

A
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CONSISTING OF

EXTRACTS FROM AND ABRIDGMENTS OF

THE

CHOICEST PIECES

OF

Practical Divinity

WHICH HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE ENGLISH TONGUE.



IN THIRTY VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

1. WE commonly believe, that there is not in the world, a more complete body of Practical Divinity than is now extant in the English tongue, in the writings of the last and the present century. And perhaps this belief is not altogether owing to a natural prejudice in favour of our own country. It seems rather to be grounded on the truth of things, on solid, rational observation.

2. Indeed there can be no reasonable doubt hereof, in any who do but calmly consider, (even before they are acquainted with the writings themselves,) that we have not wanted men of natural abilities, no ways inferior to those other countries have produced, whether in earlier or later ages. Whatever assistance art could give, we have also largely enjoyed. And may we not add, "Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name be the praise!" That the piety

which has shone in many of our countrymen, has been equal to their learning? They were indeed burning and shining lights, in their successive generations; men whom the Spirit of God endued with the truest wisdom, and taught to understand even the deep things of God.

3. Hence we have in English as great a variety of books, on every branch of religion, as is to be found, (I believe it may be said) in any language under heaven. And this variety has been abundantly increased, particularly in the present age, by numerous translations from all languages, ancient as well as modern. So that were a man to spend four-score years, with the most indefatigable application, he could go but a little way toward reading over what has been published in our own tongue, within these last hundred and fifty years.

4. But this very plenty creates a difficulty. One who desires to make the best of a short life, is lost among five hundred folios, and knows not where to begin. He cannot read all, and would willingly read those only that will best reward his labour. But who will point out these? Who will give him a clew, whereby he may guide himself through this labyrinth?

5. This is needful in the highest degree. And not only because of the immense variety, the endless

multicliplity of books, with which he is surrounded on every side ; but likewise, because in many of these more is spoken than is true. There is much truth ; but there is much falsehood also ; and these are frequently so intermixed, so (casually or designedly) blended together, that it is not an easy thing to separate them. Again ; many, though true, are of little use ; being chiefly, if not wholly, controversial, they rather tend to promote vain jangling, than holiness either of heart or life. Others, not controversial, are written in such a style, as is scarce intelligible to the bulk of mankind. A fault which it is not easy for men of learning to avoid ; which they cannot avoid without great attention ; it being so natural to imagine, that what is plain to themselves, must needs be so to their readers also.

6. Those who have avoided this fault, have frequently fallen into another ; their thoughts are as common as their expressions. They speak plain, but mean time they speak nothing ; nothing but what the meanest of their readers might have said for them. All their observations are trite and superficial ; they just skim over the surface of religion, but declare nothing of the height or depth of those great truths which are brought to light by the gospel.

7. From this some have run into the opposite extreme. They are not too superficial, but too mystical. They find hidden meanings in every thing,

which God never taught, nor the ancient children of God ever knew. They seek mysteries in the plainest truths, and make them such by their explications. Whereas the Christian Religion, according to the Scriptural account, is the plainest, clearest thing in the world: nothing stranger, or harder to be understood than this, "We love him, because he first loved us."

8. There is yet another inconvenience arising from the vast variety of authors in the English tongue. They do not always agree; they do not all speak the same thing in the same manner. Even in points of practical religion, yea and those of the highest concern, writers of no small eminence, speak not only in a manner different from, but contradictory to each other. One bids us go on, another stop; one directs to the right hand, another to the left. Inso-much that unless the reader be endued, not only with a good understanding, but with some experimental knowledge of the things of God, he is in danger of being quite bewildered. Nay, some unhappy men have been induced hereby, to throw away all Religion; imagining, there was nothing therein, but jargon and self-inconsistency.

9. Now who will be at the pains to extract the gold out of these baser mixtures! Who will separate the pure, genuine Divinity, out of this huge, mingled mass? I have made, as I was able, an attempt of

this kind. I have endeavoured to extract such a collection of *English Divinity*, as (I believe) is all true, all agreeable to the oracles of God: as is all practical, unmixed with controversy of any kind; and all intelligible to plain men: such as is not superficial, but going down to the depth, and describing the height of Christianity. And yet not mystical, not obscure to any of those, who are experienced in the ways of God. I have also particularly endeavoured to preserve a consistency throughout, that no part might contradict any other; but all conspire together, “to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work.”

10. But in order to this, I have been obliged, not only to omit the far greatest part of several eminent authors, but also to add what was needful, either to clear their sense, or to correct their mistakes. And in a design of this nature, I apprehend myself to be at full liberty so to do. I therefore take no author for better, for worse; (as indeed I dare not call any man Rabbi,) but endeavour to follow each so far as he follows Christ. And not (knowingly) one step farther.

11. I follow (nearly, not scrupulously) the order of time, wherein these authors wrote. And that for two reasons: first, that the serious reader may be the more clearly satisfied, that the genuine religion

of Jesus Christ, has been one and the same from the beginning: and secondly, that if it should please God to call me hence, before the work is brought to a period, any who thinks good to pursue the same design, may the more easily go on where I leave off.

May the Giver of every good gift, give it his blessing, and write his love in every reader's heart!

KINGSWOOD-SCHOOL,
March 25, 1749.

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THE
EPISTLES
OF THE
APOSTOLICAL FATHERS,
ST. CLEMENT, ST. IGNATIUS, ST. POLYCARP:
AND
The Martyrdoms
OF
ST. IGNATIUS AND ST. POLYCARP.

PARTLY TRANSLATED, AND PARTLY ABRIDGED.

TO THE
R E A D E R.

1. THE authors of the following collection were contemporaries of the holy apostles : one of them bred under our Lord himself, and the others well instructed by those great men, whom he commissioned to go forth and teach all nations. We cannot therefore doubt but what they deliver to us is the pure doctrine of the gospel ; what Christ and his apostles taught, and what these holy men had themselves received from their own mouths.

2. Nor had they only the advantage of living in the apostolical times, of hearing the holy apostles and conversing with them, but were themselves of a very eminent character in the church ; men raised to the highest honour and authority ; chosen by the apostles to preside in their several sees ; and those some of the most eminent then in the world : such men therefore, we may be well assured, must have been carefully instructed in the mystery of the gospel, and have had a most comprehensive and perfect knowledge of the faith as it is in Jesus.

3. Had they been men of no note, no authority in the church, yet the very age wherein they lived would have rendered their discourses justly venerable to us. But now, having to do with men not only instructed in common by the apostles, with the other Christians of those days, but particularly bred up and instituted by

them ; having here the writings of men who had attained to so perfect a knowledge of the mystery of godliness, as to be judged worthy by the apostles themselves to be overseers of the great churches of Rome, Antioch, and Smyrna ; we cannot, with any reason, doubt of what they deliver to us as the gospel of Christ : but ought to receive it, though not with equal veneration, yet with only little less regard than we do the sacred writings of those who were their masters and instructors.

4. Yet farther, they were not only such eminent men, and bred up under such mighty advantages, and so thoroughly instructed in the knowledge of the gospel, but they were also persons of consummate piety ; adorned with all those Christian virtues which they so affectionately recommend to us. But, especially, they were zealous watchmen over their churches ; careful to instruct them in the true faith of Christ, and to preserve them from the contagion of those heresies, which even then began to corrupt it. Hence we read in Eusebius, with what a holy zeal Ignatius first, and then his fellow-disciple, St. Polycarp, set themselves against those who taught other doctrines than what the apostles had delivered unto them : what wise directions they gave for the discovery of false teachers, and how earnestly they exhorted all the churches to keep firm to their respective bishops and presbyters, and to the apostolical doctrine derived from them.

5. To this general piety of their lives, and care for the purity of religion, we may add, their courage and constancy in the maintaining of it. And two of them, after having spent their lives in a careful administration of the great charge to which they were called, were at last made perfect through martyrdom, which they underwent with a calmness and resolution worthy both the

religion they professed, and the eminent characters they had obtained in the church.

6. Such reason have we to look on the writings of these holy men, as containing the pure, uncorrupted doctrine of Christ. But to advance higher yet, They were not only thus qualified by these ordinary means to deliver the gospel to us, but were likewise endued with the extraordinary assistance of the Holy Spirit.

7. To be satisfied of this, we need only consider, 1. That the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, which the Scriptures themselves tell us were conferred on other believers, as well as on the apostles, continued still in the church after their departure, as is expressly testified by Justin Martyr. And that we may be assured he spoke nothing but what was undeniable, we find him urging it against Trypho the Jew, as an unanswerable argument for the Christians against the Jews, from whom those gifts had been long departed.

8. The same St. Clement declares, in his epistle to the Corinthians; where he reproves those who prided themselves in them. And St. Ignatius not only supposes (in his salutation to the church of Smyrna,) that such gifts might be in others, but, in his letter to the Philadelphians, plainly intimates, that he himself was endued with a large portion of them.

9. Which being so, we cannot doubt, 2dly, but that the apostles were careful to set those over the several churches who were most eminent for these gifts; and that God was also pleased to grant to such persons a more than ordinary portion of his Spirit, for the better discharge of those eminent offices, to which they were called.

10. One of the qualifications which the apostles required, even in those who were to be ordained deacons,

we know was, That they should be “men full of the Holy Ghost.” And accordingly it is recorded of St. Stephen, that he was *full of faith and power, and did signs and wonders among the people*; nor could the Jews stand against the wisdom and Spirit by which he spake. How much more careful must they have been not to admit any into the highest authority, but who were yet more eminently endued with the same gifts.

11. The plain inference is, Not only that they were not mistaken in their interpretations of the gospel of Christ, but that in all the necessary parts of it they were so assisted by the Holy Ghost, as to be scarce capable of mistaking. Consequently we are to look on their writings, though not of equal authority with the Holy Scriptures, (because neither were the authors of them called in so extraordinary a way to the writing them, nor endued with so large a portion of the blessed Spirit,) yet as worthy of a much greater respect than any compositions which have been made since; however men have afterwards written with more art, and a greater stock of human learning than is to be found not only in the following pieces, but even in the New Testament itself.

12. Indeed the manner in which they are written, the true primitive simplicity which appears in all the parts of them, is no just objection to them, but rather a strong recommendation to all considering men. They knew the excellency of their doctrine, and the importance of the revelations which it made of the future state; and therefore they contented themselves to declare these things in a plain and simple manner; and yet with such efficacy and power as surpassed all the rhetorick in the world.

OF
ST. CLEMENT,
AUTHOR OF
THE FOLLOWING EPISTLE.

IT is no small commendation which the Holy Ghost, by St. Paul, has left us of the writer of this epistle, Phil. iv. 3, where the apostle not only mentions him as his fellow-labourer in the work of the gospel, but as one whose name was written in the book of life.

He was made bishop of Rome by the express direction of one or both the apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul : the occasion of his writing this letter seems to have been, first, The division of the church at Corinth, on account of their teachers ; and, secondly, Their mistakes concerning the resurrection. St. Paul had not long before put a stop to the one, and set them right as to the other. But the evil beginning to break out afresh, St. Clement, in the epistle before us, first, takes no notice of the rise of those new seditions, and exhorts them to unity, and then, by many arguments establishes the certainty of the future resurrection.

It is most probably judged to have been written about seventy years after Christ, shortly after the end of Nero's persecution, and a little before the Jewish war broke out, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem.

ST. CLEMENT'S

EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

The church of God which sojourneth at Corinth, elect, sanctified by the will of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord: grace and peace be multiplied unto you, from the Almighty God, through Jesus Christ.

BRETHREN,

§ 1. BY reason of the sudden dangers and calamities which have befallen us, we may have seemed slow to consider the things you required of us: and especially that detestable and unholy sedition, strange to us, and unbecoming the elect of God: which a few rash and self-willed men have inflamed to such a height of madness, that their venerable and renowned name, worthy to be loved of all, hath been greatly blasphemed. For who that hath only sojourned among you, hath not praised the firmness of your faith, adorned with all virtues? Who hath not admired the wisdom and gentleness of your piety in Christ? Who hath not published abroad the exceeding greatness of your hospitality? And accounted you happy, for your perfect and certain knowledge of the gospel. For ye did all things without respect of persons, and walked in the laws of God, being subject to them who had the rule over you, and giving the honour that was due to the presbyters among you.

§ 1. The reason of his not sooner answering their letter, which had given an account of the new schism in their church.—The scandal occasioned by it.—A commendation of their preceding behaviour.

Ye commanded the young men to be of a modest and serious mind: the women ye exhorted to do all things with gravity, and with an unblamable and pure conscience; loving their husbands; obeying them, and ordering their houses with all sobriety and discretion.

§ 2. Ye were all humble-minded, without arrogance, desiring rather to be subject than to govern; more ready to give than to receive; content with the portion God hath dispensed to you: and, hearkening diligently to his word, ye were enlarged in your bowels, having his sufferings always before your eyes. Thus a firm and blessed peace was given to you all; and an insatiable desire of doing good; and a full effusion of the Holy Ghost was upon you all. Being full of a holy intention, ye did, with great readiness of mind, and with a pious confidence, stretch forth your hands unto Almighty God, beseeching him to be merciful unto you, if in any thing ye had unwillingly offended. Ye strove with God day and night for all the brethren, that through his mercy the number of the elect might be saved. Ye were sincere, and without guile, toward each other; ye were not mindful of injuries; all sedition and all schism was an abomination to you. Ye bewailed every one his neighbour's sins. Ye esteemed their defects your own. Ye were kind to one another without grudging, and ready to every good work. Being adorned with an altogether virtuous and holy conversation, ye did all things in the fear of God; and the commandments of the Lord were written on the tables of your heart.

§ 3. But, when all honour and enlargement were given unto you, then was fulfilled that which is written, "My beloved did eat and drink, he was enlarged, and waxed fat, and kicked." From hence envy, and strife, and sedition, persecution, and tumult, and war, and captivity. Hence the vile rose up against the honourable,



§ 2. A farther commendation of their preceding behaviour. .

§ 3. The cause and consequences of their present schism.

the foolish against the wise, the young men against the elders. Therefore righteousness and peace are *now* far from you, while many leave the fear of God, are diminished in the faith, and no longer walk in the commandments of God, neither have their conversation as becometh the gospel of Christ; but walk after their own desires, full of unjust and wicked envy, by which death entered into the world.

§ 4. For thus it is written, "And in process of time, it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and unto his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him." Ye see, brethren, envy wrought the death of a brother. For this our father Jacob fled from the face of his brother Esau: this caused Joseph to be persecuted to the death, and come into bondage. For envy Aaron and Miriam were shut out of the camp. Envy sent Dathan and Abiram quick into hell, because they were seditious against Moses the servant of God. For this David underwent not only the hate of strangers, but was persecuted by Saul, the king of Israel.

§ 5. But to cease from ancient examples, let us come to those combatants who have been nearest to us; let us take the examples of our own age. Through envy the faithful and most righteous pillars of the church have been persecuted even to the most grievous deaths. Let us set before our eyes the holy apostles. Peter, by unjust envy, underwent his many sufferings; till at last, being martyred, he went to the place of glory that was due to him. Through envy did Paul receive the reward



§ 4, 5, 6. Examples of the ill effects of envy.

of his patience, having been seven times in bonds, having been scourged, stoned ; having preached both in the east and in the west ; having taught the whole world righteousness, and travelled to the utmost bounds of the west, and borne testimony before rulers, he left the world, and went unto the holy place ; leaving behind him a glorious report of his faith, and a most eminent pattern of patience.

§ 6. To these holy men hath been joined a great number of others, who having through envy endured many torments, have left us a glorious example. Even women, persecuted through envy, having suffered grievous tortures, have finished the course of the faith, and weak as they were in body, have attained a great reward.

§ 7. These things, brethren, we write unto you, not only for your instruction, but also for our own remembrance. For we are in the same lists, and engaged in the same combat. Let us lay aside all vain and useless cares, and let us come up to the glorious and venerable rule of our holy calling. Let us consider what is good, and acceptable, and well pleasing in the sight of him that made us. Let us fix our eye on the blood of Christ, and see how precious it is before God, which, being shed for our salvation, brought the grace of repentance to all the world. Let us look diligently to all ages, and learn that our Lord hath always given place for repentance, to all who desire to turn to him. Noah preached repentance, and they who hearkened to him were saved. Jonah denounced destruction against the Ninevites ; yet they, repenting of their sins, appeased God by their prayers, and received salvation, although they were strangers to the covenant of God.

§ 8. All the ministers of the grace of God have, by the Holy Spirit, spoken of repentance. And even the Lord of all, hath spoken concerning it with an oath,

§ 7. An exhortation to repentance.

§ 8. Promises to the penitent.

“ As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of a sinner, but that he should repent ;” adding this good sentence, “ Turn ye from your sins, for why will ye die, O house of Israel ?”

§ 9. Wherefore let us obey his excellent and glorious will, and, imploring his compassion and goodness, fall down before him, and turn ourselves to his merey. Laying aside all vain labour, and contention, and envy, which leadeth unto death ; let us fix our eyes on those who have perfectly ministered to his excellent glory. Look on Enoch, who, being found upright and obedient, was translated, and his death was not found. Noah, being found faithful by his ministry, preached regeneration to the world : and the Lord saved by him all the creatures that entered with one accord into the ark.

§ 10. Abraham, named the friend of God, was found faithful, in obeying the words of God. By obedience he went out of his own land, and from his kindred, and his father's house ; that, forsaking a narrow land, and a weak kindred, and a small house, he might inherit the promises of God.

§ 11. By faith was Lot saved out of Sodom, when all the country round was destroyed by fire and brimstone, the Lord shewing, that he will not forsake them that trust in him, but that he will bring the disobedient to punishment. For his wife, who went out with him, being not of the same mind, was set for a sign ; and is a pillar of salt unto this day ; that all may know, that the double-minded, and they who distrust the power of God, become a condemnation, and a sign to all ages.

§ 12. By faith and hospitality was Rahab saved. For when the spies were sent by Joshua the son of Nun to search out Jericho, she would not discover them unto the messengers of the king. Then she said to them, “ I



§ 9, 10, 11, 12. Encouragement to turn to God from Scripture examples.

know that the Lord your God hath given this city into your hands. When therefore ye shall have taken it, ye shall save me and my father's house." And they gave her a sign, that she should hang out of her house a scarlet thread : a type of the blood of our Lord, whereby should be redemption to all who believe and trust in God.

§ 13. Let us therefore humble ourselves, brethren, laying aside all arrogance, and pride, and foolishness, and anger. Let us remember the words of our Lord Jesus, "Be ye merciful, and ye shall obtain mercy ; forgive and ye shall be forgiven." By this command and these rules, let us establish ourselves, that so we may always walk obediently to his holy words.

§ 14, 15. It is therefore just and righteous; men and brethren, that we obey God, and not the authors of sedition and discord ; considering, the danger of giving ourselves up to turbulent men, estranged from that which is good. But let us be kind to one another, according to the compassion and sweetness of him that made us. And let us hold fast to those who follow peace in sincerity, not with those who "bless with their mouth, but curse with their heart."

§ 16, 17, 18. Christ is theirs who are humble, not who exalt themselves over his flock. The sceptre of the majesty of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, came not in the pomp of pride and arrogance, but in lowliness and humility. He was as "a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people." Ye see, beloved, what a pattern is set before us : and if our Lord thus humbled himself, what should we do ?

§ 19. In humility then let us return to the mark of peace which was given to us from the beginning. Let us steadfastly behold the Father and Creator of the universe,

§ 13. An exhortation to humility and gentleness.

§ 14, 15. To love, unity and peace.

§ 16, 17, 18. To humility.

§ 19. Gentleness enforced by the example of God.

and hold fast his glorious and exceeding great gifts and benefits. Let us see him with our understanding, and with the eyes of our soul behold his long-suffering will : let us consider, how gentle and patient he is, toward his whole creation.

§ 20. The heavens continue unshaken by his appointment, and are subject to him in peace. Day and night fulfil their allotted course, and hinder not each other. The sun and moon, and all the quires of stars, run the race he hath commanded in concord. The fruitful earth yields her food plentifully in its season, to all the animals that are thereon, according to his will, not disputing or altering any thing of what he hath ordered. The floods of the great deep, gathered together by him, pass not the bounds which he hath appointed for them. The impassible ocean and the worlds beyond, are governed by the same Lord. Spring and summer, autumn and winter, give place to each other in peace. The winds in their courses fulfil their ministry, each in his appointed season. The eternal springs never fail to reach out their breasts, for the health and delight of man. The very smallest of creatures, join together in unity and mutual peace. All these hath the great Creator and Lord of all, commanded to abide in peace and concord ; who doth good to all, but more abundantly to us, who have fled to his mercies, through our Lord Jesus Christ : to whom be glory and majesty for ever and ever. Amen.

§ 21. Take heed, my beloved, that his many blessings be not to us to condemnation, if we walk not worthy of him, doing with one consent the things that are good and well-pleasing in his sight. Let us consider, how near he is, and that nothing of our words or thoughts is hid from him. Let us not therefore leave the rank assigned us by his will. Let us offend foolish and unreasonable men,



§ 20. Motives to unity from the works of the creation.

§ 21, 22, 23. An exhortation to various duties.

lifted up and glorifying in the arrogance of their own wisdom, rather than God. Let us reverence our Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was given for us. Let us honour those that are over us in the Lord; let us respect our elders; let us train up our young men in the fear of the Lord. Our women let us guide into that which is good. Let them shew forth a purity, worthy of all love; let them be patterns of sincerity and meekness: the government of their tongues let them manifest by their silence. Let them shew their love, not with respect of persons, but alike toward all those who fear God in holiness. Let their children partake of the discipline of Christ. Let them learn how great power humility has with God; how much holy love avails with him: how the fear of him is good and great, and saveth all those, who with a pure mind turn to him in holiness. For he is a searcher of the thoughts and intents of the heart. His breath is in us: and when he will, he taketh it away.

§ 24. Let us consider, beloved, how the Lord continually sheweth us the resurrection which is to come; of which he had made our Lord Jesus Christ the first fruits, raising him from the dead. Behold the types thereof in every season: the night lieth down, the day ariseth: again, the day goeth, and the night cometh on. Let us behold the fruits of the earth: how the seed is sown. The sower went forth and cast it into the ground. It fell naked and dry: it was afterwards dissolved: then from that dissolution, the great power of God raiseth it up again, and it increaseth and bringeth forth fruit.

§ 26, 27. In this hope, therefore, let our souls cleave to him, who is faithful in his promises, and righteous in his judgments. He hath commanded us not to lie. Much less will he lie himself. For nothing is impossible to God, but to lie. Let us then stir up our faith, and consider, that all things are nigh unto him. By the word of his majesty he made all things:



§ 24, 25. Proofs of the resurrection drawn from nature.

§ 26, 27. Drawn from Scripture, and from the power of God.

and by a word he is able to destroy them. "Who shall say unto him, what dost thou?" or who shall resist the power of his strength? When he pleaseth, and as he pleaseth, he doth all things; and of all he hath determined, nothing passeth away. All things are continually in his sight; nor hath any thing been hid from him.

§ 28. Seeing then he seeth and heareth all things, let us fear him, and lay aside our unholy desires, that his mercy may cover us from the wrath to come. For whither can any of us flee from his mighty hand? What world will receive those that flee from him? "If we ascend into heaven, he is there: if we go down to hell, he is there also." Whither shall a man go, or whither shall he run, from him who containeth all things.

§ 30. Wherefore let us do all the things that pertain to holiness, fleeing all evil speaking, and unholy embraces, drunkenness, youthful lusts, and abominable desires. Let us join ourselves closely to those, to whom God hath given his grace: and let us put on concord, lowliness, temperance, keeping ourselves far from all whispering and evil-speaking. Let us give praise to God, not to ourselves; for self-praises God hateth. Let the testimony of our good actions be given by others, as it was given to our holy fathers. Confidence, and arrogance and boldness are with the accursed of God; but mildness and lowliness with those that are blessed of him.

§ 32. All the holy men of old were glorified and magnified, not for their own sakes, or for the sake of their own works, or for the righteousness which they themselves had wrought, but through his will. And we in like manner, being called through his will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, neither by our own wisdom, or knowledge or godliness, or by the works which we have wrought in holiness of heart, but by faith; by

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§ 28, 29. An exhortation to purity, grounded on the omnipresence of God, and enforced by his mercy, to his servants.

§ 30. Cautions against detraction and several other vices.

§ 31. Enforced by examples.

§ 32. We are justified by faith.

which the Almighty God hath justified all men from the beginning ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

§ 33. What shall we do then, brethren ? Shall we let go our love, and grow slothful in doing good ? God forbid ! but let us make haste with earnestness and diligence, to fulfil every good work. Even the Creator and Lord of all rejoiceth in his works. By his sovereign power hath he stablished the heavens, and adorned them by his incomprehensible wisdom : he divided the earth from the surrounding water, and fixed it as an unshaken tower, on the foundation of his will. The living creatures thereof he spake into being : and having created the sea, with all the creatures that are therein, he shut them up there by his power. Above all, with his holy hands he formed man, the most excellent, and, as to his understanding, the greatest of all the creatures ; the character of his own image. Having therefore such an example, let us vigorously fulfil his will, and with all our strength work the works of righteousness.

§ 34. The good workman with confidence receives the bread of his labour : but the slothful and remiss cannot bear to meet the eye of his master. Let us therefore be ready and forward in well-doing ; for he, *of whom are all things*, hath told us before, “ Behold the Lord, and his reward is before his face, to render unto every man according to his work.” Therefore he exhorteth us, to set upon every good work, not slothfully or negligently, but with all our heart. And let our glorying and our confidence be in him. Let us submit ourselves to his will. Let us consider the whole multitude of his angels, how ready they stand to minister unto his will. For the scripture saith, “ Thousands of thousands minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him, and cry, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Sabaoth ; the whole earth is full of his glory.” Let us also, being

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§ 33, 34. An exhortation to diligence in good works, after the example of God, and his angels.

gathered together in love, as with one mouth, fervently cry unto him, that we may be partakers of his great and glorious promises, such as "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard."

§ 35. How blessed and wonderful, beloved, are the gifts of God? Life and immortality, righteousness and glory! truth and boldness of speech, faith and confidence, temperance and holiness! And all these things fall under our understanding. What then are those which are prepared for them that wait for him? The Creator, the Father of ages, the all-holy, he knoweth the greatness and excellence of them. Let us therefore agonize to be found in the number of them that wait for him, that we may partake thereof. And this shall we do, if our understanding be established by faith in God; if we seek the things which are pleasing and acceptable unto him; if we do whatever is agreeable to his perfect will, and follow the way of truth.

§ 36. This is the way, beloved, wherein we find our Saviour, Jesus Christ, the high-priest of our offerings, the defender and helper of our weakness. Through him we can fix our eye upon the height of heaven: through him we behold, as in a glass, the glorious face of the Most High. Through him have the eyes of our hearts been opened. Through him our darkened and foolish understanding again rejoiceth in his marvellous light. It has pleased God that through him we should taste the knowledge of immortality; who is "the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person:" unto whom he hath said, "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." But who are his enemies? even those who oppose their own will to the will of God.

§ 37, 38. Let us therefore, my brethren, with all earnestness, fight the good fight of faith. Let us observe

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§ 35. The Christian rewards, and the way to obtain them.

§ 36. The blessings through Christ.

§ 37, 38. An exhortation to obedience to God, and to various duties.

those who fight under earthly leaders : with what order and readiness, and exact obedience, they perform what is commanded them. All are not generals, nor commanders of thousands ; but every one in his own rank does that which is commanded him. And thus do all the members conspire together, for the preservation of the whole body. Let therefore our whole body be saved in Jesus Christ ; and let every man be subject to his neighbour, according to the gift he has received. Let not the strong despise the weak ; and let the weak see that he reverence the strong. Let the rich man dispense to the necessities of the poor ; and let the poor man bless God, that he hath given one unto him, by whom what is wanting to him may be supplied. Let the wise shew his wisdom, not in words, but in good works. Let the humble not bear witness to himself, but leave it to another to bear witness of him. Let not the chaste glory in himself, knowing that it is another who giveth him that gift. Let us all consider whereof we are made, and how we came into the world, as it were out of a sepulchre, and out of darkness. He who made us and formed us, brought us into his own world, having prepared his benefits for us, before we were born. Having therefore all these things from him, we ought in all to give thanks unto him. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

§ 40. We ought also, looking into the depths of the Divine knowledge, to do all things in order, whatsoever the Lord hath commanded to be done. We ought to make our oblations, and to perform our holy offices at their appointed seasons. For these he hath commanded to be done, not irregularly or by chance, but at determinate times and hours ; as he hath likewise ordained



§ 40. Directions concerning the time and persons set apart for holy offices : enforced § 41, from the exact order observed in the Jewish sacrifices.

by his supreme will, where, and by what persons they shall be performed : that so all things being done according to his pleasure, may be acceptable in his sight. Blessed therefore are they who make their offerings at the appointed seasons ; for following the commands of their Lord, they sin not. The same care ought to be had with regard to the persons who minister in holy things. For to the chief priest are his peculiar offices given ; and to the priests is their proper place appointed : and to the Levites pertain their own ministries. And the layman is bound by what is commanded to laymen.

§ 41. Let every one of you therefore, brethren, bless God in his proper station ; preserving a conscience void of offence in all holiness, not transgressing the appointed rule of his service. The Jewish sacrifices are offered only at the appointed place, and by the appointed ministers. And they who do any thing otherwise than is ordained by his will, are punished with death. And you know, that by how much the more knowledge we have received, by so much the greater is our danger.

§ 42, 43. The apostles preached to us from our Lord Jesus Christ : Jesus Christ from God. Therefore Christ was sent by God, and the apostles by Christ : all this was accordingly done in order, agreeably to the will of God. They therefore having received a command, and being thoroughly assured by the resurrection of our Lord, and confirmed by the word of God, went forth with the full assurance of the Holy Spirit, preaching the kingdom of God. And thus preaching through all cities and countries, they constituted the first-fruits of them, having provided them by the Spirit, bishops and ministers over such as should afterwards believe.

§ 44. The apostles knew by the Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be contention about the name of bishoprick.



§ 42, 43. From the orders of clergy appointed by the apostles : the care of Moses concerning the priesthood ; and § 44. That of the apostles concerning the regular succession of ministers.

And having received perfect knowledge of this before, they not only constituted those we have named, but farther gave direction that when they should die, other approved men should succeed in their ministry. Those therefore ought not to be cast out of their ministry, who have been constituted by the apostles ; or afterwards by other excellent men, with the consent of the whole church ; and who have ministered unblamably to the flock of Christ, with all lowliness, in peace and sobriety. For it is not a small crime, to throw those out of their bishoprick who have behaved honestly and unblamably therein.

§ 45. Ye are contentious, brethren, and zealous about things which do not pertain to salvation. Look into the Scriptures, the true words of the Holy Ghost. Ye know, nothing false or feigned is written therein. And there ye find not the just rejected by holy men. The righteous were persecuted ; but by sinners only. They were imprisoned, but it was by unholy men ; they were killed, they were stoned, but it was by transgressors ; by men corrupt and abominable, and inflamed with an unrighteous zeal : men so full of rage and of all wickedness, as to torment those, who worshipped God with a holy and unblamable mind : not knowing that the Most High fighteth for, and defendeth, all who serve him with a pure conscience. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

§ 49, 50. He that hath the love that is in Christ, let him keep the commandments of Christ. Who can declare the bond of the love of God ? Who is sufficient worthily to express the magnificence of its beauty ? The height to which love exalts us cannot be spoken. Love unites us to God. Love covereth a multitude of sins.



§ 45. That none but wicked men persecute the good.

§ 46. An exhortation to unity.

§ 47. The peculiar guilt of their schism.

§ 48. An exhortation to repentance.

§ 49, 50. The power of Divine love.

Love is long-sufferings, yea, beareth all things. There is nothing mean in love, there is nothing haughty. Love has no schism, is not seditious. Love does all things in unity. By love were all the elect of God made perfect. Without love nothing is acceptable to God. Through love hath Jesus Christ our Lord received us : through his love to us hath he given his blood for us, his flesh for our flesh by the will of God, and his soul for our souls.

Ye see, beloved, how great and wonderful a thing love is, and that no words can declare its perfection. Who then is sufficient to be found therein ? Who but they whom God vouchsafes to teach it. Let us therefore besecch him that we may be worthy thereof, that we may live in love, unblamable, without respect of persons. All the generations from Adam unto this day are passed away : but those who were made perfect in love, are in the region of the just, and shall appear in glory at the visitation of the kingdom of Christ. Happy then are we, beloved, if we fulfil the commandments of God in the unity of love, that so, through love our sins may be forgiven us. For "blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." And this blessing cometh on those who are elected by God,* through Jesus Christ our Lord. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

§ 51, 52. Let us therefore, as many as have transgressed, pray for pardon : especially those who were the authors of the sedition and schism among you. It is better for a man to confess his sins, than to harden his heart. Pharaoh and his host, and all the princes of Egypt, together with all their chariots and horsemen, were swallowed up, and perished in the red sea, for no other cause than this, because they hardened their hearts, after so great signs wrought in the land of Egypt, by

* That is, on true believers.

§ 51, 52, 53, 54, 55. An exhortation to repentance and unity, enforced from the law of Moses to his brethren, and from other examples.

Moses the servant of God. Beloved, God wanteth nothing: neither doth he desire any thing of any man, but that he should confess his sins unto him.*

§ 53. Ye know, beloved, ye fully know, the Holy Scriptures. Ye have thoroughly searched the oracles of God. Consider then the love which Moses bare to his brethren. When the Lord had said unto him, "I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff-necked people. Now therefore let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their names from under heaven:" he said, "Not so, Lord, forgive now this people their sin. Or if thou wilt not, blot me also out of the book of the living." O excellent love! O unsupportable perfection! the servant speaketh freely to his Lord, and beseecheth him to forgive the people, or to blot out him with them!

§ 54. Who then is generous, who is compassionate, who is full of love among you? Let him say, 'If sedition arise through me, if contentions or schisms, I go wheresoever ye please, I do whatsoever ye command me. Only let the flock of Christ be again in peace, with the elders who have been set over it.' These things they whose conversation is right towards God, have done, and will ever do. Nay, even of the heathens, many have given up themselves unto death, that they might save their country from destruction. And we know how many among ourselves have given up themselves unto bonds, that they might redeem their neighbour from them: and how many have sold themselves unto slavery, that with the price of themselves they might feed their brethren.

§ 56. Let us pray for such as are in sin, that they may receive the meekness and humility to submit, not unto us, but unto the will of God. For so there shall be unto them a fruitful and merciful remembrance before God

* Viz. and forsake them, turning to God in faith, love, and new obedience.

§ 56. The benefits of brotherly correction.

and his holy ones. And let us receive correction, at which no one ought to be displeased; for the reproof and the correction which we exercise toward one another is good and highly profitable, seeing it unites us to the will of God.

§ 57. Ye therefore who laid the foundation of this schism, submit to your elders, and learn repentance. Bend ye the knees of your heart, and learn to be in subjection, laying aside your proud and arrogant boasting. For it is better for you that ye be small in the flock of Christ, than that ye be highly exalted, and be cast out of his fold.

§ 58. The all-seeing God, the Father of spirits, and Lord of all flesh, who hath chosen our Lord Jesus Christ, and us by him to be a peculiar people, grant to every soul that calleth on his glorious and holy name, faith, fear, peace, patience, long-suffering, temperance, holiness and wisdom, unto all well-pleasing in his sight, through our high-priest and protector Jesus Christ; by whom be glory and majesty, power and honour unto him, both now and for evermore. Amen.

§ 59. The messengers whom we have sent unto you, Claudius, Ephebus, Valerius Bito and Fortunatus, send back speedily unto us in peace and joy, that they may the sooner inform us of your peace and unity, which we pray and long for; and that we also may the sooner rejoice in your prosperity. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and with all every where who are called of God through him. To whom be honour and glory, and might and majesty, and eternal dominion, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen.

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§ 57. An application to the authors of the schism.

§ 58, 59. The blessing and conclusion.

OF  
**ST. POLYCARP.**

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THE character of St. Polycarp, the angel or bishop of the church in Smyrna, sufficiently appears from the words of our Lord, in the Revelation, ii. 9, &c. "I know thy works and tribulation, and poverty; but thou art rich—fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer—be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

He wrote this letter to the Philippians, as appears from several passages of the letter itself, about or a little after the time, of the martyrdom of St. Ignatius; that is, at the end of the year 116, or in the beginning of 117; when he had not as yet heard the particular circumstances of the sufferings of that glorious martyr.

It is here placed before the epistles of St. Ignatius, although it was written after them; both because it is a fit introduction to them, and because it was probably so placed by Polycarp himself. For thus he speaks to the Philippians, "The epistles of Ignatius we have sent unto you,—which are subjoined to this epistle."

# ST. POLYCARP'S

## EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

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*Polycarp, and the presbyters which are with him, to the church of God which sojourneth at Philippi, mercy and peace from God Almighty and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, be multiplied.*

§ 1. I REJOICED with you greatly in our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye received those who are the images of true charity, and, as it behoved you, accompanied those that were in bonds becoming saints, which are the crowns of those who are truly elected by God and our Lord : as also that the firm root of your faith remaineth unto this day, and bringeth forth fruit unto our Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered for our sins even unto death : whom God hath raised up, loosing the bands of hell ; “ whom having not seen ye love ; in whom believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory ; ” into which many desire to enter, knowing that “ by grace ye are saved : ” not by works, but by the will of God, through Jesus Christ.

§ 2. Wherefore girding up your loins, serve the Lord in fear and truth. Leave vain conversation, and the error of the many ; believing in him who raised up our

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§ 1. He commends them for their kindness to those that suffered for Christ.

§ 2. He exhorteth them to continue therein.

Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and gave him glory and a throne at his right hand : to whom all things in heaven and in earth are made subject ; whom all that hath breath shall worship, who cometh to judge the quick and the dead, whose blood God shall require of them that obey him not. And he who raised up Christ from the dead, will raise us up also, if we do his will, and walk in his commandments, and love the things which he loved ; renouncing all unrighteousness, love of money, inordinate affection, lying and evil speaking : not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but remembering the words of our Lord, " Judge not, and ye shall not be judged ; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven : be merciful, and ye shall obtain mercy.

§ 3. These things, my brethren, I write not unto you of myself, concerning righteousness ; but because ye exhorted me thereto. For neither can I, nor any other such as I am, come up to the wisdom of the blessed and glorious Paul, who being present with you, taught you the word of truth perfectly, and being absent, wrote letters unto you ; by which ye may be edified in the faith that is given you, which is the mother of us all : which is followed by hope and led by love both of God, and Christ, and our neighbour. For if a man be in these, he hath fulfilled the law of righteousness : for he who hath love is far from all sin.

§ 4. But " love of money is the root of all evil." Knowing therefore that " we brought nothing into the world, neither can carry any thing out," let us arm ourselves with the armour of righteousness. Let us teach ourselves first, to walk in the law of the Lord, and then our wives to walk in the faith which is given them, in love and purity, (loving their husbands in all truth, and all others alike with all temperance,) and to bring up

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§ 3. He advises them to remember the doctrine taught them by St. Paul.

§ 4. The duties of husbands, wives, widows.

their children in the discipline and fear of the Lord. The widows teach to be sober in the faith, continually interceding for all men ; far from all slander, lying, evil speaking, covetousness, and from all evil : knowing that they are the altars of God, and that he seeth all things, that nothing is hid from him ; nothing of the reasonings, or of the thoughts, or of the secrets of their hearts.

§ 5. Knowing therefore that God is not mocked, we ought to walk worthy of his commandment and his glory. Let the deacons be blameless in his sight, as the ministers of God in Christ, and not of men : not evil speakers, not double-tongued, not lovers of money ; but compassionate, careful, diligent, temperate in all things ; walking according to the truth of the Lord, who was the servant of all : whom if we please in this present world, we shall receive the good things which are to come ; as he hath promised to raise us from the dead ; and that if we believe and walk worthy of him, we shall reign with him. Let the young men be unblamable in all things : above all, taking care of their purity, and restraining themselves from all evil : for it is good to be cut off from the desires which are in the world, because all desire warreth against the Spirit.

§ 6. Let the priests be merciful and compassionate to all, bringing back such as are gone astray ; visiting all that are weak ; not neglecting the widows, the fatherless, and the poor : let them always be provident to do good, in the sight of God and men ; abstaining from all anger, covetousness, respect of persons, unjust judgment : not soon believing any thing against any : not severe in judging ; knowing that we are all debtors by sin. If therefore we pray our Lord to forgive us, we ought ourselves to forgive. We are all before the eyes of our Lord and God ; and we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. Let us therefore serve him in

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§ 5. Of deacons, and young men

§ 6. And of priests

all fear and reverence; being zealous of what is good, abstaining from all offence, and avoiding false brethren, and those that bear the name of Christ in hypocrisy, who deceive vain men.

§ 7 For “every one who confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is an antiehrhist.” And every one who confesseth not his death on the cross, is of the devil. And every one who perverteth the oracles of God to his own lusts, and saith there is no resurrection, and no judgment, he is the first-born of Satan. Wherefore, leaving the vanity of the many and their false doctrines, let us turn unto the words delivered to us from the beginning. Let us watch unto prayer. Let us persevere in fastings, and with supplication beseech the all-seeing God not to lead us into temptation; since, as our Lord hath said, Though “the Spirit be willing, the flesh is weak.”

§ 8. Let us therefore without ceasing cleave steadfastly to him who is our hope, and the earnest of our righteousness, even Jesus Christ, “who himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;” but suffered all things for us, that we might live through him. Let us therefore be followers of his patience; and if we suffer for his name, let us glorify him; for this example hath he left us, and thus have we believed.

§ 9. Wherefore I exhort you all, that ye obey the word of righteousness, and exercise all patience, which ye have seen before your eyes, not only in the blessed Ignatius, Zosimus, and Rufus, but also in others among yourselves, and in Paul and the rest of the apostles: being confident that all these have not run in vain, but in faith and righteousness; and that they are in the place which was due unto them, with the Lord, with



§ 7. Of faith in Christ, fasting, and prayer.

§ 8. An exhortation to patience, enforced by the example of Christ, and,

§ 9. Those of the apostles and other saints.

whom also they suffered. For they loved not the present world, but him who died, and was raised again by God for us.

§ 10. Stand fast in these things, following the steps of our Lord. Be ye firm and immovable in the faith, lovers of the brethren, lovers of one another, gentle to all, despising none. When it is in your power to do good, delay not. Be ye all subject one to another; "having your conversation unblamable among the gentiles," that our Lord be not blasphemed. But wo unto him through whom the name of the Lord is blasphemed. Therefore teach sobriety to all men.

§ 11, 12. I am greatly afflicted for Valens, once a presbyter among you, and for his wife: may the Lord give them true repentance; and be long-suffering toward them, not counting them as enemies, that ye may save your whole body. And the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ himself, our everlasting high-priest, the Son of God, build you up in faith and truth, and in all meekness and gentleness, in patience and long-suffering, in forbearance and chastity, and give you a lot and portion among his saints; and unto us with you, and to all under the heavens who shall believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in his Father who raised him from the dead. Pray ye for all the saints; and also for all kings, princes, and rulers, and for those who hate you and persecute you, and for the enemies of the cross, that your fruit may be manifest in all, and that ye may be perfect in Christ.

§ 13. The epistles of Ignatius, which ye required, we have sent unto you; they are subjoined to this epistle. Ye may be greatly profited thereby; for they treat of faith and patience, and of all things that pertain to edification in the Lord Jesus.—Be ye safe in the Lord Jesus Christ. His grace be with you all. Amen!

§ 10. An exhortation to various duties.

§ 11. To mildness toward offenders.

§ 12. He prays for them, and exhorts them to pray for all men.

§ 13. Of the epistles of Ignatius.

OF
ST. IGNATIUS'S EPISTLES.

EUSEBIUS informs us, That as * Ignatius was on his way to Rome, in order to be cast to the wild beasts, he not only confirmed the churches through which he passed, but wrote to the chief of those that were near, in the following order :

First, from Smyrna, where he tarried some time with his fellow-disciple, St. Polycarp, he wrote to the Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians and Romans ; and being gone on to Troas, he thence wrote to the churches of Philadelphia and Smyrna, and a particular letter to Polycarp.

And with the descriptions which Polycarp and Eusebius have left us of the epistles of this holy man, the following fully agree ; as they do likewise exactly with those numerous quotations (produced at large, and compared together by Bishop Pearson,) which the ancient fathers have made out of them.

* Hist. Ecclesiastica, lib. 3. c. 36.

ST. IGNATIUS'S

EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the church which is at Ephesus in Asia, blessed in the greatness and fulness of God the Father, predestinated, before all worlds, to an enduring, eternal, unchangeable glory, united and elected through his true passion, in the will of the Father and Jesus Christ our God, all health in Jesus Christ, and his holy grace.*

§ I. I HAVE heard of your name, much beloved in God, which ye have justly obtained, by faith and love in Jesus Christ our Saviour, being followers of God, and stirring up yourselves by the blood of Christ to finish, and perfect works answerable thereto. Ye heard that I came bound from Syria, for the common name and hope, trusting to obtain through your prayer, that I may fight with beasts at Rome, so that by martyrdom I may attain to be a disciple of Him, “who gave himself to God an offering and sacrifice for us.” I received therefore, in the name of God, your whole multitude in Onesimus, your bishop, whom I love with love unspeakable; whom I beseech you all to love in Jesus Christ, and to be followers together of Him. Blessed be God who hath given such a bishop to you who were worthy of him.

* All true and persevering believers are thus predestinated, and none else.

2. Concerning my fellow-servant Burrhus, according to the will of God your deacon, blessed in all things, I pray that he may remain to the honour of you and of your bishop. Crocus also, worthy of God and you, whom I have received as a pattern of your love, hath refreshed me in all things, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ shall refresh him, with Onesimus, and Burrhus, and Euplus, and Fronto, in whom I have seen the love of you all. And may I have joy of you always, if I am worthy! Ye ought therefore, in all manner of ways, to glorify Jesus Christ, who hath glorified us; that by an uniform obedience, ye may be "perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment, and may *all* speak the same thing;" and that, being subject to the bishop and the presbyters, ye may be sanctified in all things.

3. I do not command you, as being somebody; for though I am bound for his name, I am not yet made perfect in Jesus Christ. But I now begin to be a disciple, and I speak unto you as to any fellow-disciples. I ought indeed to have been stirred up by you, in faith, patience, and long-suffering. But love not suffering me to be silent, I first exhort you, that ye together fulfil the will of God. Jesus Christ, our hidden life, sheweth us the will of the Father; and by the will of Jesus Christ are the bishops, who are appointed unto the ends of the earth.

4. Ye ought, therefore, to fulfil the will of your bishop, as indeed ye do; to whom your venerable presbytery, worthy of God, are fitly joined as strings to a harp, by whose concord and harmony of love, Jesus Christ is sung. And be ye the quire, that so being consonant in love, and taking up the song of God, ye may in unity sing with one voice to the Father, through Jesus Christ. So shall he hear you, and acknowledge by your works, that ye are members of his Son. Wherefore it is profitable for you to live in unblamable unity, that ye may always partake of God.

5. Happy are ye who are so joined with your bishop, as the church with Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ with the Father, that all things may agree in unity. Let no man deceive himself. If a man be not within the altar, he is deprived of the bread of God. But, if the prayer of one or two have such force, how much more that of the bishop and the whole church? He, therefore, who goeth not to the public assembly is proud, and hath passed his own sentence; for "God resisteth the proud." Let us take heed, therefore, not to resist the bishop, that we may be found obedient to God.

6. For whomsoever the master of the house sendeth to be over his household, we ought to receive him, as him that sent him. It is therefore manifest, that we ought to look on the bishop as on the Lord himself. And indeed Onesimus himself greatly commendeth your good order in God: that ye all live according to the truth, and that no heresy dwelleth among you. For ye do not hearken to any one, more than to Jesus Christ, speaking to you in truth.

7. But some deceitfully bear the name of Christ, and yet do things unworthy of God. Flee from these as from wild beasts. For they are ravening dogs, that bite secretly. Guard yourselves against them; for they are hard to be cured. There is one physician, both fleshly and spiritual, made and not made, God incarnate, true life in death, both of Mary and of God, first passible, then impassible.

8. Wherefore let no man deceive you. Nor indeed are ye deceived, being wholly God's. For so long as there is no contention among you to trouble you, ye live according to God. My soul be for your's, for your church at Ephesus, whose name shall endure to all ages. They that are of the flesh cannot do the works of the Spirit, neither they that are of the Spirit the works of the flesh: as faith cannot do the works of unbelief, neither unbelief the works of faith. But even

those worldly works which ye do are spiritual ; for ye do all things in Jesus Christ.

9. But I have known some who came among you, having perverse doctrine, whom ye suffered not to sow in you, stopping your ears, that ye might receive nothing from them. For ye are living stones, prepared for the building, the temple of God the Father, and lifted up on high by the Holy Ghost, through the cross of Jesus Christ. Your faith is your support, and your charity the way that leadeth to God. Ye, therefore, with all your companions in the same journey, are spiritual temples, full of God, full of Christ, full of holiness ; adorned in all things with the commands of Jesus Christ : with whom I rejoyce that I have been counted worthy to converse by this epistle, and to joy with you, that having your eye fixed on that other life, ye love nothing but God only.

10. And pray without ceasing for other men. For there is hope of their repentance, that they may attain unto God. Suffer them, therefore, to be instructed by your works. Be ye meek at their anger, humble at their boastings ; return your prayers to their blasphemies ; to their error, your steadfastness in the faith. At their fierceness be ye gentle, not endeavouring to imitate them : (but let us be their brethren in mildness, endeavouring to imitate the Lord. For who was ever more unjustly treated than he ? who more outraged ? who more set at nought ?) that no plant of the devil may be found among you. But continue in all holiness and sobriety, through Christ Jesus, both in body and spirit.

11. The last times are come. Let us be ashamed. Let us fear the long-suffering of God, that it be not unto condemnation. Either let us fear the wrath to come, or love the present grace : one of the two. Only let us be found in Christ Jesus, unto true life. Without him, let nothing be worthy of you. For him I bear about these bonds, these spiritual jewels ; in which may I arise

through your prayer ; whereof let me always be a partaker, that I may be found in the lot of the Christians of Ephesus, who have always agreed with the apostles, through the power of Jesus Christ.

12. I know who I am, and to whom I write. I am a condemned man ; ye are they that have found mercy : I am in danger ; ye are established : ye are the passage of those who are slain into God : the fellow-disciples of the holy, the martyred, the worthily-happy Paul : at whose feet may I be found, when I shall have attained unto God ; who, in all his epistle, maketh mention of you in Christ Jesus.

13. Labour, therefore, to come more frequently together, to the praise and glory of God. For when ye frequently come together, the powers of satan are destroyed, and his mischief is dissolved by the concord of your faith. For nothing is better than peace, whereby all war is destroyed, both of things in heaven and things on earth.

14. Nothing of this is hid from you, if ye have perfect faith in Jesus Christ, and love, which are the beginning and the end of life : faith is the beginning, love the end : and both being joined in one, are of God. All other things pertaining to perfect holiness follow. For no man that hath faith sinneth ; and none that hath love hateth any man. The tree is made manifest by its fruits. So Christians shall be known by their deeds. For it is not the work of an outward profession ; but in the power of faith, if a man endure unto the end.

15. It is better to be silent and be a Christian, than to talk and not be a Christian. It is good to teach, if he that speaketh doeth also. There is one Master who spake and it was done. And even what things he did without speaking, were worthy of the Father. He that truly possesseth the word of Jesus, can hear even his silence, that he may be perfect, that he may work by the things which he speaketh, and may be known by the things he doeth in silence. There is nothing hid

from the Lord, but even our secret things are nigh unto him. Let us therefore do all things as having God dwelling in us, that we may be his temples, and he may be in us, and be our God. As also he is, and will manifest himself before our face : wherefore we justly love him.

16. Be not deceived, my brethren. Fornicators and adulterers "shall not inherit the kingdom of God." But if these corrupters suffered death, how much more he, who by evil doctrine corrupts the faith of God, for which Jesus Christ was crucified ? He that is thus defiled, shall depart into unquenchable fire ; and so also shall he that heareth him.

17. As our Lord received on his head the sweet smelling ointment, so he breathes incorruption upon his church. Be not ye anointed with the filthy doctrine of the prince of this world, lest he carry you away captive from the life which is set before you. Why are ye not all wise, who have received the knowledge of God, which is in Christ Jesus ? Why do we perish in our folly, not considering the gift, which is sent unto us of the Lord ?

18. Let my life be sacrificed for the cross, which is a stumbling-block to them that believe not, but to us salvation and life everlasting. Where is the wise man ? Where is the disputer ? Where is the boasting of them who are called men of understanding ? Our God, Jesus Christ, was, according to the dispensation of God, conceived in Mary, of the seed of David, by the Holy Ghost. He was born, he was baptized, that thereby he might sanctify water to the washing away of sin.

19. By his death all the power of magic was dissolved ; every band of wickedness vanished away ; ignorance was taken away, and the ancient kingdom destroyed ; God appearing in the form of a man, for the renewal of eternal life. Then began what is already perfected in the counsel of God. From thence all things

were moved; forasmuch as God hath determined to abolish death.

20. If it be the will of the Lord, I shall write unto you again more fully of these things. Especially if the Lord shall reveal unto me that ye all come together in one faith, obeying your bishop and your presbytery with entire affection, and breaking one and the same bread, which is the medicine of immortality, our antidote that we should not die, but live for ever in Christ Jesus.

21. My soul be for your's, and their's whom ye have sent, to the glory of God, even unto Smyrna, from whence I write to you; giving thanks unto the Lord, and loving Polycarp, even as I do you. Be mindful of me, as Jesus Christ of you. Pray for the church which is in Syria, from whence I am carried bound to Rome, the least of all the faithful who are there. Fare ye well in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ, our common hope!

ST. IGNATIUS'S

EPISTLE TO THE MAGNESIANS.

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the blessed church, by the grace of God the Father, in Jesus Christ our Saviour ; in whom I salute the church which is at Magnesia, near the Mæander, and wish it all joy in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ.

1. WHEN I heard of your well-ordered love in God, being full of joy, I desired much to speak unto you, in the faith of Jesus Christ. For having been thought worthy to obtain a most excellent name, in the bonds which I carry about, I salute the churches ; wishing in them a union both of the body and spirit of Jesus Christ, our eternal life ; as also of faith and charity, to which nothing is preferred : but especially of Jesus and the Father ; in whom, if we undergo all the injuries of the prince of this present world, and escape, we shall enjoy God.

2. Seeing then I have been judged worthy to see you, by Damas, your most excellent bishop, and by your presbyters, Bassus and Apollonius, and by my fellow-servant Sotio, the deacon, in whom I rejoice, I determined to write unto you.

3. It will become you not to despise your bishop on the account of his youth ; but to yield all reverence to him according to the power of God the Father, as also I perceive your holy presbyters do ; submitting to him, or rather not to him, but to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Bishop of us all.

4. Seeing all things have an end, there are these two set before us, death and life ; and every one shall depart into his proper place. For there are two sorts of men, the one of God, the other of the world ; and each of these have their proper inscription. The unbelievers are of this world ; but the faithful, through charity, have the character of God the Father, by Jesus Christ : by whom, if we are not ready to die, after the likeness of his passion, his life is not in us.

5. I exhort you that ye study to do all things in concord ; your bishop presiding in the place of God ; your presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles ; and your deacons, most dear to me, being entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ ; who was with the Father before all ages, and appeared in the end to us. See that ye all reverence one another : and let no one look upon his neighbour after the flesh ; but do ye all love each other in Jesus Christ. Let there be no division among you ; but be ye united to your bishop, and those who preside over you, to be your pattern and direction in the way to immortality.

6. As, therefore, the Lord did nothing without the Father, neither by himself, nor yet by his apostles ; so neither do ye do any thing without your bishop and presbyters ; neither endeavour to do any thing yourselves apart : but being come together in the same place, have one common prayer ; one supplication ; one mind ; one hope ; in charity and in joy undefiled. There is one Lord Jesus Christ, than whom nothing is better. Wherefore come ye all together as unto one temple of God ; as to one altar ; as to one Jesus Christ ; who proceeded from one Father, and exists in one, and is returned to one.

7 Be not deceived with strange doctrines, nor with old fables, which are unprofitable. For if we still continue to live according to the Jewish law, we do confess ourselves not to have received grace. For even the most holy prophets lived according to Christ Jesus. And

for this cause were they persecuted, being inspired by his grace to convince the unbelievers and disobedient that there is one God, who has manifested himself by Jesus Christ his Son ; who is the Eternal Word, who in all things pleased him that sent him.

8. Let us not then be insensible of his goodness ; for, should he have dealt with us according to our works, we had not now had a being. Wherefore, being his disciples, let us learn to live according to the rules of Christianity : for whosoever is called by any other name besides this, he is not of God. Lay aside, therefore, the old and evil leaven ; and be ye changed into the new leaven, which is Jesus Christ.

9. These things, my beloved, I write unto you ; not that I know of any among you that lie under error : but, as one of the least among you, I forewarn you that ye fall not into the snares of vain doctrine ; but that ye be fully instructed in the birth, and suffering, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our hope ; which was accomplished in the time of Pontius Pilate ; and from which, God forbid that any among you should be turned aside.

10. May I, therefore, have joy of you in all things, if I shall be worthy of it. For though I am bound, yet am I not worthy to be compared to one of you that are at liberty. I know that ye are not puffed up ; for ye have Jesus Christ in your hearts. And especially when I commend you, I know that ye are ashamed.

11. Study, therefore, to be confirmed in the doctrine of our Lord, and of his apostles ; that so, whatsoever ye do, ye may prosper both in body and spirit : in faith and love ; in the Son, and in the Father, and in the Holy Spirit ; in the beginning, and in the end. Be subject to your bishop, and to one another, as Jesus Christ to the Father, according to the flesh ; and the apostles both to Christ and to the Father, and to the Holy Ghost ; that so ye may be united both in body and spirit.

12. Knowing you to be full of God, I have the more briefly exhorted you. Be mindful of me in your prayers,

that I may attain unto God : and of the church which is in Syria, from which I am not worthy to be called. I stand in need of your joint prayers in God, and of your love, that the church which is in Syria may be thought worthy to be nourished by your church.

13. The Ephesians salute you, from which place I write unto you, (being present here to the glory of God, in like manner as you are,) who have in all things refreshed me, together with Polycarp, the bishop of the Smyrnæans. The rest of the churches, in the honour of Jesus Christ, salute you. Farewel, and be ye strengthened in the concord of God, enjoying his inseparable Spirit, which is Jesus Christ.

ST. IGNATIUS'S EPISTLE TO THE TRALLIANS.

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the holy church which is at Tralles in Asia ; beloved of God, the Father of Jesus Christ, elect, and worthy of God, having peace through the flesh, and blood, and passion of Jesus Christ our hope, in the resurrection which is by him ; which also I salute in the fulness of blessing, in the apostolical character, wishing all joy and happiness unto it.

1. I HAVE heard of your blameless and constant disposition through patience, which not only appears in your outward conversation, but is naturally rooted and grounded in you ; in like manner as Polybius your bishop has declared unto me, who came to me to Smyrna, by the will of God and Jesus Christ, and so rejoiced together with me in my bonds for Jesus Christ, that in effect I saw your whole church in him. Having therefore received the testimony of your good will towards me for God's sake, by him, I knew that ye were the followers of God.

2. For whereas ye are subject to your bishop as to Jesus Christ, ye live not after the manner of men, but according to Christ, who died for us ; that so believing in his death, ye might escape death. It is therefore necessary, that, without your bishop, you should do nothing : also be ye subject to your presbyters, as to the apostles of Jesus Christ, our hope ; in whom if we walk, we shall be found in him. The deacons also, as being

the ministers of the mysteries of Jesus Christ, must by all means please all. For they are not the ministers of meat and drink, but of the church of God. Wherefore they must avoid all offences, as they would do fire.

3. Concerning all which, I am persuaded that ye think after the very same manner: for I have received, and even now have with me, the pattern of your love in your bishop. Whose very look is instructive, and whose mildness powerful. But because I have a love towards you, I will not write sharply, lest, being a condemned man, I should seem to prescribe to you as an apostle.

4. I have great knowledge in God; but I refrain myself, lest I should perish in my boasting. For now I ought the more to fear, and not hearken to those that would puff me up. For they that speak to me in my praise chasten me. I indeed desire to suffer, but I cannot tell whether I am worthy so to do. And this desire, though to others it does not appear, yet to myself it is for that reason the more violent. I have therefore need of moderation, by which the prince of this world is destroyed.

5. Am I not able to write to you of heavenly things? But I fear lest I should harm you, who are yet but babes in Christ; and lest perchance, being not able to receive them, ye should be choked with them. For even I myself, although I am in bonds, yet am not therefore able to understand heavenly things: in these I am yet a learner. For many things are wanting to us, that we come not short of God.

6. I exhort you therefore, yet not I, but the love of Jesus Christ, that ye use none but Christian nourishment; abstaining from pasture which is of another kind, I mean heresy. For they that are hereticks, confound together the doctrine of Jesus Christ with their own poison, whilst they seem worthy of belief; as men give a deadly potion mixed with sweet wine, of which he who is ignorant does with the treacherous pleasure sweetly drink in his own death.

7 Not that I know there is any thing of this nature among you ; but I fore-arm you, as foreseeing the snares of the devil. Wherefore, putting on meekness, renew yourselves in faith and love. Let no man have any thing against his neighbour. Give no occasion to the gentiles, lest, by means of a few fooling men, the whole congregation of God be evil spoken of. For wo to that man through whose vanity his name is blasphemed by any.

8. Flee therefore these evil plants, which bring forth deadly fruit, of which if any one taste, he shall presently die. For these are not the plants of the Father ; seeing if they were, they would appear to be the branches of the cross, and their fruit would be incorruptible ; by which he invites you through his passion, who are members of him. For the head cannot be without its members, God having promised a union with himself.

9. I salute you from Smyrna, together with the delegates of the churches of God that are present with me, who have refreshed me in all things, both in the flesh and in the spirit. My bonds, which I carry about me for the sake of Christ, (beseeching him that I may attain unto God,) exhort you that you continue in concord among yourselves, and in prayer with one another. I beseech you that you hearken to me in love, that I may not by those things which I write, rise up in witness against you. Pray also for me, who stand in need of your prayers, that I may be worthy of the portion which I am about to obtain, that I be not found a reprobate.

10. The love of those who are at Smyrna and Ephesus salute you. Remember in your prayers the church of Syria, from which I am not worthy to be called, being one of the least of it. Fare ye well in Jesus Christ. Love every one his brother with an unfeigned heart. My soul be for yours, not only now, but when I shall have attained unto God ; for I am yet under danger. But the Father is faithful in Jesus Christ to fulfil both mine and your petition ; in whom may ye be found unblamable !

ST. IGNATIUS'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the church which has obtained mercy from the majesty of the most high Father, and his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ ; beloved, and illuminated through the will of him who willeth all things which are according to the love of Jesus Christ our God ; united both in flesh and spirit to all his commands, and filled with the grace of God ; all joy in Jesus Christ our God.

1. FORASMUCH as I have at last obtained, through my prayers to God, to see your face, which I much desired to do, I hope to salute you, if it shall be the will of God to grant me the end I long for. For the beginning is well-disposed, if I shall have grace, without hinderance, to receive what is appointed for me. But I fear your love, lest it do me an injury. For it is easy for you to do what you please ; but it will be hard for me to attain unto God, if you spare me.

2. But I would not that ye should please men, but God, whom also ye do please. For neither shall I ever hereafter have such an opportunity of going unto God ; nor will you, if ye shall now be silent, ever be entitled to a better work. For if you shall be silent in my behalf, I shall be made partaker of God. But if you shall love my body, I shall have my course to run again. Wherefore suffer me to be sacrificed unto God, now the altar is already prepared ; that when ye shall be gathered toge-

ther in love, ye may give thanks to the Father through Christ Jesus, that he has vouchsafed to bring a bishop of Syria unto you, being called from the east unto the west. For it is good for me to set from the world unto God, that I may rise again unto him.

3. Ye have never envied any one; ye have taught others. I would therefore that ye should now do those things yourselves, which in your instructions you have prescribed to others. Only pray for me, that God would give me strength, that I may not only say, but will; nor be only called a Christian, but be one. If I shall be found a Christian, I may be called one; and be thought faithful, when I shall no longer appear to the world.

4. I write to the churches, and signify to them all, that I am willing to die for God, unless you hinder me. I beseech you that you shew not an unseasonable goodwill towards me. Suffer me to be food to the wild beasts, by whom I shall attain unto God. For I am the wheat of God; and I shall be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ. Rather encourage the beasts, that they may become my sepulchre, and may leave nothing of my body; that, being dead, I may not be troublesome to any. Then shall I be truly the disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world shall not see so much as my body. Pray therefore unto Christ for me, that by these instruments I may be made the sacrifice of God. I do not, as Peter and Paul, command you. They were apostles, I am a condemned man: they were free, but I am a servant: but if I shall suffer, I shall then become the freeman of Jesus Christ, and shall rise free. And now, being in bonds, I learn not to desire any thing.

5. From Syria even unto Rome, I fight with beasts, both by sea and land; both night and day; being bound to ten leopards, to a band of soldiers; who though treated with all kindness, are the worse for it. But I am the more instructed by their injuries; yet am I not therefore justified. May I enjoy the wild beasts that are

prepared for me ; which also I wish may exercise all their fierceness upon me. Pardon me in this matter ; I know what is profitable for me. Now I begin to be a disciple of Christ ; nor shall any thing move me, whether visible or invisible, that I may attain to Christ Jesus. Let fire and the cross,—let the rage of wild beasts,—let breaking of bones, and tearing of members,—let the shattering in pieces of the whole body, and all the torments of the devil come upon me,—only let me enjoy Jesus Christ.

6. All the ends of the world, and the kingdoms of it, will profit me nothing : I would rather die for Jesus Christ, than rule to the utmost ends of the earth. Him I seek who died for us ; Him I desire, that rose again for us. This is the gain that is laid up for me. Pardon me, my brethren, ye shall not hinder me from living : suffer me to enter into pure light ; where, being come, I shall be indeed the servant of God. Permit me to imitate the passion of my God. If any one has Him within himself, let him consider what I desire, and let him have compassion on me, as knowing how I am straitened.

7 The prince of this world would fain carry me away, and corrupt my resolution towards my God. Let none of you help him : rather do ye join with me, that is with God. Do not speak with Jesus Christ, and yet covet the world. Let not any envy dwell with you : no, not though I myself when I shall be come unto you, should exhort you to it, yet do not ye hearken to me ; but rather believe what I now write unto you. For though I am alive at the writing this, yet my desire is to die. My love is crucified. I take no pleasure in the food of corruption, nor in the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, and the drink that I long for is his blood, which is incorruptible love.

8. I have no desire to live any longer after the manner of men ; neither shall I, if you consent. Be ye willing,

that ye yourselves also may be pleasing to God. I exhort you in few words ; I pray you believe me. Jesus Christ will shew you that I speak truly. My mouth is without deceit, and the Father hath truly spoken by it. Pray for me, that I may accomplish what I desire. I have not written to you after the flesh, but according to the will of God. If I suffer, ye have loved me : but if I shall be rejected, ye have hated me.

9. Remember in your prayers the church of Syria, which now enjoys God for its shepherd instead of me : let Jesus Christ only oversee it, and your love. I am ashamed to be reckoned one of them : for neither am I worthy, being the least among them, and as one born out of due season. But through mercy I have obtained to be somebody, if I shall get unto God. My spirit salutes you ; and the charity of the churches that have received me in the name of Jesus Christ ; for even they that were not near to me in the way, have gone before me to the next city to meet me.

10. These things I write to you from Smyrna, by the most worthy of the church of Ephesus. As for those which are come from Syria, and are gone before me to Rome, I suppose you are not ignorant of them. Ye shall therefore signify to them that I draw near, for they are all worthy both of God and of you ; whom it is fit that you refresh in all things. This have I written to you, the day before the ninth of the calends of September. Be strong unto the end, in the patience of Jesus Christ.

ST. IGNATIUS'S

EPISTLE TO THE PHILADELPHIANS.

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the church of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, which is at Philadelphia in Asia ; which hath obtained mercy, being fixed in the concord of God, and rejoicing evermore in the passion of our Lord, and being fulfilled in all mercy through his resurrection ; which church I salute in the blood of Jesus Christ, which is our eternal and undefiled joy.

1. AS becomes the children of the light and truth, flee divisions and false doctrines : but where your shepherd is, there do ye follow after. For there are many wolves who lead captive those that run in the course of God ; but in your concord they shall find no place.

2. My brethren, the love I have towards you makes me the more large ; and having a great joy in you, I endeavour to secure you against danger : or rather not I, but Jesus Christ ; in whom being bound I the more fear, as being yet only on the way to suffering. But your prayer to God shall make me perfect, that I may attain to that portion which by God's mercy is allotted to me.

3. If any do not speak concerning Christ Jesus, they are but as monuments and sepulchres of the dead, upon which are written only the names of men. Flee therefore the snares of the prince of this world ; lest at any time ye grow cold in your charity. But come all together in the same place, with an undivided heart. I bless my God that no one among you has whereof to boast that I

have been burthensome to him. And I wish to all among whom I have conversed, that it may not turn to a witness against them.

4. For although some would have deceived me according to the flesh ; yet the Spirit, being from God, is not deceived : for it knows both whence it comes, and whither it goes, and reproves the secrets of the heart. I cried whilst I was among you, attend to the bishop, and to the presbytery, and to deacons. Some supposed that I spake this as fore-seeing the division that should come among you. And he is my witness for whose sake I am in bonds that I knew nothing from any man. But the Spirit spake, saying on this wise: Do nothing without the bishop : keep your bodies as the temples of God : love unity ; flee divisions ; be the followers of Christ, as he was of his Father.

5. I trust in the grace of Jesus Christ, that he will free you from every bond. I exhort you that you do nothing out of strife, but according to the instruction of Christ. I have heard of some who say, Unless I find it written in the originals, I will not believe it to be written in the gospel. And when I said, it is written, they answered what lay before them in their corrupted copies. But to me Jesus Christ is instead of all the uncorrupted monuments in the world ; together with those undefiled monuments, his cross, and death, and resurrection, and the faith which is by him ; by which I desire, through your prayers, to be justified.

6. He is the door of the Father ; by which Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, entered in ; as well as the apostles and the church. And all these things tend to the unity which is of God. Howbeit, the gospel has somewhat in it far above all other dispensations ; namely, the appearance of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, his passion, and resurrection. For the beloved prophets referred to him : but the gospel is the perfection of incorruption. All therefore together are good, if ye believe with charity.

7. Now as concerning the church of Antioch which is in Syria, seeing through your prayers, and the bowels which ye have towards it in Jesus Christ, it is in peace; it will become you, as the church of God, to ordain some deacon to go to them thither as the ambassador of God; that he may rejoice with them when they meet together, and glorify God's name. Blessed be that man in Jesus Christ, who shall be found worthy of such a ministry.

8. As concerning Philo, the deacon of Cilicia, he still ministers unto me in the word of God; together with Rheus, who has followed me even from Syria, not regarding his life: these also bear witness unto you. And I myself give thanks to God for you, that ye receive them as the Lord shall receive you. But for those that dishonoured them, may they be forgiven through the grace of Jesus Christ. The love of the brethren that are at Troas salutes you: from whence also I write. May our Lord Jesus Christ honour them; in whom they hope, both in flesh, and soul, and spirit; in faith, in love, in unity. Farewell in Christ Jesus our common hope.

ST. IGNATIUS'S

EPISTLE TO THE SMYRNÆANS.

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the church of God the Father, and of the beloved Jesus Christ ; which God hath mercifully blessed with every good gift ; being filled with faith and love, so that it is wanting in no gift ; most worthy of God, and fruitful in saints ; to the church which is at Smyrna in Asia ; all joy through his immaculate Spirit, and the word of God.

1. I GLORIFY God, even Jesus Christ, who has given you such wisdom. For I have observed that you are settled in an immovable faith, as if you were nailed to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, both in the flesh and in the Spirit ; and are confirmed in love through the blood of Christ ; being fully persuaded of those things which relate unto our Lord : who truly was of the race of David according to the flesh, but the Son of God according to the will and power of God.

2. Now these things, beloved, I put you in mind of, not questioning but that you yourselves also believe that they are so. But I arm you before-hand against certain beasts in the shape of men, whom you must not receive ; only pray for them, that if it be the will of God they may repent ; but of this our Lord Jesus Christ has the power, who is our true life ; for whom I have given up myself to death, to the fire, to the sword, to wild beasts ; and the nearer I am to the sword, the nearer am I to God : when I shall come among the wild beasts, I shall come

to God. Only in the name of Jesus Christ, I undergo all, to suffer together with him; he who was made a perfect man strengthening me.

3. Let no man deceive himself; both the things which are in heaven, and the glorious angels, and princes, whether visible or invisible, if they believe not in the blood of Christ, it is to them to condemnation. "He that is able to receive this, let him receive it." Let no man's place or state in the world puff him up: that which is worth all is faith and love, to which nothing is to be preferred. But consider those who are of a different opinion from us, as to what concerns the grace of Jesus Christ which is come unto us, how contrary they are to the design of God. They have no regard to charity; no care of the widow, the fatherless, and the oppressed; of the bond or free, of the hungry or thirsty.

4. See that ye all follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ, the Father; and the presbytery, as the apostles. And reverence the deacons, as the command of God. Let no man do any thing of what belongs to the church separately from the bishop. Let that eucharist be looked upon as well as established, which is either offered by the bishop, or by him to whom the bishop has given his consent. Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the people also be; as where Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic church. It is not lawful without the bishop, either to baptize, or to celebrate the holy communion: but whatsoever he shall approve of, that is also pleasing unto God.

5. Ye have done well in that ye have received Philo, and Rheus, who followed me for the word of God, the deacons of Christ our God. Who also give thanks unto the Lord for you, forasmuch as ye have refreshed them in all things. Nor shall any thing that you have done, be lost to you. My soul be for yours, and my bonds which ye have not despised, nor been ashamed of. Neither shall Jesus Christ, our perfect faith, be ashamed of you.

6. Your prayer is come to the church of Antioch which is in Syria. From whence, being sent bound with chains, I salute the churches ; being not worthy to be called from thence, as being the least among them. Nevertheless, by the will of God, I have been thought worthy of this honour ; not for that I think I have deserved it, but by the grace of God, which I wish may be perfectly given unto me, that through your prayers I may attain unto God. And therefore that your work may be fully accomplished, it will be for the honour of God, that your church appoint some delegate, who being come as far as Syria, may rejoice together with them that are in peace. For in as much as ye are perfect yourselves, you ought to think those things that are perfect. And when you are desirous to do well, God is ready to enable you thereunto.

7. The love of the brethren that are at Troas salute you ; from whence I write to you by Burrhus, whom ye sent with me, who has in all things refreshed me. And I would to God that all would imitate him, as being a pattern of the ministry of God. May his grace fully reward him. I salute your very worthy bishop, and your venerable presbytery ; and your deacons, my fellow-servants ; and all of you in general, and every one in particular, in the name of Jesus Christ, and in his flesh and blood ; in his passion and resurrection, both fleshly and spiritually ; and in the unity of God with you. Grace be with you, and mercy, and peace, and patience, for evermore.

ST. IGNATIUS'S

EPISTLE TO ST. POLYCARP

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to Polycarp, bishop of the church which is at Smyrna ; their overseer, but rather himself over-look'd by God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ ; all happiness.

1. HAVING known that thy mind towards God, is fixed upon an immovable rock, I exceedingly give thanks that I have been thought worthy to behold thy face, in which may I always rejoice in God. Wherefore I beseech thee, by the grace of God with which thou art clothed, to press forward in thy course, and to exhort all that they may be saved. Maintain thy place, with all care both of flesh and spirit : make it thy endeavour to preserve unity, than which nothing is better. Bear with all men, even as the Lord with thee. Support all in love, as also thou dost. Pray without ceasing ; ask more understanding than thou already hast. Be watchful, having thy spirit always awake. Speak to every one according as God shall enable thee. Bear the infirmities of all, as a perfect combatant ; where the labour is great, the gain is the more.

2. If thou shalt love the good disciples, what thank is it ? But rather do thou subject to thee those that are mischievous, in meekness. Every wound is not healed with the same plaister : if the disease be vehement, mollify it with soft remedies : be in all things, “ wise as a serpent, but harmless as a dove.” As for those who are not seen, pray to God that he would reveal them

unto thee, that so thou mayest be wanting in nothing, but mayest abound in every gift. The times demand thee, as the pilots in the winds ; and he that is tossed in a tempest, the haven where he would be ; that thou mayest attain unto God. Be sober, as the combatant of God. The crown proposed to thee is eternal life ; concerning which thou art also fully persuaded. I will be thy surety in all things, and my bonds, which thou hast loved.

3. Let not those that teach other doctrines, disturb thee. Stand firm as a beaten anvil. It is the part of a brave combatant to be torn in pieces, and yet to conquer. We ought to endure all things for God's sake, that he may bear with us. Be every day better than other : consider the times ; and expect him, who is above all time, eternal, invisible, though for our sake made visible : impalpable, and impassible, yet for us subjected to sufferings ; enduring all manner of ways for our salvation.

4. Let not the widows be neglected : be thou, after God, their guardian. Let nothing be done without thy knowledge and consent ; neither do thou any thing but according to the will of God ; as also thou dost, with all constancy. Let your assemblies be more frequent : inquire into all by name. Overlook not the men and maid servants ; neither let them be puffed up ; but rather let them be the more subject, to the glory of God, that they may obtain from him a better liberty.

5. Flee evil arts ; or rather, make not any mention of them. Say to my sisters, that they love the Lord ; and be satisfied with their own husbands, both in the flesh and spirit. In like manner, exhort my brethren, in the name of Jesus Christ, that they love their wives, even as the Lord the church. If any man can remain in a virgin state, to the honour of Christ, let him remain, without boasting ; but if he boast, he is undone. It becomes all such as marry, whether men or women, to come together with the consent of the bishop, that so their marriage /

may be according to godliness, and not in lust. Let all things be done to the honour of God.*

6. Hearken unto the bishop, that God also may hearken unto you. Labour with one another; contend together, run together, suffer together; sleep together, and rise together; as the stewards, and assessors, and ministers of God. Please him under whom ye war; and from whom ye receive your wages. Let none of you be found a deserter; but let your baptism remain, as your arms; your faith, as your helmet; your love, as your spear; your patience, as your whole armour. Let your works be your depositum, that so you may receive a suitable reward. Be long-suffering towards each other in meekness, as God is towards you. Let me have joy of you in all things.

7 Now forasmuch as the church of Antioch in Syria, is in peace through your prayers; I have been the more comforted and without care in God; if so be that by suffering I shall attain unto God; that through your prayers I may be found a disciple of Christ. It will be fit, O most worthy Polycarp, to choose one who is patient of labour, that he may be the messenger of God; and that going unto Syria, he may glorify your incessant love to the praise of Christ. A Christian has not the power of himself, but must be always at leisure for God's service. Now this work is both God's and your's; when ye shall have perfected it. For I trust through the grace of God ye are ready to every good work that is fitting for you in the Lord.

8. I have not been able to write to all the churches, because I must suddenly sail from Troas to Neapolis; (for so is the command of those to whose pleasure I am subject;) do you write to the churches that are near you that they also may do in like manner. I salute all by name; particularly the wife of Epitropus, with all her



* He speaks to the whole church of Smyrna in what follows.

house, and children. I salute Attalus my well-beloved. I salute him, who shall be thought worthy to be sent by you into Syria. Let grace be ever with him, and with Polycarp who sends him. I wish you all happiness in our God, Jesus Christ; in whom continue in the unity and protection of God. Farewel in the Lord.

THE
Martyrdom
OF
ST. IGNATIUS.

1. WHEN Trajan came to the Roman empire, Ignatius, the disciple of St. John the apostle, a man in all things like unto the apostles, governed the church of Antioch with all care. Who, being scarcely able to escape the storms of persecution under Domitian, as a good governor, by the helm of prayer and fasting, by the constancy of his doctrine and spiritual labour, withstood the raging floods; fearing lest they should sink those who either wanted courage, or were not well grounded in the faith.

2. Wherefore this being at present somewhat abated, he rejoiced greatly at the tranquillity of his church; yet was troubled as to himself, that he had not attained to the pitch of a perfect disciple. For he thought that the confession which is made by martyrdom would bring him to a yet more intimate union with the Lord. Wherefore continuing a few years longer with the church, and as a divine lamp, illuminating the hearts of the faithful by the exposition of the Holy Scriptures, he attained to what he had desired.

3. For Trajan, in the nineteenth year of his empire, being lifted up with his victory over the Scythians and Dacians, and many other nations,—and thinking that the conquest of the Christians was yet wanting to his absolute and universal dominion,—obliged all such as lived religiously either to sacrifice or to die. Wherefore our brave soldier of Christ, being in fear for the church of Antioch, was voluntarily brought before Trajan, who was at that time there, on his way to Armenia, and the Parthians, against whom he was hastening.

4. Being come into the presence of the emperor Trajan, the emperor asked him, “What a wicked wretch art thou, thus to transgress our commands, and to persuade others also to do likewise, to their destruction?” Ignatius answered; “No one ought to call Theophorus wicked; forasmuch as all evil spirits are departed far from the servants of God. But if because I am a trouble to those wicked spirits, thou callest me wicked, I confess the charge; for having within me Christ, the heavenly King, I dissolve all the snares of the devils.”

5. *Trajan* replied; “And who is Theophorus?”—*Ignatius*. He who hath Christ in his breast.—*Trajan*. And do not we seem to thee to have the gods within us, who fight for us against our enemies?—*Ignatius*. Ye err, in that ye call the evil spirits of the heathens, gods. For there is but one God, who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that are in them; and one Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son, whose kingdom may I enjoy.

6. *Trajan*. His kingdom, you say, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate.—*Ignatius*. His who crucified my sin, with the inventor of it; and has put all the deceit and malice of the devil under the feet of those who carry him in their heart.—*Trajan*. Dost thou then carry Him who was crucified within thee?—*Ignatius*. I do: for it is written, “I will dwell in them, and walk in them.” Then Trajan pronounced this sentence against him; *Forasmuch as Ignatius hath confessed that he carries within himself Him that was crucified, we command that he be carried bound to the great Rome, there to*

be thrown to the beasts, for the entertainment of the people.

7. When the holy martyr heard this, he cried out with joy, "I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast vouchsafed to honour me with a perfect love towards thee; and hast made me to be put in iron bonds with thy apostle Paul." Having said this, he with joy put on his bonds; and having first prayed for the church, and commended it with tears unto the Lord, he was hurried away, like a choice ram, the leader of a good flock, by the brutish soldiers, in order to his being carried to Rome, there to be devoured by the blood-thirsty beasts.

8. Wherefore with much readiness, out of his desire to suffer, he left Antioch, and came to Seleucia; from whence he was to sail. And after a great deal of toil, being come to Smyrna, he left the ship with great gladness, and hastened to see the holy Polycarp, his fellow-scholar, who was bishop there: for they had both of them been the disciples of St. John.

9. Being brought to him, he entreated first the whole church (for the churches of Asia attended this holy man by their bishops, and priests, and deacons, if by any means they might receive some part of his spiritual gift,) but more particularly Polycarp, to contend with God in his behalf; that, being suddenly taken by the beasts from the world, he might appear before the face of Christ. And to return a recompence to the churches, he sent letters of thanks to them, which distilled spiritual grace, with prayer and exhortation.

10. And having strengthened such of the brethren at Rome as were against his martyrdom by his epistle, setting sail from Smyrna, he came to Troas; from whence, being brought to Neapolis, he passed by Philippi, through Macedonia, and that part of Epirus which is next to Epidamnus. Having found a ship in one of the sea-ports, he sailed; and passing by several islands and cities, at length saw Puteoli: which being shewed to the holy man, he hastened to go forth, being desirous to

walk from thence, in the way that Paul the apostle had gone. But a violent wind arising, and driving on the ship, would not suffer him so to do : wherefore, commending the love of the brethren in that place, he sailed forward.

11. And the wind continuing favourable to us, in one day and a night we indeed were unwillingly hurried on, as sorrowing to think of being separated from the holy martyr : but to him it happened according to his wish, that he might go the sooner out of the world, and attain unto the Lord, whom he loved. Wherefore sailing into the Roman port, and those impure sports being almost at an end, the soldiers began to be offended at our slowness ; but the bishop with great joy complied with their hastiness.

12. Being therefore soon forced away from the port, we met the brethren, who were full of fear and joy ; for they rejoiced in that God had vouchsafed them the company of Theophorus ; but were afraid when they considered that such an one was brought thither to die. Some of these he commanded to hold their peace, who were the most zealous for his safety, and said, That “ they would appease the people, that they should not desire the destruction of the just ; ” who presently knowing this by the Spirit, desired them that they would shew a true love to him ; persuading them not to envy him who was hastening unto the Lord. And so, all the brethren kneeling down, he prayed to the Son of God in behalf of the churches, that he would put a stop to the persecution, and continue the love of the brethren towards each other ; which being done, he was with all haste led into the amphitheatre, and speedily thrown in, the end of the spectacles being at hand. Thus was he delivered to the cruel beasts, that so the desire of the holy martyr might be accomplished ; namely, That he might not be burdensome to any of the brethren, by the gathering of his relics ; for only the greater and harder of his bones remained, which were carried to Antioch.

13. Thus this valiant martyr of Christ trod under foot the devil, and perfected the course he had desired, in Christ Jesus our Lord ; by whom, and with whom, all glory and power be to the Father, with the blessed Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen !

AN
EXTRACT
 FROM THE
EPISTLE OF THE CHURCH OF SMYRNA,
 CONCERNING
The Martyrdom
 OF
ST. POLYCARP.

The church of God which is at Smyrna, to the church of God which is at Philadelphia, and to all the other assemblies of the holy catholic church in every place ; mercy, peace, and love, from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied.

§ 1. WE have written to you, brethren, of the other martyrs, but especially the blessed Polycarp, who by his sufferings put an end to the persecution.

2. Germanicus strengthened those that feared by his patience ; and fought gloriously with the beasts. For when the Proconsul would have persuaded him to consider his age, and spare himself, he pulled the wild beast

to him, and provoked him, being desirous quickly to be delivered from a wicked and unjust world. Upon this, the whole multitude cried out, "Away with the atheists; let Polycarp be looked out."

3. Then one named Quintus, seeing the beasts, was afraid. This was he who forced himself and some others, to present themselves of their own accord to the trial. Him the Proconsul persuaded to swear and sacrifice. For which cause, brethren, we do not commend those who offer themselves to persecution; seeing the gospel teaches no such thing.

4. Polycarp, when he first heard that he was called for, was not at all concerned; but resolved to tarry in the city. Nevertheless, he was at last persuaded to go out of it. He departed therefore into a village, not far distant, and there tarried with a few; doing nothing, night and day, but praying for all men, and for the churches that were in the world. And as he was praying, he saw a vision three days before he was taken; and behold, the pillow under his head seemed to him on fire. Whereupon, turning to those that were with him, he said prophetically, *I must be burnt alive.*

5. When those who were to take him drew near, he departed into another village; and immediately they came thither. And when they found him not, they seized upon two young men; one of which, being tormented, confessed. So the officer, Herod by name, hastened, that Polycarp might receive his portion, being made partaker of Christ.

6. The sergeants, therefore, and horsemen taking the young lad with them, departed about supper-time, being Friday; about the close of the evening they found him, lying down in a little upper room. When he heard that they were come to the house, he went down and spake to them. Then presently he ordered that there should be somewhat got ready for them, that they might eat and drink: desiring them withal, that they would give him one hour's liberty, to pray without disturbance.

And when they had permitted him, he stood praying, being full of the grace of God, so that he ceased not for two whole hours ; insomuch that many of the soldiers began to repent they were come out.

7 As soon as he had done his prayer, in which he remembered all men, whether little or great, honourable or obscure, that had at any time been acquainted with him, and with them the whole catholic church ; the time being come to depart, the guards set him upon an ass, and brought him into the city, being the day of the great Sabbath. Herod, with his father Nicetes, met him in a chariot : and having taken him up to them, and set him in the chariot, they began to persuade him, saying, “ What harm is there in it, to say, Lord Cæsar, and sacrifice, and so be safe ? ” But Polycarp, at first, answered them not : whereupon they, continuing to urge him, he said, “ I shall not do what you would persuade me to.” So being out of all hope of prevailing, they first spake bitter words, and then with violence threw him out of the chariot, insomuch that he hurt his thigh with the fall. But he not turning back, went on readily with all diligence, as if he had received no harm ; and so was brought to the lists, where there was so great a tumult, that no body could be heard.

8. As he was going into the lists, there came a voice from heaven to him, *Be strong, Polycarp, and quit thyself like a man.* No one saw who it was that spake to him ; but the voice many of our brethren heard. As he was brought in, there was a great disturbance when they heard that Polycarp was taken. And when he came near, the Proconsul asked him, whether he was Polycarp ? Who confessing that he was, he persuaded him to deny the faith, saying, “ Reverence thy old age, swear by Cæsar’s fortune : repent, and say, take away the wicked.” Then Polycarp, looking with a stern countenance upon the whole multitude, that was gathered together in the lists, and shaking his hand at them, looked unto heaven, and groaning, said, “ Take away the

wicked." But the Proconsul insisting, and saying, "Swear, and I will set thee at liberty; reproach Christ;" Polycarp replied, "Eighty and six years have I now served Christ, and he has never done me the least wrong: how then can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?"

9. When the Proconsul still insisted, saying, "Swear by the genius of Cæsar;" he answered, "Seeing thou art so urgent with me that I should swear, as thou callest it, by the genius of Cæsar, seeming as if thou didst not know what I am; hear me freely professing that I am a Christian. If thou desirest an account what Christianity is, appoint a day, and thou shalt hear it." The Proconsul replied, "Persuade the people." Polycarp answered, "To thee have I offered to give a reason of my faith: for so are we taught to pay all due honour, (such only excepted as would be hurtful to ourselves,) to the powers and authorities which are ordained of God. But for the people, I esteem them not worthy, that I should give an account of my faith to them."

10. The Proconsul continued, and said, "I have wild beasts ready; to those I will cast thee, except thou repent." He answered, "Call for them then: for we Christians are fixed in our minds not to change from good to evil." The Proconsul added, "Seeing thou despisest the wild beasts, I will cause thee to be devoured by fire, unless thou shalt repent." Polycarp answered, "Thou threatenest me with fire, which burns for an hour; but knowest not the fire of that eternal punishment, which is reserved for the ungodly. But why tarriest thou? Bring forth what thou wilt."

11. The Proconsul then sent his cryer into the middle of the lists, to proclaim three times, *Polycarp hath confessed himself to be a Christian*. Which being done, the whole multitude, both of the Gentiles and the Jews, being full of fury, cried out with a loud voice, "This is the doctor of Asia, the father of the Christians, and the overthrower of our gods: he that hath taught so many not to sacri-

rice, nor pay any worship to the gods." And saying this, they cried out with one consent, that *Polycarp should be burnt alive.*

12. This was done with greater speed than it was spoke; the whole multitude instantly gathering together wood and fagots, out of the shops and baths; the Jews especially, with all readiness assisting. When the fuel was ready, Polycarp laid aside all his upper garments. This being done, they presently put about him such things as were necessary to prepare the fire. But when they would have nailed him to the stake, he said, "Let me alone as I am: for He who has given me strength to endure the fire, will also enable me, without your securing me by nails, to stand without moving in the pile.

13. Wherefore they did not nail him, but only tied him to it. But he having put his hands behind him, and being bound as a ram chosen out of a great flock, for a burnt-sacrifice, acceptable unto God, looked up to heaven, and said, "O Lord God Almighty, the Father of thy well-beloved and blessed Son, Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of thee; the God of angels and powers, and of every creature, and especially of the whole race of just men who live in thy presence! I give thee hearty thanks, that thou hast vouchsafed to bring me to this day, and to this hour; that I should have a part in the number of thy martyrs, in the cup of thy Christ, to the resurrection of eternal life, both of soul and body, in the incorruption of the Holy Ghost: among which may I be accepted this day before thee, as an acceptable sacrifice. For this, and for all things else, I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee, by the eternal and heavenly High-Priest, Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son; with whom to thee, and the Holy Ghost, be glory, both now, and to all succeeding ages. Amen."

14. He had no sooner pronounced aloud, Amen, and finished his prayer, but they who were appointed to be his executioners, lighted the fire. And when the flame began to blaze to a very great heighth, behold the flame,

making a kind of arch, like the sail of a ship filled with the wind, encompassed, as in a circle, the body of the holy martyr.

15. Those wicked men, seeing that his body was not consumed by the fire, commanded the executioner to go near to him, and strike his dagger in him ; which was accordingly done. The centurion then put his body into the midst of the fire, and so consumed it.

16. Such was the passion of the blessed Polycarp ; who is yet had in memory of all men : insomuch that he is spoken of by the very Gentiles themselves, as having been not only an eminent teacher, but a glorious martyr. Whose death all desire to imitate, as having been every way conformable to the gospel of Christ. For having by patience overcome the unjust governor, and so received the crown of immortality, he now, together with the apostles, and all other righteous men, who have gone before, with great triumph, glorifies God, even the Father, and blesses our Lord, the Governor both of our souls and bodies, and Shepherd of the catholic church, which is over all the earth.

17. We wish you, brethren, all happiness, by living according to the rule of the gospel of Jesus Christ ; with whom, glory be to the Father and the Holy Spirit, for the salvation of his chosen saints. After whose example the blessed Polycarp suffered ; at whose feet may we be found in the kingdom of Jesus Christ !

OF
MACARIUS.

1. MACARIUS was born in the province of Thebais, about the year of our Lord 301, when Dioclesian and Maximian were in possession of the empire.

2. Whoever it was that first seasoned this holy vessel of mercy with the heavenly odour of Divine grace, it seems plain from the following homilies, that he was educated like Timothy, in the Holy Scriptures, and that his acquaintance with those Sacred Writings was not merely literal or speculative, but that it was a true and practical knowledge, able to save his soul; for whatever things he spoke or wrote came from himself, and were (as we are informed of the writings of the late Dr. Henry More,) purely the genuine emanations of his own mind, a description of his own heart and soul.

3. So remarkable above his years was the progress he had made by that time he was thirty, that he was called, out of mere respect, *the young old man*. At forty years of age was he honoured from above with the gifts of healing, and by the church on earth with the degree of presbyter.

4. Nor were the favours of heaven, or the honours of the church bestowed in vain upon him: the success of

his ministration, as presbyter, immediately appeared, for about this time, viz. A. D. 341, in the reign of Valens, the emperor, a storm of persecution was raised by Lucius, the Arian, which raged to that degree, as even to exceed the persecutions of the pagans. It began with the most infamous assaults upon virgins, and persons of note and character in the church for chastity. It proceeded to the banishment of citizens, to racks, slaughters, and flames; by means of which Christians were destroyed without number. And to drop other particulars, at his command our holy Egyptian, together with others of the holy fathers, were banished and transported into a certain island, where they soon converted all the inhabitants from their pagan superstition, to the faith and worship of the true God.

5. His settled abode was generally after this (as indeed it was before,) in Scetis. Here did he preside, like another Samuel, over the colleges and schools of the prophets; superintending not merely the common or inferior monks, but the very heads or governors amongst them. His first settling here was at the age of thirty, where, off and on, he spent sixty years; during which time he thoroughly acquainted himself with all the exercises of religious solitude.

6. Having thus served his Master faithfully for ninety years, he was received up into the reward of his labours. He died on the 15th of January, A. D. 391. Thus lived, and thus died, the great Macarius of Egypt, if he can so properly be said to die, whose very life in the flesh was a constant death to this present evil world; and consequently whose release from the corruptible body that presseth down the soul, must evidently be an advantage to that angelic life, which he so early had begun

to experience in this earthly tabernacle. But, notwithstanding this, his death, his name will live, and God be glorified, on his account, both in heaven and earth.

7 There is visibly to be distinguished in our author, a rich, sublime, and noble vein of piety, but that perfectly serious, sober, and unaffected; natural and lively, but sedate and deep withal. Whatever he insists upon is essential, is durable, is necessary. What he continually labours to cultivate in himself and others is, the real life of God in the heart and soul, that kingdom of God, which consists in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. He is ever quickening and stirring up his audience, endeavouring to kindle in them a steady zeal, an earnest desire, and inflamed ambition, to recover that Divine image we were made in; to be made conformable to Christ our Head; to be daily sensible more and more of our living union with him as such; and discovering it, as occasion requires, in all the genuine fruits of an holy life and conversation, in such a victorious faith as overcomes the world, and working by love, is ever fulfilling the whole law of God. He seems indeed never to be easy, but either in the height, or breadth, or length of Divine love, or at least in the depths of humility.

AN
EXTRACT
FROM
THE HOMILIES
OF
MACARIUS.

HOMILY I.

An allegorical explication of the vision described in the prophet Ezekiel.

1. THE blessed prophet Ezekiel having seen a vision from God, full of glory, made a relation of it, and committed it to writing ; a vision full of mysteries, surpassing utterance. For he saw in a plain the chariot of the cherubim, four spiritual living creatures ; each of which had four distinct faces : one the face of a lion, another that of an eagle, the third of an ox, and the last the face of a man. To every face there were wings, so that there were no hinder parts to any of them, nor any thing behind at all. Their necks were full of eyes, and their bellies in like manner were thick set with eyes ; neither was there any one part about them at all free from eyes. There were also wheels to every face, *a wheel within a wheel*. And the Spirit was in the wheels. And he saw as it were the likeness of a man, and under his feet as it were a work of sapphire. And the chariot bore the

cherubim, and the living creatures the Lord that sat upon them. Whithersoever they would go, it was straight forward. And he saw under each cherub as it were the hand of a man supporting and carrying,

2. And this that the prophet saw, was true and certain. But the thing it signified, or shadowed forth beforehand, was a matter mysterious and divine, that very mystery which had been hid from ages and generations, but was made manifest at the appearing of Christ. For the mystery which he saw, was that of the human soul as she is hereafter to receive her Lord, and become herself the very throne of his glory. For the soul that is thought worthy to partake of the spirit of his light, and is irradiated by the beauty of his ineffable glory, (he having by that spirit prepared her for his own seat and habitation) becomes all light, all face, and all eye : neither is there any one part in her but what is full of these spiritual eyes of light ; that is, there is no part in her darkened : but she is all entirely wrought into light and spirit, and is all over full of eyes, having no hinder part, or any thing behind ; but appears to be altogether face, by reason of the inexpressible beauty of the glory of the light of Christ, that rides and sits upon her.

3. And as the sun is altogether of one likeness, without any hinder part or defect, but is all throughout bedecked with light, without the least variety of part ; or as the light is all over of an exact likeness with itself, and admits of no distinction of first or last : so the soul that is thoroughly illuminated by the inexpressible beauty of the glory of the light of the face of Christ, and partakes of the Holy Spirit in perfection, and is thought worthy to become the mansion and the throne of God, becomes all eye, all light, and all face, and all glory, and all spirit ; Christ himself who governs and drives, and carries and supports her, thus preparing her, and thus gracing and adorning her with spiritual beauty. For “the hand (saith the text,) of a man was under the cherub ;” because he it is that rideth in her, and directs her way.

4. But another way, it is applied to the church of the saints in heaven. And as it is said that the living creatures were *exceeding high, full of eyes*, and that it was impossible for any one to comprehend the number of the eyes, or the height ; and as to behold and wonder at the stars in heaven was given to all men, *but to know or comprehend the number of them was not given* : so may I affirm also of the church of the saints in heaven, that to enter in and enjoy it, is granted to all that will but strive ; but to know and comprehend the exact number there, is reserved for God alone.

5. The rider therefore is carried about in this chariot, and throne of living creatures that are all eye, or in other words, by every particular soul that is once become his throne or seat, and is perfect eye and light, he having placed himself thereon, and governing it with the reins of the Spirit, and directing her in the way, as he sees best. For as the spiritual living creatures went not whither they were willing of themselves, but at the discretion and pleasure of him that sat upon them, and directed the way : thus also does the same person hold the reins, drive and conduct the soul by his Spirit. Thus do they take their course even in heaven, not when they please, or as they are inclined themselves. And when this body is thrown off, he still manages the reins, and orders every motion of the soul in wisdom. And again, whenever he pleaseth, he cometh into the body, and into the thoughts of the heart ; and when he pleases, into the ends of the earth, and discovers to her mysteries without a veil. O the noble and good, and only true Charioteer ! Thus too shall our very bodies be honoured in the resurrection, the soul being thus glorified, and mixing with the Spirit in this present life. But the soul which still lives in the darkness of sin, belongs not to the body of light ; but is indeed the body of darkness, and still sides with the faction of darkness. They only that have the life of light, that is, the power of the Holy Ghost, belong to the light. The soul in itself is a creature intellectual,

and beautiful, and great, and wonderful, and a noble likeness and image of God. And it was through the transgression, that the affections of darkness gained entrance into it.

6. It remains then that whatsoever the soul mixes with, the same is it united to in every motion of the will. If therefore it has the light of God within itself, and liveth therein, it belongeth to the light of rest; or if it has the darkness of sin, it inherits condemnation. But the soul that is desirous to live with God, in rest and light eternal, ought to come to Christ the true high-priest, to be slain and become dead to the world, and to its former life of darkness, and be removed to another life altogether divine.

7. As a person that is dead in a city, neither hears the voice of them that inhabit it, nor any sounds whatever; but is disposed of in some other place, where no voices and cries of that city come; so the soul, after it is once slain and dead in that city of corrupt affections, where it lives at present and converses, hears no more within itself, the clamour and bustle of the spirits of darkness; but is translated into the city of goodness and peace, into the city of the light of the Godhead, and there it lives and hears, and there it is wholly taken up, and talks, and reasons, and there does it work the works that are spiritual, and worthy of God.

8. Let us therefore pray that we may be slain by his power, and become dead to the world of wickedness, of darkness, and receive the life of the heavenly Spirit, and be translated from the evil state of darkness into the light of Christ, and be refreshed in life to all ages.

9. Sin detains and stops and hinders the soul, that it should not come near to God and carry off the victory. But where the Lord himself takes the reins of the soul into his hands, that person never fails of victory, because he skilfully governs and directs the chariot of the soul, into an heavenly and divine sense at all times. For neither doth he war against sin, but as he hath the

supreme power in himself, he works himself the victory.

10. The cherubim then are driven not whither they are inclined of themselves to go, but the way which he that holds the reins directs. Which way soever he is willing, there it is they go, and he carries them. "For there was (saith the text) under them, the hand of a man." The holy souls are led and directed in their way, by the Spirit of Christ, guiding them where he pleases; sometimes into heavenly contemplation, sometimes into temporal things; where his pleasure is, there do they wait upon him,

11. Do thou, therefore, who hearest these things, look well to thyself, whether thou art possessed of them in thy own soul. And if thou art not, thou oughtest to have continual grief and sorrow of heart, and anxiety, as one separated hitherto by death, from the kingdom. And as one that is wounded, cry to the Lord without intermission, and ask in faith, that he would make thee also worthy of this true life.

12. For as the body is not supplied from its own nature with meat, drink, and cloathing, but has the universal supply of life from without, being quite naked of itself; so the soul cannot attain to everlasting life, from its own nature, but from the Divine nature; from his Spirit, from his light it is maintained in spiritual meat and drink, and the heavenly clothing, which are the life of the soul. For the Divine nature contains in it the very bread of life, and *the living water*, and the *wine which cheereth the heart of man*, and *the oil of gladness*, and the whole variety of the food of the heavenly Spirit, and the heavenly robes of light, which are of God. In these doth the eternal life of the soul consist. Wo to the body, when it shall stand upon the bottom of its own nature, because it corrupts and dies! And wo to the soul, if it shall presume upon the strength of its nature, and trust to nothing, but its own works, not having the fellowship of the Divine Spirit, because it dies of course,

not being thought worthy of the eternal life of the God-head.

13. If therefore thou art become the throne of God, and the heavenly Charioteer hath seated himself upon thee, and thy soul is become all over a spiritual eye; and thou art nourished with that food of the Spirit, and hast been made to drink of the living water, and art clothed with the garments of light; lo, then thou livest indeed, even the life which is truly eternal; thy soul being at rest with the Lord; lo thou art in actual possession, and hast received these things from the Lord in truth, that thou mightest live the true life. But if thou art conscious to thyself of nothing of all this, lament and grieve, and mourn, because as yet thou hast not any share of the spiritual and eternal riches, neither hast received the true life.

14. Be in pain, therefore, and intreat the Lord night and day, because thou art sunk into the calamitous poverty of sin. But would to God that any had a quick sense of this pain, by reason of this their want! And that we might not live on in security, as if we were full! Because he that is troubled in good earnest, and seeketh and prayeth to the Lord without ceasing, shall soon obtain redemption and the heavenly riches, as the Lord hath said in the parable with relation to the unjust judge and the widow, "How much more shall God avenge them that cry to him night and day? I tell you of a truth, that he will avenge them speedily." To whom be glory and power, for ages. Amen.

HOMILY II.

That God alone is able to deliver us out of the bondage of the wicked ruler.

1. LET us beseech God that he would divest us of the old man, because he alone is able to take away sin from us, they being stronger than us, that have taken us captive, and detain us prisoners in their own kingdom. But he hath promised to rescue us from this sore bondage. As when the sun shines, and the wind blows, the sun indeed hath a distinct nature of his own, and the wind likewise another nature,—and yet no man is able to make an actual separation of the wind from the sun, unless God alone shall make the wind to cease, that it may blow no longer ;—even so is sin blended with the soul, although both retain their own nature. It is impossible therefore to separate the soul from sin, unless God make a calm, and put a stop to this evil wind, which dwelleth in the soul and body.

2. And again, as a man that sees a bird flying may desire also to fly himself, but not having wings, it is impossible he should fly ;—just so a man may be willing to be pure, and without blame, and without spot, and to be always with God ; but he has not wherewithal to compass it. He is willing to fly up into the divine air, and into the liberty of the Holy Spirit ; but, unless he receive wings for his purpose, he can never do it.

3. Let us therefore beseech God that he would give us “the wings of the dove,” his Holy Spirit, that so “we may fly to him and be at rest ;” and that he would separate the evil wind, and cause it to cease from us, both in soul and body : for he only is able to bring it to pass. It is only “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” He alone it is that shewed this mercy to them that believe in him, that they are redeemed from

sin. And for those that wait for him, and hope in him, and seek after him, will he work this unspeakable salvation.

4. As in a dark and cloudy night a boisterous wind blows, and searches and shakes every plant and seed,—so man also, when he is fallen under the power of the devil, and is in the midst of the night and darkness, is ruffled, and shocked, and tossed about by the dreadful wind of sin that blows. It moreover searches his whole nature, his soul, his thoughts, and mind. And all the members of his body share in the commotion; and nothing is left free from it; neither is there the least part, either of soul or body, but what suffers from the sin that dwelleth in us. There is also the day of light, and the divine wind of the Holy Spirit, that breathes upon souls, and refreshes them that are in the light; and pierces through the whole substance of the soul and its thoughts; and withal gently fans and refreshes all the members of the body with divine and inexpressible rest.

5. The Lord hath also put on them the raiment of the kingdom of light, surpassing all description,—the garments of faith, of hope, of love, of joy, of peace, of goodness, of kindness,—and all the other robes of light and life; the divine, living robes of that rest which is unspeakable: that as God himself is love, and joy, and peace, and kindness, and goodness, so may the new man be through grace.

6. And as the kingdom of darkness and sin are hid in the souls of sinners, until the day of the resurrection, at which time their very bodies also shall be covered over with the darkness which lies now hid in the soul,—thus also doth the kingdom of light now enlighten and reign in the souls of the saints; but is hid from the eyes of men till the day of the resurrection; at which time the body itself shall be covered and glorified by the light of the Lord, that the body may reign together with the soul; which even now is actually refreshed and enlightened with the light eternal. Glory be to his mercies and

tender compassion, for that he hath pity on his servants; and enlighteneth and delivereth them out of the kingdom of darkness, and vouchsafes his own light to them; and his own kingdom: to whom be glory and power, for ages! Amen.

HOMILY III.

Christians ought to go over the course of this world with care, that they may attain the praise of God.

1. WHAT shall God do with him that gives himself up to the world, and is deceived by the pleasures of it, or drawn away with the hurry of earthly distractions? The man upon whom he bestows the succours of his grace, is he who divorces himself from gross pleasures, and at all times forcibly urges his mind towards the Lord, both denying himself, and seeking after the Lord only. This is the person whom God takes into his special care,—that keeps himself disentangled from the snares of this world; that “works out his salvation with fear and trembling;” that with the utmost heed passes through all the toils of the world, both seeking after the Lord for his assistance, and hoping in his mercy to be saved through grace.

2. As iron, or lead, or gold, or silver, when cast into the fire is freed from that hard consistency which is natural to it, being changed into softness, and so long as it continues in the fire, is still dissolved from its native hardness—after the same manner the soul that has renounced the world, and fixed its desires only upon the Lord, and hath received that heavenly fire of the Godhead, and of the love of the Spirit, is disentangled from all love of the world, and set free from all the corruption of the affections; it turns all things out of itself, and is

changed from the hardness of sin, and melted down in a fervent and unspeakable love for that heavenly Bridegroom alone, whom it has received.

3. But I tell thee, that if these very brethren, so much desired by him, draw back from that love, he too is turned away from them. For that very thing is the soul's life and refreshment,—namely, the hidden and unspeakable communion of the heavenly King. For if the love of that fellowship which is in the flesh causes a separation from father, mother, and brethren, and sets one at liberty from all love besides, how much more shall they, as many as have been thought worthy to partake of that Holy Spirit, who is the heavenly object of our love, come entirely off from the love of the world, and all things else appear to them as impertinent superfluities, in that they have been perfectly overcome with heavenly desire, and united to the falling down of it? There are their desires, there are their thoughts employed; there do they live, there do their thoughts rove up and down; there is the mind continually taken up, being overcome with divine and heavenly love, and spiritual desire.

4. What remains then, beloved brethren, but that, having such good things laid before us, and so great promises being made us by the Lord, we throw off all impediments, renounce all love of the world, and give ourselves wholly to that only good; that so we may obtain that unspeakable love of the Spirit, which the blessed Paul hath exhorted us to hasten after; saying, "Follow after charity;" that we may be changed from our own hardness by the hand of the Most High, and may come to the spiritual sweetness and rest, having been wounded with the love of the Divine Spirit. For the Lord bears an exceeding friendly affection for man, waiting with compassion for the time when we shall entirely turn to him. For though through the abundance of ignorance, and childishness, and corruption we are turned away from life, and multiply impediments upon ourselves,—yet he is touched with abundance of compas-

sion for us—suffering long till we return to him, and are enlightened in our inward man, that our faces may not be covered with shame at the day of judgment.

5 Lo! his bowels yearn, and he beareth long; and though we sin, he holds his hand, waiting for our repentance; and he is not ashamed to receive us again when we fall, as the prophet hath said: “Shall they fall, and not arise; shall he turn away, and not return?” Only let us be sober, seeking assistance from Him, and he, for his part, is ready to save us. For he accepts this warm effort of our will, and the forwardness that proceeds from a good purpose; but the whole regulation of it he worketh in us himself.

6. Let us therefore, beloved, as the children of God, having put off all carelessness and sloth, be brave, and ready to follow after him, never adjourning from day to day; for we know not the time of our departure out of the body. The promises made to us are great, and beyond expression; insomuch that all the glory and beauty of heaven and earth, with all the furniture, and variety, riches, splendour, and delight of the visible creation, bear no proportion to the treasure of one single soul.

7 How then shall we stand out against such promises, and not be willing to come entirely to him, and devote ourselves to him, to love him only, and to admit of neither rival nor partner with him? But, behold, notwithstanding all these things, and the great glory that has been given, and the tender compassions of our Lord, from the beginning, towards us; and notwithstanding his inexpressible goodness to us, demonstrated by his suffering upon the cross; yet do we still refuse to depart from our own will, and from the love of the world, and from engagements and habits which are evil. And yet, after all, lo! he continues to be kind, cherishing and preserving us invisibly, not delivering us over according to our sins, to the power of evil, nor yet suffering us to perish by the deceitfulness of the world; but, through

his great kindness and long-suffering, looking down upon us, expecting when it will be that we turn to him.

8. But if it appears to us impossible to turn from a multitude of sins, let us call to mind how our Lord, when conversing with mankind, by his goodness restored the blind to their sight, cured the sick, healed every kind of disease, raised the dead that were gone down into corruption, made the deaf to hear, cast a legion of devils out of one man, and recovered him to his right mind; how much more will he convert the soul that turns to him, and petitions him for mercy, and bring it into the cheerful state of freedom from passions, into an establishment of every virtue, and a renovation of the mind from the deadness of infidelity, and ignorance, and want of fear.

9. For if he was moved with so much compassion towards bodies which die, and readily did for every one what he requested; how much more to an immortal soul, that is subject neither to dissolution nor corruption, yet labours under the disease of ignorance, and malice, and of infidelity and want of fear; but cometh notwithstanding to the Lord, seeking to him for help, and desiring to receive from him the grace of his Spirit for its redemption, salvation, and delivery from every corrupt affection.

10. Therefore hath he admonished us to beg of him the gift of grace with boldness, without intermission, and without fainting. For it was for the sake of sinners that he came into the world, that he might turn them to himself, and heal them that believe on him. Only let us withdraw ourselves from the deceits of the world, and reject all wicked and vain thoughts, and ever cleave to him to the uttermost of our power; and he is ready to supply us with his help. For he is merciful, and quickening, and healing the disorders that were incurable, and working redemption for them that call upon him, and hang upon him with application and desire. To such a soul as this doth God vouchsafe his help, which

looks upon all things else as superfluous, and acquiesces in nothing that this world affords ; but expects to rejoice in the rest of his benignity. And thus, having through faith attained to the heavenly gift, and daily advancing in goodness, and continuing in the way of righteousness to the last, it is thought worthy to partake of eternal salvation.



HOMILY IV.

There is a wide difference between Christians and the men of this world.

1. THE world of Christians, and their way of life, and their mind, and discourse, and practice, is one thing ; and that of the men of this world, another. And the difference between them is very wide. For the children of this world are tossed to and fro by unsettled reasonings, by earthly desires, and a variety of gross imaginations, whereby Satan is continually sifting the whole sinful race of men.

2. For the word that was spoken to Cain by his Maker, "Thou shalt go mourning and trembling, and be tossed about upon the earth," is a type and image of all sinners, as to their inward state. For thus is the race of Adam tossed about with the incessant suggestions of fear and dread, and every kind of disturbance, the prince of this world tossing to and fro the soul that is not born of God ; and variously disturbing the thoughts of mankind, as corn that is continually shifted about in a sieve ; and shaking and ensnaring them all in worldly deceits, and the lusts of the flesh, with fears and troubles.

3. As from one Adam the whole race of mankind *was spread over the earth*,—so one taint in the affections was derived down into the sinful stock of men ; and the

prince of malice is sufficiently able to shift them all in restless, and gross, and vain, and troublesome reflections. For as one and the same wind is enough to stir, and shake all plants and seeds whatever,—so the prince of wickedness, as an hidden and blustering wind, *tosseth to and fro* all the race of men upon earth, and, *carries them about* with unsettled thoughts, and enticing them with the *lusts of the world*, fills every soul with ignorance, blindness, and oblivion, if it is not born from above.

4. For in this do true Christians differ from the whole race of mankind besides. They have their heart and mind constantly taken up with the thoughts of heaven ; and, through the presence and participation of the Holy Spirit, do behold, as in a glass, the good things which are eternal, being born of God from above, and thought worthy to become the children of God in truth and power ; and being arrived, through many conflicts and labours, to a settled and fixed state, to an exemption from trouble, to perfect rest, are never sifted more by unsettled and vain thoughts. Herein are they greater and better than the world ; their mind and the desire of their soul are in the peace of Christ, and the love of the Spirit ; “ they have passed from death to life.” Wherefore the alteration peculiar to Christians doth not consist in any outward fashions, but in the *renovation* of the mind, and the *peace* of the thoughts, and the *love* of the Lord, even the heavenly love. Herein Christians differ from all men besides. The Lord hath given them truly to believe on him, and to be worthy of those spiritual good things. For the glory, and the beauty, and the heavenly riches of Christians are inexpressible, and purchased only with labour, and pains, and trials, and many conflicts. But the whole is owing to the grace of God.

5. Now if the sight of even an earthly king is desired by all men, (except those persons that are spiritual, who look upon all his glory as nothing, through their having experimentally known another heavenly glory ;) if, I say,

the men of this world are so desirous to behold an earthly king, with his splendour and glory—how much more are those upon whom that dew of the Spirit of life hath dropped, and wounded their hearts with love for Christ; bound fast to that beauty, and the unspeakable glory, and the inconceivable riches of the true and eternal King; with desire and long-suffering after whom they are captivated, turning wholly to him, to obtain those unspeakable good things, which through the Spirit they actually behold already; and for whose sake they esteem all the glories, and honours, and riches of earthly kings as nothing?

6. For they are wounded with the Divine beauty; their desire is towards the heavenly King; and placing him only before their eyes in the abundance of their affection, they, for his sake, disengage themselves from all love of the world, and draw back from every earthly clog, that so they may be able ever to retain in their hearts that only desire. And they that are Christians in truth and power, rejoice at their departure out of the flesh, because they have “that house which is not made with hands.” And therefore, if the house of the body be destroyed, they are in no fear; for they have the heavenly “house of the Spirit,” and that “glory which is incorruptible.”

7. Let us therefore strive by faith to be possessed of that clothing, that when we resume the body, there be nothing wanting which may glorify our flesh in that day. For every one, so far as he hath been thought worthy by faith to be made partaker of the Holy Spirit, in the same proportion shall his body also be glorified in that day. For that which the soul hath treasured up within, in this present life, shall then be made manifest outwardly in the body.

8. For as the trees that have got over the winter do, by an invisible power, put forth from within, and shoot out leaves, and flowers, and fruits, as their clothing—and in like manner, as the flowers of the grass come out

of the bosom of the earth, and the earth is covered and clothed—so, in the day of the resurrection, and through the power of the “Sun of Righteousness,” there shooteth out from within the glory of the Holy Spirit, covering the bodies of the saints, which glory they had before, within hidden in their souls. For whatever (the soul) hath at present, the same cometh forth at that time outwardly in the body.

9. Therefore ought every one of us to strive, and be diligent in all virtue, and to believe and to seek it of the Lord; that the inward man may be made partaker of that glory in this present life, and have that holiness of the Spirit, that we may have at the resurrection wherewith to cover our naked bodies, and refresh us to all eternity in the kingdom of heaven. For Christ will come down from heaven, and raise to life all the kindred of Adam that have slept from the beginning of the world: and he shall separate them all into two divisions; and them that have his own mark, that is, the seal of the Spirit, he shall place on his right hand. And then shall the bodies of these be surrounded with a Divine glory from their good works, and themselves shall be full of the glory of the Spirit, which they had in their souls in this present life. So that, being thus glorified in the Divine light, and snatched away to “meet the Lord in the air, we,” as it is written, “shall ever be with the Lord,” reigning with him world without end. Amen.



HOMILY V.

Concerning those things that happen to Christians in the time of prayer, and concerning the degrees of perfection.

1. A MAN goes in to bow the knee, and his heart is filled with a Divine power, and his soul rejoiceth with

the Lord, as the bride with her bridegroom. The inward man is snatched away to yet farther devotion, into the unfathomable depth of that world in much sweetness, insomuch that his whole mind is estranged, being raised and carried off thither ; so that, for that time, there is a cloud of oblivion upon the thoughts of the earthly wisdom ; for his thoughts are filled with Divine and heavenly things, things infinite and incomprehensible, certain wonderful things, which are impossible to be uttered.

2. Sometimes the love flames out and kindles with greater strength ; but at other times more slow and gentle. As the same fire at certain seasons burns with a stronger heat and flame, but at others abates and burns dim, so this lamp (of grace) sometimes burns and shines out, when it is more strongly enkindled by an extraordinary infusion of the love of God ; but again it is imparted in measure, and then the light is comparatively dull.

3. At another season the light which was shining in the heart, has disclosed a yet more inward, profound, and concealed light, insomuch that the whole man being absorbed in that sweetness and contemplation, was master of himself no longer, but was to this world as a mere fool and barbarian, by reason of the superabundant love and sweetness of the hidden mysteries : so that the person being for that time set at liberty, arrives to such degrees of perfection, as to become pure and free from sin. But after all this, grace has withdrawn itself, and the veil of the adverse power has come upon him ; it appears in past however, and he stands in one of the lower rounds of perfection. And one that is rich in grace, at all times, by night and by day, continues in a perfect state, free and pure, ever captivated with love, and elevated to God.

4. But if a man should have these things always present before him, he would not be able to undertake the dispensation of the word. Neither could he bear to

hear, or have any concern for himself or the morrow ; but purely to sit in a corner in a state of elevation : so that the perfect degree of all hath not been given, that a man may be in a capacity to attend the care of the brethren; and the ministration of the word. Nevertheless, “the middle wall of partition is broken down, and death is overcome.”

5. Grace, even in this present life, operates thus : it calms all the members and the heart, so that the soul, out of the abundance of joy, seems like a little child, conscious of no ill ; and the man no longer condemns the Gentile, or the Jew, or the man of the world. But the inward man looks upon all with an eye of purity, and rejoices over the whole world, and desires to respect and love all, the Gentiles as the Jews. At another time, as the son of a king, he confides in the Son of God as his own father, and the doors are opened to him, and he goes into many mansions. And the farther he goes in, they are again opened to him in proportion, from one hundred mansions to an hundred others, and he is rich : and the more he is enriched, there are again others, and those newer wonders, discovered to him. And he is intrusted, as the son and heir, with things that cannot be spoken by human nature, nor pronounced by the mouth and tongue. Glory be to God ! Amen.



HOMILY VI.

The gifts of grace are preserved by an humble mind, and a ready will ; but destroyed by pride and sloth.

1. THE souls that are lovers of truth and of God, and desirous to put on Christ completely, though they may suffer in some measure a state of emptiness ; yet being wholly nailed to the cross of Christ, they perceive, day after day, an experimental sense of their advances to-

wards the spiritual Bridegroom. And being wounded with an heavenly desire, and hungering after righteousness, they have an insatiable longing for the Spirit to shine out upon them. And though they are thought worthy to receive, through faith, the knowledge of Divine mysteries, or are made partakers of the gladness of heavenly grace, yet they have no confidence in themselves : but the more of spiritual gifts they enjoy, the more insatiable is the heavenly desire they are filled with ; the more they are sensible of the spiritual progress in themselves, the more hungry and thirsty are they after the increase of grace ; and the richer they spiritually are, by so much the more do they seem to themselves to be in want, and are carried out with a spiritual desire after the heavenly Bridegroom, as saith the wise man, " They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty."

2. Souls like these, that have a fervent and insatiable love for the Lord, are thought worthy of the redemption from vile affections, and receive the irradiation and presence of the Holy Spirit, which is unspeakable, and the mystical fellowship in the fulness of grace. But as many souls as are destitute of manly vigour and activity, are still but as in the flesh, having never entertained any hopes of receiving the sanctification of their heart through patience and long-suffering, nor of enjoying the fellowship of the Spirit, with the utmost sensation and assurance : these, after having been once thought worthy of Divine grace, have yet been insensibly circumvented by the evil one, and so have given themselves over to carelessness and remissness. And the reason is evident ; after they have received the grace of the Spirit, and actually enjoyed the comfort of grace in rest and spiritual sweetness, they trust in it ; they are lifted up, and take no farther care, being neither of a contrite heart, nor humble mind ; neither have they waited with all diligence and faith, to be perfectly filled with grace : but instead of that, they were full, they were completely

satisfied, and rested in the first consolation of grace. The progress such souls made tended more to elevation than humility; so that they were stripped again of that very gift, which before was vouchsafed to them, through their careless contempt of any thing farther, and the vain swelling of their own opinion.

3. The soul that is truly a lover of God, and a lover of Christ, though it does righteous works without number, demeans itself however, as if it had wrought just nothing at all, through the insatiable love it beareth to the Lord. And though by fastings and by watchings it has even macerated the body, it applies itself to the pursuit of the virtues still, as if it never had begun before to take the least pains about them. Though it has been thought worthy of the several gifts of the Spirit, or favoured with revelations and heavenly mysteries; yet, by reason of its immense love for the Lord, doth it seem to itself as if it had just nothing in possession: but hungering and thirsting through faith and love, it is carried on insatiably in the persevering spirit of prayer to the mysteries of grace, and to every degree of virtue. And being wounded by the heavenly Spirit, continually exciting an inflamed desire after the heavenly Bridegroom, and longing to be completely admitted to the mystical and inexpressible communion with him in the sanctification of the Spirit; having the face of the soul unveiled, and looking with a steady eye upon the heavenly Bridegroom, face to face, in the light which is spiritual, and not to be expressed; it mixes with him in all the fulness of assurance; becomes conformable to his death, ever waiting in the abundance of desire to die for the sake of Christ, and expecting to obtain, under the conduct of the Spirit, an entire redemption from sin, and the darkness of the affections: that being purified by the Spirit, sanctified in soul and body, it may be made a vessel clean prepared for the susception of the heavenly ointment, and the residence of Christ, the true and heavenly King. And then is the

soul filled with the heavenly life, and becomes the pure habitation of the Holy Spirit.

4. But these are heights which the soul does not reach all at once ; but through many labours and conflicts, with variety of trials and temptations, it receives spiritual growth and improvement, till at last it comes to an entire exemption from its old affections ; holding out, with a cheerful and noble obstinacy against every succeeding temptation, it is then thought worthy of great honours and spiritual gifts, and becomes an inheritor of the heavenly kingdom in Christ Jesus our Lord : to whom be glory for ever. Amen.



HOMILY VII.

This Homily teaches us how the soul ought to demean herself in holiness and purity, towards her Bridegroom, Jesus Christ.

1. IF a glorious prince should take a liking to a poor woman that has nothing, and have her brought home to him for his spouse, she ought ever after to shew all good will to this husband, and retain a constant love for him. But if she transgresses the bounds of decency and duty, then she is turned out of doors with disgrace and reproach, and is full of sorrow ; reflecting from how great wealth she is fallen, and what glory she has lost. Thus also the soul, which Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, shall espouse to himself, ought to please Christ, her lover ; carrying herself in the house of this heavenly Spouse with a fair deportment, and a grateful sense of the grace bestowed upon her. Lo ! such a soul is actually invested with the full command of all her Lord's goods, and her body becomes the glorious tabernacle of his Godhead. But if she do not the things that are pleasing to him, and is not perfectly observant of his

will, then with reproach and disgrace is she disrobed of all her honour, as no way proper for the communion of the heavenly King. And after that, there commences an universal grief and lamentation over that soul among all the saints and intellectual spirits: angels, powers, apostles, prophets, and martyrs, mourn for her. For as "there is joy in heaven," as the Lord hath said, "over one sinner that repenteth," so is there great grief and mourning in heaven over one soul that falls from eternal life.

2. We must therefore strive, and with the utmost prudence take care to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling." Whosoever therefore you are, that have been made partakers of the Spirit of Christ, look upon yourselves in no case whatever, whether small, or great, to be above advice; neither do any despite to the Spirit of grace, that you may be never excluded from the life which you have been made to partake of.

Let us therefore beg of God, that we, as many as have been partakers of his grace, may minister acceptably in the service of the Spirit, according to his will; that thus serving him according to his will with a spiritual service, we may inherit eternal life.

3. But can a man fall that has the gift of grace?

Answ. If he grow careless, he certainly falls. For his enemies are never idle, or backward in the war. How ought you then never to desist from seeking after God? For the damage which you sustain by your neglect is exceeding great, though you may seem to be even established in the mystery of grace.

4. Are the perfect liable to affliction or war, or are they entirely free from care?

Answ. An enemy never respites any from the war. And Satan is perfectly void of mercy: wherefore neither is he backward to set upon any man whatever, though he does not attack all in the same measure and degree.

5. But there is need of much pains and labour, that a man may seek and lay the foundations, till such a time as

the fire shall come into the hearts of men, and purge away the thorns. And thus do they begin to be sanctified, giving glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.



HOMILY VIII.

That spiritual men are liable to temptations and afflictions.

1. As the experienced husbandmen, in a year of plenty, expect a time of dearth; and on the other hand, when dearth and difficulties overtake them, they are not dejected; as knowing there will come a change. So in the spiritual state, when the soul falls into divers temptations, it is not surprised as at a strange or unusual thing, neither does it despond, because it knows that they come by permission, that it may be tried and disciplined by the evil that befalls it. Neither again, when it abounds in wealth and ease, is it free from apprehension, but expects a change.

2. For when a man is rich in grace, there is yet a remnant of corruption with him: he has one however that taketh his part, and that cometh to his assistance. Whenever therefore any one is in afflictions, and the storm of corrupt affections thickens upon him, yet ought he not to quit his hope. For then sin gains ground. But when a man retains his hope in God, sin crumbles as it were, and dries away.

3. As a well that runs, and has all about it nothing but moist grounds, when the heat comes on, both itself and its adjacent bogs are dried up; thus it is with the servants of God, in whom grace abounds; that dries up the concupiscence, not only that which is from the wicked one, but that also which is natural; because that now the men of God are greater than the first Adam.

4. Christians therefore belong to another world, are the sons of the heavenly Adam, a new generation, the children of the Holy Spirit, the bright and glorious brethren of Christ, perfectly like their Father, the spiritual and glorified Adam, of that very city, of the same kind, and of the self-same power. He himself says, "Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world."

5. Yet a fear they still have upon them, not indeed that of novices, that live in a dread of wicked spirits ; but a fear and concern how they may best employ the spiritual gifts they are entrusted with. And such a one as this looks upon himself to be despicable beyond all sinners. This reflection is as deeply rooted in him, as if it were his very nature. The more he advances in the knowledge of God, so much the less is he in his own eyes. And though he learns never so much, he is still as one that knows nothing. But these things are wrought in the soul by the ministration of grace. The case is not unlike that of an infant in the arms of a young man ; the bearer carries it about whithersoever he pleases : so does grace also carry the mind about, and bear it upwards into the very heavens, to the perfect world, and eternal rest.



HOMILY IX.

Concerning the spiritual unction and glory of Christians.

1. THE Christians, who are come the nearest to the King, are at all times devoted to the cross of Christ ; and when they are anointed with the heavenly unction, they commence kings and prophets of the heavenly mysteries. For if the anointing oil that came from an outward plant, had so much virtue that the persons anointed with it, were constituted kings thereby ; how much more do they who are anointed with the sanctifying and cheering oil of

gladness, the heavenly and spiritual oil, receive the sign of that incorruptible kingdom, and everlasting power, the earnest of the Spirit, the very spirit of holiness and comfort? It is called *the Comforter*, by reason of that comfort and support it bestows upon them that are in afflictions. These being anointed from the tree of life, Jesus Christ, from the heavenly plant; are thought worthy to come to perfection; to the kingdom, and the adoption, being admitted to the secret councils of the heavenly King, and having free access to the Almighty, entering into his very palace, where are angels, and the spirits of the holy persons, though at the same time they live in this present world. For though they have not actually received the inheritance prepared for them in that world, they are secure from the earnest of the Spirit, which they have received, as if they were already crowned, and in possession of the kingdom. Nor does it seem a strange thing to them that they shall reign together with Christ, through the overflowing presence of the Spirit. For what reason? Even because though in the flesh, they have a relish of its sweetness, and that effectual working of his power.

2. For they that are to reign in the world to come, are before-hand acquainted with the mysteries of grace. Indeed since man transgressed the commandment, the devil has covered the whole soul with a dark veil. But when grace cometh, *the veil is thrown off*; so that the soul becoming pure, and regaining its proper nature, a creature free from blame or spot, for ever after beholds with a clear sight the glory of the true light, and the true *Sun of Righteousness* flashing with his bright beams upon the heart itself.

3. For as when the *heavens are done away*, the righteous for ever after shall live in the kingdom, and light, and glory, beholding nothing else but after what manner Christ in glory is evermore at the right hand of the Father; so these also that are now taken out of the world, behold all the beauties and the wonders which are

wrought there. For we that are upon earth, *have our indenization in heaven*; all our transactions, and our whole civil conduct, is in that world as to our mind, and the inner man. For as the outward eye, when clear, perfectly beholds the sun; so the mind that is perfectly cleansed, ever beholds the glory of the light of Christ, and is present with the Lord night and day, just as the body of our Lord, being joined to the Godhead, is ever present with the Holy Ghost. But these are heights men do not immediately attain to, nor without labour and affliction, and conflict.

4. But the unsteady and unskilful, whenever grace operates, imagine presently they have no more sin. Whereas they that have discretion, cannot deny, that even we who have the grace of God, may be molested again with evil thoughts. For we have often had instances of some among the brethren, that have experienced such a degree of joy and grace, as to affirm, that for five or six years running, they had no sin in them; and yet after all, when they thought themselves freed entirely from it, the corruption that lurked within, was stirred up anew, and they were well nigh burnt up.

5. There is need therefore of great discernment, that a person may by experience know that things are really thus. I tell you moreover, that even the apostles were not altogether without apprehension. For with that joy and gladness had they also a fear and trembling, proceeding from grace itself, and not from corrupt nature. But that very grace was their security, that they might not turn aside.

HOMILY X.

Concerning the treasure of Christians, that is, Christ and the Holy Spirit, variously exercising them towards perfection.

1. IF any one in this world is possessed of a treasure, with that treasure he purchases whatever he has a mind to. Whatsoever he is desirous of he compasses with ease, and readily procures all possessions that suit his inclinations. So also they who have found the heavenly treasure of the Spirit, the Lord shining in their hearts, fulfil that entire extent of goodness there is in the commandments of the Lord, from that treasure that is within them, Christ; and by means of that do they amass together a large store of heavenly wealth. For by means of the heavenly treasure do they work every virtue in the whole circle of righteousness, and every commandment of the Lord, by the help of the invisible riches of the grace within them.

2. Whoever therefore possesses within himself this heavenly treasure of the Spirit, he fulfils in this spirit all the righteousness of the commandments, and the complete practice of the virtues, without blame, and in purity; moreover without compulsion or difficulty. Then let us beseech God, and seek diligently unto him, and pour out our supplications before him, that he would freely grant unto us the treasure of his Spirit, that we may be enabled to walk in all his commandments without reproof, and without blemish, and fulfil all the righteousness of the Spirit in purity and perfection.

3. For he that is poor, and naked, and a beggar, can purchase nothing in the world: but he that has a treasure at command, without trouble, is master of what possession he pleases. So the soul that is naked, and destitute of God, cannot, would it ever so fain, produce

any of the fruits of the Spirit of righteousness in truth and reality, before it actually partakes of the Spirit itself.

4. It behoves every one therefore to oblige himself by force to petition the Lord, that he may receive the heavenly treasure of the Spirit, so as without difficulty to be able to perform all the commandments of the Lord, blameless and in purity; which before, even with violence, he could never do. For being poor and destitute of the communication of the Spirit, how should he come by such spiritual possessions? But the soul which, by faith and much patience, hath found the Lord, the true treasure, produceth the fruits of the Spirit, and performs all the righteousness and commandments of the Lord, which the Spirit hath commanded, in and by it, with purity, and free from blame.

5. We ought therefore to beg of God with earnestness of heart, that he would grant unto us his riches, the true treasure of Christ, in our hearts, in the power and efficacy of the Spirit. And thus having found first within ourselves salvation and eternal life, we shall then profit others also, producing from that treasure of Christ within us, all the goodness of spiritual discourses, and declaring heavenly mysteries. For so it pleaseth the good will of the Father, that he should dwell with every one that believeth. "He that loveth me, (says Christ,) shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." And again, "We will come unto him, I and my Father, and make our abode with him." Thus did the infinite kindness of the Father's will. Thus was the inconceivable love of Christ pleased. And thus did the unspeakable goodness of the Spirit promise. Glory be to the tender mercies of the Holy Trinity, which surpass all expression!

6. Let us illustrate in some measure by examples the methods of the Spirit in the soul. At a certain time then are they elated, as at a royal banquet, and rejoice with joy and gladness not to be expressed. At another season are they as the bride, that in communion with the

bridegroom enjoys Divine pleasures. At other times they are as the angels, which are not clogged with this earthly tabernacle.

7. At other times, they are in grief and lamentation for all mankind, and interceding for the whole stock of Adam. They take up a wailing and a weeping for it ; the love of the Spirit for the human nature kindling and flaming out within them. At other times the joy and love of the Spirit inflames them to that degree, that were it possible, they would snatch up every man into their own bowels, not making the least distinction of the bad from the good.

8. At other times they are humbled so far below every other person in the self-abasement of the Spirit, as to think themselves inferior to, and less than all. At other times they are like a strong man, that, having put on the royal armour, and coming down in battle upon his enemies, fights valiantly against them, and overcomes them. For in like manner, he too that is spiritual taketh the heavenly weapons of the Spirit, and comes upon his enemies and fights them, and treads them under his feet. At other times doth the soul rest in great silence, and calmness and peace, being given up to spiritual pleasure, and rest unspeakable. At other times it is instructed by grace in a sort of understanding and wisdom not to be described, and a knowledge of the Spirit that is past finding out, in such things as it is impossible for the tongue to utter. So very various is the way of grace in them, and such variety is there in the manner after which it conducts the soul, refreshing it according to the will and pleasure of God. And with equal variety does it exercise her, thereby to restore her perfect and blameless, and pure to our heavenly Father.

9. These several refreshments of grace are expressed indeed very differently. However, there is no intermission of their influence ; but one operation continually succeeds another. For when the soul is thoroughly cleansed from all its corrupt affections, and is united, by

an ineffable communion, to the Spirit, the Comforter, and is thoroughly mixed with the Spirit, and is become spirit itself: then is it all light, all eye, all spirit, all joy, all rest, all gladness, all love, all bowels, all goodness, and clemency. As a stone in the bottom of the sea is every way surrounded with water; so are these every way drenched with the Holy Spirit, and made like to Christ himself, possessing unalterably within themselves the virtues of the power of the Spirit, being blameless within and without, and spotless, and pure. For being brought to perfection by the Spirit, how is it possible they should outwardly produce the fruits of sin? But at all times, and in every instance, do the fruits of the Spirit shine brightly out in their whole deportment.

.10. And therefore let us also beseech God, and believe in love, and abundant hope, that the self-same Spirit may govern and lead us into all the will of God; and may refresh us with all the variety of the rest he gives: that by the means of such an administration, and the exercise of grace, and spiritual improvement, we may come to the perfection of the fulness of Christ, as the apostle expresses it, "That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." And again, "Till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The Lord hath promised to all that believe in him, and ask in truth, that he will give to them the mysteries of the ineffable communion of the Spirit; and therefore let us, having entirely devoted ourselves to the Lord, make haste to attain the good things we have before-mentioned, being consecrated both in soul and body, and nailed to the cross of Christ, and giving glory to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, unto ages. Amen.

HOMILY XI.

Christians that are willing to improve and increase, ought to force themselves to every thing that is good.

1. HE that is desirous to come to the Lord, and to become the mansion-house of Christ, and to be filled with the Holy Spirit, that so he may bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, and perform the commandments of Christ in purity; ought to begin first with believing in the Lord, to give himself entirely up to the directions of his commandments, and to bid an universal farewell to the world, that so his mind may not be engrossed by any of the things that do appear.

2. He ought ever to continue instant in prayer, in the faith and expectation of the Lord, waiting at all times for his help, with the full bent of his mind continually fixed upon it. Then ought he to force himself upon every good work, and to all the commandments of the Lord. For instance, let him force himself to be of a lowly mind before all men, and let him esteem himself worse than they, not seeking honour, or praise, or glory from any one; but setting the Lord ever before his eyes, desirous of pleasing him only, in meekness of heart, as the Lord himself prescribes, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

3. In like manner let him accustom himself to be merciful, kind, tender-hearted, and good to the utmost of his power, as our Lord expresses it, "Be ye merciful, even as your heavenly Father is merciful."

4. Above all things, let him keep inviolably in mind the humiliation of our Lord, and his manner of life, his meekness of conversation, as the standard that is never to be overlooked. And thus the things which he does now by violence, and with a reluctant heart, he will in time do freely, by being ever mindful of the Lord, and in

much love waiting for him. For the Lord observing how he forces himself, and even wrests his heart, though never so unwilling, shews mercy to him, and redeems him from his enemies, and from the sin that dwelleth in him, *filling him with the Spirit*. And thus for the future, without compulsion or difficulty, does he perform the commands of the Lord in truth. Or rather, the Lord himself doth his own commandments in him; and then he brings forth the fruits of the Spirit in purity.

5. But first he ought thus to force himself to that which is good; and though his heart be ever so much against it, to wait continually for mercy; to force himself to shew compassion, to endure contempt with a courageous patience; and though he is set at nought, not to be moved with indignation, as it is written, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves;" to force himself to prayer, if he have not the spiritual prayer. And thus does God, beholding him in these conflicts, grant unto him the *true prayer of the Spirit*, the true love, the meekness of truth, *the bowels of mercies*, yea, all the fruits of the Spirit.

6. Yet if any one forces himself to pray only for the gift of prayer, but exerts no such vigour after meekness, and humility, and love, and the other commandments of the Lord, this is sometimes granted him; but then it is apart by itself, just according to his petition. But in his behaviour he is exactly as he was before; without meekness, for he sought it not; without humility, because he asked not for it; nor has he a love for all men; forasmuch as he never had any concern or agony in the offering up of his prayer for it. And in the execution of the work he is upon, he has not faith and confidence towards God, because indeed he has not discovered that he wants it; neither has he laboured to obtain from the Lord a steady and true affiance in him.

7. Therefore it behoves every one, as he forces himself to prayer, so also to an assurance in God; to humility, to meekness, sincerity, and simplicity; to all patience

and long-suffering, with joy. Thus ought he, by an habitual violence, to esteem himself as nothing ; to break himself of unprofitable discourse ; ever to meditate upon the things of God, and to declare them with his mouth, and with his heart. The same way should he proceed to conquer "all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking ;" to conform to our Lord's whole deportment ; to an universal good conversation ; to all the humility of meekness, so as neither to be exalted, nor high-minded, nor puffed up, nor to speak against any man.

8. All these ought he to bring himself to by downright force, that is desirous to be well-pleasing to Christ ; that so, (when he shall behold this forwardness and full intention of his, in thus compelling himself to all goodness,) he may impart his whole self to him, the Lord himself performing all these things within him in purity, without trouble, and without compulsion, which before he was not able, not even with force and violence, to observe. Then all these exercises of virtue become to him as nature. For the Lord, when he comes, and is in him, and he in the Lord, performs in him his own commands without labour, filling him with the fruits of the Spirit.

9. Whoever therefore is willing to please God in truth, and receive from him the heavenly grace, and to grow up and be perfected in the Holy Spirit, ought to force himself upon all the commandments of God, and to bring his unwilling heart in subjection to them, according as it is written, "Therefore hold I straight all thy commandments, and all false ways I utterly abhor." For as a man, in order to perseverance in prayer, acts with violence and constraint, till he can bring himself to it ; so also, in all instances, if he has a willing mind, he is violent and pressing with himself. Nay, and after he has obtained his petition, and is come to taste of God, and is made partaker of the Holy Ghost, he takes pains to improve the gift imparted to him.

10. The Spirit itself then teaches him the true prayer,

the true love, the true meekness—which before he forced himself to, and sought after, and which took up his whole thoughts. And being thus grown up, and consummated in God, he is thought worthy to become the heir of the kingdom : for the humble man never falls. For whence should he fall, who is below all ? Self-elevation is a great abasement ; but self-abasement is a great exaltation, and honour, and dignity.

11. And thus the commandments of God being fulfilled by us through his Spirit, and that Spirit perfecting us in itself, and being itself completed in us, when once cleansed from all the pollution and stain of sin, it will then present our souls to Christ as beautiful brides, pure and blameless : we, on the one hand, reposing ourselves in God, in his kingdom,—and God, on the other, taking up his rest in us to endless ages ! Glory be to his mercies, and compassion, and love ; for that he hath vouchsafed to admit the race of mankind unto so great honour, to be the sons of his heavenly Father, and declared them to be his own brethren. To him be glory for ever ! Amen.



HOMILY XII.

Christ alone is able to heal the soul, and to adorn her with the robe of grace.

1. IF any one is naked for want of the heavenly clothing, which is the power of the Spirit, (as it is said, “ Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his,”) let him weep, and entreat the Lord that he may receive the spiritual clothing which is from heaven ; that he may have a covering for his soul, disrobed of the Divine power. For he is clothed with vile affections, that is not clad with the garment of the Spirit.

2. For as in the things that are seen, if any one is naked, he is in much confusion and disgrace,—and even friends turn away from their friends that are naked,—thus does God turn away from the souls that are not clothed with the garment of the Spirit, in the full assurance of faith, as not “having put on the Lord Jesus Christ” in power and in truth.

3. The very first man, when he beheld himself naked, was ashamed. So great is the dishonour that attends nakedness! If therefore, in relation only to the body, the being naked exposes us to so much shame; how much rather is the soul that is unclathed of the Divine power, that is not elad with the raiment not to be described—immortal and spiritual, the Lord Jesus Christ himself,—covered over with shame and dishonourable affections! Every one that is unclathed of that Divine glory, ought to be ashamed of himself, and to acknowledge the disgrace he is under; as Adam was ashamed with respect to his body being naked, though he made himself a covering of fig-leaves. Let therefore such a soul ask of Christ, who clothes it with glory which surpasses all expression, without making to itself any covering of vain thoughts, or being deluded with an opinion of its own righteousness.

4. For if any one stands only upon his *own righteousness*, (not looking for *the righteousness of God, which is the Lord*, who, as the apostle speaks, *is made to us righteousness and redemption*,) the pains he takes are vain and fruitless. For such an opinion of his own righteousness is at the last day plainly laid open as a filthy rag, as saith the prophet, “All our righteousness is as filthy rags.”

Let us therefore beg of God, and entreat him that we may put on the garment of salvation, our Lord Jesus Christ. Glory be to his tender mercies and compassion, which surpass all expression and utterance!

5. As the woman that was diseased with an issue of blood, when she had touched the hem of our Lord’s gar-

ment, was healed immediately, and the impure fountain of her blood was dried up—so every soul that has the incurable wound of sin, the fountain of unclean and wicked thoughts, if she will come to Christ, recovers her health; and that fountain which sendeth forth impure thoughts, only through the power of Jesus, abates and is dried up.

6. To him alone this is possible. For as that woman who had spent all she was worth upon those that had *promised* to heal her, was yet cured by no man, till such time as she came to the Lord, and touched his hem—so is it with the soul that has been wounded from the beginning with this incurable wound of sinful affections; which none of the righteous, neither the fathers, nor the prophets, or patriarchs have been able to cure.

7. Moses came, but was not able to give perfect health. The priests, the gifts, tithes, new-moons, washings, sacrifices, whole burnt-offerings, and every other branch of righteousness, were punctually observed under the law; and yet the soul could not be healed, and cleansed from the impure fountain of sinful thoughts. Neither could all its righteousness avail any thing, till such time as the Saviour came himself, the true Physician, who healeth freely—who gave himself a ransom for the race of mankind. He alone wrought the great and saving redemption, and cure of the soul: he it was that set it free from the state of bondage, and brought it out of darkness, having glorified it with his own light. He hath dried up the fountain of unclean thoughts; for “behold,” saith the Scripture, “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!”

8. Its own medicines out of the earth, that is, its own righteous actions, were not able to heal it of so great a plague. But by the heavenly and Divine nature, the gift of the Holy Spirit, was man capable of recovering health, being purified in his heart by the Holy Ghost.

Let us therefore have faith in him, and come to him in

truth, that he may speedily perform his healing operation within us:—for he hath promised to “give to them that ask him, his Holy Spirit; and to open to them that knock; and to be found of them that seek him:” and he that promised *cannot lie*. To him be glory and might for ever! Amen.



HOMILY XIII.

That no man, unless he is strengthened by Christ, is able to get clear of the stumbling-blocks of Satan. And what they ought to do, that are desirous of the Divine glory.

1. **THEY** in whom is the Divine law ingrafted in the heart, having the eyes of their mind enlightened, are able to get clear of the stumbling-blocks of the wicked one. But they that are not honoured with the word of God, being vainly puffed up, imagine that by their own free-will they can cut off all occasions of sin, which yet is condemned through the mystery of the cross alone.

2. For it is impracticable to go upon the asp and the basilisk, and to tread upon the lion and the dragon, unless we are first enabled by him that said to the apostles, “Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents, and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.” For were the human nature able, without the complete armour of the Holy Spirit, to stand against the wiles of the devil, we had never been told by the apostle, “The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.”

He therefore that is desirous to be made partaker of the Divine glory, ought, with an insatiable affection, with his whole heart and strength, night and day to seek help from God.

3. Wherefore endeavour all you can to become the child of God, without blame, and to enter into that rest, "whither the forerunner Christ is entered for us." Do your utmost that your name be written in the church in heaven with the first-born; that you may be found "at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Study to enter into the holy city, the peaceful Jerusalem. Pour out tears day and night, according to him that said, "Every night wash I my bed, and water my couch with my tears." For "they that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Wherefore the prophet expresses himself with confidence, "Hold not thy peace at my tears."

4. Seek him only who said, "I am come to send fire on earth, which I would it were already kindled." For this burning of the Spirit it is that kindles up new life in the heart. This Divine fire is used to enlighten souls, and to try them as the pure gold in the furnace, but to consume sin as thorns and stubble. This inflamed the heart of Cleopas and his companion, as our Saviour was talking to them after the resurrection. This burns up the beam in the inward eye, and restores the mind to its purity, that so, upon recovering its native power of seeing, it may incessantly behold the wonders of God. Let us pray this fire that it would come to us also; that we, walking at all times in the light, may never,—no, not for a moment, "dash our feet against a stone;" but, as lights shining in the world, may hold forth the word of eternal life;" that, enjoying the good things of God, we may rest with the Lord in life, glorifying the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. To whom be glory for ever! Amen.

HOMILY XIV.

Concerning the truth and excellency of the soul ; and how it is tempted by Satan, and obtains deliverance.

1. Do not slightly regard the intellectual nature of the soul. The immortal soul is a vessel of great price. Observe how great the heaven is and the earth, and yet God took not any great complacency in them ; but in thee only. Behold thy own worth and high descent, that the Lord should come on an embassy, and that not by angels, but in his own person, on purpose to recall thee that hadst been lost, and to restore to thee the original formation of Adam in his purity. For man was Lord of all, from heaven above to the depths beneath, and pure from sin, (the image) and likeness of God. But through the transgression he is fallen, and wounded, and dead.

2. *Quest.* Is the natural concupiscence rooted out by the coming of the Holy Spirit ?

Ans. Sin is rooted out, and man receives the original formation of Adam in his purity. Through the power of the Spirit, he comes up to the first Adam ; yea, is made greater than him.

3. *Quest.* Is satan let loose to a certain degree, or makes he war as he pleases ?

Ans. If he were permitted to war at pleasure he would put an end to all. If the silversmith and the goldsmith put on fire by rule, for if there is more than enough, the gold and silver is lost ; and if man has skill enough to proportion his burdens to his beast, suitable to the strength they have to carry : how much more does God, who knows the capacities of men, loosen the reins of the adverse power in different degrees ? In the same proportion, therefore, as any one is able to receive and sustain the fight, so far is satan let loose upon him.

4. *Quest.* Does satan ever lie still, and is man freed from the war ? or, has he war as long as he lives ?

Ans. Satan at no time sleeps. As long as any one lives in this world, and wears flesh, he finds war. But, when *the fiery darts of the wicked one shall be quenched*, what then is there that hurts the man? Since he has the King to befriend him, one that gives an helping hand, he receives no manner of damage. For when a man has passed through all degrees, and is become the king's friend, can he after that be liable to injury from any one?

5. Christians are clothed with the Spirit, and are at rest. And though war ariseth from without, they are inwardly fortified with the power of the Lord, and are no more concerned for satan. Just so, when he tempted our Lord in the wilderness for forty days, what real hurt was it, that he could outwardly approach his body? for within was God. In like manner Christians, though outwardly they are tempted; yet inwardly are they filled with the Divine nature, and so nothing injured. These degrees, if any man attain to, he is come to the perfect love of Christ, and to the fulness of the Godhead. But he that is not so, still inwardly retains the war. He is one hour refreshed in prayer, and another in a state of affliction: for so is the will of the Lord; because he is as yet but an infant, he trains him up to the battle: and there spring up in him both light and darkness, and rest and affliction: and that, whatever gifts he hath, for many of the brethren have had the gifts of healing, and revelation and prophecy; however, not having attained to perfect charity, the war came upon them, and they fell. Indeed, if any one comes to perfect love, he is for ever after bound and captivated by grace. But if any one make but small advances towards this, he is still in bondage to fear, and to war, and to falling.

HOMILY XV.

Concerning the worth and condition of the Christian.

1. KNOW, O man, thy high descent and worth : how precious thou art as the brother of Christ, the friend of the king, the spouse of the heavenly Bridegroom. For whosoever shall discover the worth of his soul, he is also able to discover the power and the mysteries of the Divine nature, and thereby to be the more abased ; forasmuch as by the power of God it is that any one sees his fall. But in the same manner that he passed through sufferings and the cross, and so was glorified, and sat down on the right hand of the Father, so doth it behove you also to suffer with him, and to be crucified with him, and so to rise again, and sit together, and to be joined together with Christ, and for ever to reign together with him.

2. Christianity, therefore, is no trivial matter : it is a great mystery. Consider therefore well thy high descent, that thou art called to royal dignity, “ a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and an holy nation.” For the mystery of Christianity is foreign to this world. The glory of a king, which is seen, and his riches, are earthly, and corruptible, and passing away : but that kingdom, and those riches, are Divine things, things heavenly and glorious, never passing away ; for they reign together with the heavenly King in the church in heaven. And he truly is “ the first-born from the dead :” but then are they the *first-born* also. Yet are they in their own eyes, the very least of all, and greatly set at nought. Nay, this is become to them as it were natural, and riveted into them to esteem themselves nothing.

3. *Quest.* Do they then not know that they are possessed of something which they had not before ?

Ans. They do : but still they look upon themselves to be of no esteem. Though with God they are precious,

yet with themselves they are not so : but just as if they had known nothing at all.

4. *Quest.* How is it that the apostle says, “ Though I have all knowledge, and all prophecy, and speak with the tongues of angels, I am nothing ? ”

Ans. In respect of that charity, which is perfect, are these but small matters ; and he that is in any of these degrees may fall. I have seen men that have been admitted to the whole circle of gifts, and been partakers of the Spirit, and these very persons, not having attained to perfect charity, have fallen. One of the noble order *sold all his goods*, set them that were slaves at liberty ; was himself a person of prudence and understanding ; yet, in the midst of all, by conceiving an opinion of himself, he fell in the event into scandalous impurities and endless mischiefs.

Another, in time of persecution, yielded up his body, and was hung up, and his senses taken away ; afterwards he was thrust into prison. There attended him one of the women according to the faith ; and having contracted familiarity with her, even while in custody, he fell into fornication. See ! the rich man that sold his goods, and he that gave up his body to martyrdom, how they fell !

Another, that lived with me in the same house, and prayed with me, was rich in grace. There was given him the gift of healing, and he not only cast out devils, but healed likewise those that were afflicted with grievous sicknesses, purely by putting his hands upon them. After this, growing careless, he was puffed up, and fell into the very lowest depths of sin. See ! even he that had the gift of healing fell. You see how they fall before they come to perfect love. But he that arrives at this is plunged all over, and carried off captive into another world.

5. *Quest.* What is the meaning of those words, “ Which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have they entered into the heart of man ? ”

Ans. At that time the great men, and the righteous, and the kings, knew that the Redeemer was to come : but that his blood was to be poured out upon the cross, they neither knew nor had heard, neither had it entered into their heart, that there was to be the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost ; and that Christians were to receive the Comforter, and be clothed with power from on high, and be filled with the Godhead, and mixed together with the Holy Spirit : this they knew nothing of, neither had it entered into their heart. For Christians now grow rich in a quite different way, and are carried up into the Godhead. But though possessed of so much joy and comfort, they are yet *in fear and trembling*.

Quest. What fear and trembling ?

Ans. A jealous fear, that they make no false step in any one instance ; but harmonize with grace. For a man does not immediately arrive at perfection. First, he enters the lists and fights with satan, and after a long course and fight he carries off the trophies of victory, and becomes a Christian. .

For if merely by hearing a man is made perfect without any further trouble ; then even those that frequent the theatre, and whoremongers, shall all go into the kingdom. But this cannot be: the *way is strait and narrow*: we must go through this rugged way, and hold out with patience, and be afflicted, and so enter into life.

6. But this is the way to God, viz. to travel the road of life in much patience, in hope, in humbleness of mind, in poverty of spirit, in meekness ; and through these is a man possessed of righteousness within himself. But the righteousness we are speaking of is *the Lord himself*. These commandments are as marks of the royal way, leading them that travel in it up to the heavenly city. For, saith he, “ Blessed are the poor in spirit ; blessed are the meek ; blessed are the merciful ; blessed are the peace-makers.” This is Christianity. Glory be to the tender mercies of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, for ever ! Amen.

HOMILY XVI.

The misery of the soul, when, by reason of sin, the Lord doth not dwell in her.

1. Wo to that way, wherein none walketh, neither heareth in it the voice of man! for it is become a receptacle of beasts. Wo to the soul, when the Lord walketh not in her, neither driveth out of her the spiritual beasts of wickedness with his voice! Wo to the house, when the master of it doth not inhabit it! Wo to the earth, when it hath no husbandman to till it! Wo to the ship, when it hath no pilot; for then it is tossed about with the waves and storms! Wo to the soul, when it hath not the true Pilot in her! for then, being in the sea of darkness, tossed about by the waves of unruly passions, at the mercy of wicked spirits, it obtains in the end destruction. Wo to the soul, when it wanteth Christ to till it with care, that it may bring forth the good fruits of the Spirit! For lying waste, and being full of thorns and thistles, in the end it is burnt with fire. Wo to the soul, when it hath not Christ, the Master, dwelling in it! for then is it a wilderness; yea, is filled with the ill savour of disorderly affections, the sink of all corruption.

2. As in Egypt, during the three days' darkness, the son saw not his father, neither the brother his brother, the darkness concealing them; so when Adam had transgressed the commandment, the veil of darkness came upon his soul, and now he saw not his true and heavenly Father, and neither his brother, the Lord, nor his friends and kindred, the holy angels. And even to this time, they, upon whom Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, hath not risen, and in whom the eyes of the soul have not been opened, are under the same darkness of sin, and have not eyes to behold their Father.

3. For this every one ought to know, that there are eyes within these outward eyes, and a sense of hearing more inward than this of the outward ear. And as these eyes of ours sensibly behold and know the face of a friend, or one we love; so do the eyes of a faithful soul, enlightened with Divine light, see the true Friend, the Bridegroom, the Lord. And thus beholding the only beauty, which surpasses expression, it is wounded with Divine love; it is directed to all the virtues of the Spirit; and obtains the boundless and never-failing love of her Lord.



HOMILY XVII.

*God executes the dispensations of his grace upon mankind,
after a two-fold manner.*

I. THE wisdom of God being infinite and incomprehensible, he executes the dispensations of his grace upon mankind, after an unsearchable manner, with great variety, that they may be manifest that seek him with all their heart, and endure all manner of danger and labour upon his account. Some are prevented with the favours and gifts of the Holy Spirit, immediately, as soon as they ask, without toil, and sweat, and fatigue; God affording them grace, not by chance, but by a wisdom that exceeds all expression. Let these who so quickly obtain the Divine grace, be sensible of the benefit and kindness that has been shewn them, and of the sweetness of God, according to the proportion of grace received, without any pains of their own: let them give proof of their diligence and their conflict, and make a suitable return for those gifts, by giving their whole selves to the love of the Lord, doing his will only, and withdrawing themselves perfectly from all carnal desire.

2. On others, (though they have withdrawn from the world, and persevere in prayer, and fasting and diligence) God does not immediately bestow his grace and rest, and the gladness of the Spirit, but withholds the gift, that he may see whether they thought him the faithful and true God, who has promised, *to give to them that ask, and to open to them that knock*, the door of life ; that he may observe whether they endure to the end, asking and seeking ; or whether through remissness, they fall off, not holding on to the end.

3. For some that receive not in a little time, are the more desirous after heavenly things ; and every day adds to their former industry, and speed, and struggle, and hunger and thirst after that which is good ; nothing dispirited, by the trials that are present with their souls, nor turning to impatience, or despair ; yea, the more the Lord puts them upon the trial, so much the more eager, diligent, and obstinate they are, in seeking after the gift of God ; being fully assured that God *cannot lie*, who hath promised to give his grace, to them that continue to ask.

4. Wherefore suitably to this assurance, do they make an estimate of themselves wherein they are deficient ; whether it be in labour, or conflict, or application, or any other point, and when they make this scrutiny, with all the exactness they are able, they force and urge themselves, all they can, to do what is well-pleasing to the Lord ; as having this full confidence, that God, who is true, will not deprive them of the gift of the Spirit, if they persevere to the end in the expectation of him : but they shall receive the heavenly grace, while they continue in the flesh, and shall obtain eternal life.

5. And thus do they direct their eye to the Lord, looking for him only with great desire, and ever waiting for the consolation of grace, and taking no comfort in any thing of this world. At the same time the Lord himself is already, after an hidden manner, present with them, and succours, and preserves them, and is their support.

Although they have not obtained the grace of the Spirit, and the refreshment of the heavenly gift ; yet let them not fear ; they that take up such an intention, and endeavour, and pains, and desire of virtue, and continue in it to the end, shall of a truth obtain life, and the everlasting kingdom.

6. Let not therefore any of the brethren be lifted up against his brother, so as to say, I have the spiritual gift, and thou hast not. For you know not what the morrow may bring forth ; or what end his will be, and what your own. But let every one, looking well to himself, sift his conscience at all times, and prove the work of his heart, what application and conflict he has in his mind towards God. And aiming at the perfect mark of liberty, and freedom from disorderly affections, let him run without intermission, never placing his confidence in any gift, or in any act of righteousness. Glory and worship be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, for ever ! Amen.



HOMILY XVIII.

Concerning the progress of a Christian.

1. As many lights and burning lamps are kindled by the fire, but all the lamps and lights are lighted up from one nature. Thus Christians also are lighted up from one nature, and shine, from the Divine fire, the Son of God ; and have these lamps flaming in their hearts, and shine before him while on earth, even as he himself.

2. Christians therefore are lights that have the oil in themselves, that is, "the fruits of righteousness." But if they are not lighted up from the light of the Godhead in themselves, they are nothing. The Lord was a burning light through the Spirit of the Godhead abiding

substantially in him, and inflaming his heart according to his human part.

3. For as a rotten bag that is filled with pearls, so are Christians also, who being outwardly despicable, have in the "inward man the pearl of great price." But others are like "whited sepulchres, without indeed they are beautiful; but within are full of dead mens' bones. They are dead before God, and clothed with all manner of shame and filth, and the darkness of the enemy.

4. The Christian ought at all times to be mindful of God. For it is written, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;" that he may not only *love the Lord*, when he goes into his oratory, but that even when walking, and in company, and *when eating*, he may retain the memory of God, and a natural affection for him. Indeed to what thing soever the heart of any one is linked, that is his god. If the heart at all times desireth God, he is the Lord of the heart. But if any one that has outwardly renounced all, and is stript of his possessions, yet is wedded to himself, or to worldly desires; wheresoever his heart is chained, that is his god. And he is found to have come out of the world indeed through the broad gate, but through a wicket to have gone in again.

5. But if a man at all times cleave fast unto the Lord, and places his confidence and hope upon him; then none can hurt him: for though the devils are strong as the strong mountains, they are burnt by prayer, as wax by fire. Yet in the mean time great is the struggle and fight that lies upon the soul against them. There are the *rivers of dragons*, and the *mouths of lions*. But the fire of love burneth up all.

6. As a man that is a *complete worker of evil*, is insatiable after mischief; so Christians that have been baptized into the Holy Spirit, are insatiable after God. Yet while they have a mixture of sin, they are liable to fear, and travel through frightful places.

7. For as merchants, though they have now a fair wind, and a smooth sea, are in fear, lest on a sudden there should be a contrary wind, and the sea grow tempestuous : so Christians, though they have in themselves the favourable wind of the Spirit blowing, yet are in concern, lest the wind of the adverse power should rise upon them, and stir up a tempest in their souls.

There is need therefore of great industry, that we may come to the haven of rest, to the perfect world, to eternal life and pleasure, to the "city of the saints, to the heavenly Jerusalem, to the church of the first-born."

8. Nor ought we to be secure. For as a garden that is set with fruit-trees, and sweet-smelling plants, and all well laid out and contrived with beauty, and has withal a little wall for an hedge, to keep it ; if it should so fall out that a rapid river runs by it, and by little and little dissolves the foundation, having once gained entrance, it roots up all that was planted. Even thus is the heart of man ; it has good thoughts and desires, but there are rivers of corruption ever approaching. And if the mind but a little give way to unclean thoughts ; lo, the spirits of error have entered in, and overturned all the beauties that were there, and laid the soul waste.

9. As the eye is little beyond all the members, and yet contains the heaven, the stars, the sun, the moon, cities, and other creatures ; for all these are seen under one, are formed and imagined in the pupil of the eye. Thus also the heart is a little vessel. And yet there are dragons, and there are lions, the poisonous beasts, and all the treasures of wickedness, and there are rugged ways, and precipices. In like manner there is God, there are the angels ; there is the life and the kingdom ; there is the light, there are the treasures of grace : there are all things.

10. And yet many find them not. For as when the alarm of war is sounding, the wise-men, and the great ones were not there ; but the poor, and the un-

learned are sent forth ; and they work a victory over their enemies, and receive from the king the rewards of their victory, and crowns, and dignities. Thus also is it in heavenly things. It is the poor and unlearned from the beginning, that love the truth, do what it requires, fight the good fight, and receive from God the grace of his Spirit. But the wise and great flee the war ; neither do they make any progress, and consequently are left behind them who have fought and overcome.

And the Lord hath promised, "Where I am, there also shall these my servants be." And they shall reign together with the Father, and with the Son, and with the Holy Spirit, even to ages of ages ! Amen.



HOMILY XIX.

What kind of change Christ worketh in the Christian.

1. HE that cometh to God, and desires to be the person that *sitteth with Christ upon his throne*, ought to come to him upon this very view, that he may be changed from his former state and conversation ; that he may be *a new man*, who carries nothing of the *old man* about him : "For if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." For our Lord Jesus Christ came for this very reason, that he might change, and renew, and *create afresh* this soul that had been perverted by vile affections, tempering it with his own Divine Spirit. He came to work a new mind, and a new soul, and new eyes, new ears, a new spiritual tongue ; yea, to make them that believe in him *new men*, that he might *pour* into them the *new wine*, which is his Spirit.

2. For as the enemy, when he had gotten man into his own hands, wrought him anew for himself, having

clothed him with vile affections, and poured into him the spirit of sin ; so also the Lord, having redeemed him from the enemy, wrought him anew, and poured his own Spirit into him. For he that changed the nature of the burning fire to bedew them that were in the furnace ; and for Daniel's sake tamed the nature of the lions, can also transform the soul that was grown wild by sin into his own goodness and peace by the Holy Spirit of promise.

3. For as the shepherd can heal a diseased sheep, and keep him from the wolves ; so the true Shepherd is able to heal the sheep that was lost, even *man* from the *leprosy of sin*. The priests and levites, and the teachers that were before, were never able to heal the soul by their oblations of gifts and sacrifices ; yea, they were not able to heal themselves. "For it was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin." But the Lord can heal every disease, and every sickness of the soul. And the true healing of the soul is from the Lord only.

4. The good shepherd therefore healeth the sheep. But the sheep itself can never heal the sheep. And unless *man* be healed, there is no entrance for him into the congregation of the Lord in heaven. Thus also was it said in the law through a shadow ; "A leper shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord." But he commanded the leper to go to the priest, who was to bring him into the house of his tabernacle, put his hands upon the leprosy, the place marked with the infection, and heal it. After the same manner, Christ, the true high-priest of good things to come, in condescension to leprous souls, enters into the tabernacle of their body, takes care of their disorders, and healeth them. And thus will the soul be able to enter into the heavenly church of the saints of the *true Israel*. But every soul that bears the *leprosy of sin* in her affections, and will not come to the true high-priest, and be taken

care of now, finds no admission into the camp of the saints.

It behoveth therefore the soul that truly believeth in Christ, to be changed from her present nature into another nature, which is Divine, and to be wrought new herself through the power of the Holy Spirit. And to obtain this, will be allowed to us who believe and love him in truth, and walk in all his holy commandments.

5. No man can of himself go over the sea, unless he have a vessel, which is able to go upon the waters ; after the same manner is it impossible for the soul to pass over the sea of sin, and the abyss of the powers of darkness ; unless it receive the Spirit of Christ that walketh, and makes its way over all wickedness, by means of which he will arrive by a quick and straight passage at the heavenly port of rest.

6. But as a ship stands in need of a pilot, in order to sail well ; the Lord himself is a pilot to the faithful soul, and conveys it through all the waves of wickedness, and the strong winds of sin. Without Christ, it is impossible for any one to get over the wicked sea of the powers of darkness. "They mount up, (saith the Psalmist,) to the heavens, and go down again to the depths." But he is well acquainted with the whole art of a pilot, and tramples upon their fierce waves. For he, saith the apostle, "Having himself been tempted, is able to succour them that are tempted."

7. We ought therefore to *believe with our whole heart* his unspeakable *promises*, to *love the Lord*, and to be industrious in all virtues, and to beg continually, that we may receive *the promise of his Spirit* entirely and perfectly ; that so our souls might be quickened whilst we are yet in the flesh. For unless the soul shall in this world receive the sanctification of the Spirit through much faith and prayer, and be made partaker of the Divine nature, (through which it will be able without *blame* and in *purity* to *perform every commandment* ;) it is unfit for the kingdom of heaven. For whatever

good a man hath possessed in this world, the same shall in that day be his life, through the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost for ever ! Amen.



HOMILY XX.

No art or wealth of this world, but the manifestation of Christ alone, is able to heal man.

1. HE that hath made Christ his choice, ought to look upon all things in this world, as out of his way and foreign to him. For he that truly *follows* after the *cross of Christ*, having *renounced all things*, and *even his own soul*, ought to have his *mind fixed* upon the *love of Christ* ; *preferring the Lord* before *parents, brethren, wife, children, kindred, friends, and possessions*. For this hath Christ plainly declared in these words, “ Every one that hath not left father, or mother, or brethren, or wife, or children, or lands, and followeth not me, is not worthy of me.” For in no *other* is there found *salvation* and *rest* for mankind.

2. How many kings have there sprung from the race of Adam, whose thoughts have been lifted up by their royal power ? Yet not one of these has so much as known that corruption which from the transgression of the first man broke in upon the soul. There have also been several wise men in the world, and variety of artificers. But all these being held fast by the serpent dwelling within, and being sensible of the sin that cohabited with them, because the captives and slaves of the wicked power, without gaining any advantage from their knowledge and skill.

3. The world therefore, thus stored with all manner of varieties, is like a rich man that is possessed of great and splendid houses, gold and silver, and possessions ; but

being distressed with pains and distempers, cannot with all that wealth, release himself of his infirmity. No application of any thing relating to this life, neither riches, nor strength rescue the soul from sin; nothing less than the appearance of Christ, that alone is able to cleanse both soul and body. Wherefore having disengaged ourselves from the *cares of this life*, let us *devote* ourselves to the Lord, *crying to him night and day*. For this visible world, and the rest which it affords, the more they seem to cherish the body, so much the more do they sharpen the disorders of the soul, and increase her illness.

4. God hath *created* both *the heaven and the earth; the sun, and the moon, the waters, the trees*, and all kinds of *living* creatures. But in none of these doth God take up his rest. The creation is under his command, but he hath no where fixed his throne, nor vouchsafed communion with himself to any but man, in whom alone he is well pleased—to whom he hath imparted himself, and in whom he hath taken up his rest. Do you behold here the near relation of God to man, and of man to God? Wherefore the soul having made trial of all the creatures, hath not found any rest for herself but in the Lord alone. Nor hath the Lord found *pleasure in any other*, but *man* only.

5. If you open your eyes towards the sun, you find his orb in the heaven, but his light and rays glancing full upon the earth, and the whole force of his light, and his brightness shooting down upon it. So likewise doth our Lord *sit* in person at the “right hand of the Father, above all principality and power;” but his *eyes* extended to the *hearts of men upon earth*, that he may raise them to the place where he himself is; yea, “He hath raised us up together with him, and made us sit together at his right-hand in heavenly places.” To Him be glory for ever! Amen. |

HOMILY XXI.

An allegorical explanation of things done under the law.

1. THE glory of Moses, which he had upon his face, was a type of the true glory. For whereas the Jews were not able to fix their eyes upon the face of Moses; so do Christians receive that glory of light within their souls; and the darkness beareth not the splendour of it.

2. They were manifested by circumcision, that they were the people of God: but here the peculiar people of God receive the sign of circumcision within, in their heart. For the heavenly sword cutteth off the unclean foreskin of sin.

3. Among them baptism sanctified the flesh; but with us is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and of fire.

4. There was an outward tabernacle and an inward; and into the first the priests went at all times, accomplishing the service of God. Into the second, once a year, "went the high-priest only, with blood; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." But we all enter into the "tabernacle not made with hands, whither the Forerunner is entered for us, Christ."

5. It is written in the law, that "the priest shall take two pigeons, and kill the one," but *sprinkle* the *living one* with her *blood*, and let it go, that it may *fly away free*. This was a type and shadow of the truth. For Christ was slain, and his blood having *sprinkled us*, hath made us to bear wings. He hath "given us of his Holy Spirit," that we might fly without impediment into the Godhead.

6. To them was given the law written upon "tables of stone;" but to us, that "written upon the tables of the heart." For, saith he, "I will put my laws into their heart, and in their mind will I write them." And in-

deed all those things were abolishable and temporary. But they are now accomplished in the inward man.

7 The Lord spake to Moses, "to take a lamb without spot, and kill it, and with the blood of it to anoint the thresholds and the doors, that he that destroyed the first-born of the Egyptians, should not touch them." For the angel that was sent, beheld the sign of the blood from afar, and withdrew. But he went into the houses which had not the sign, and "slew every first-born. He also commanded that leaven should be put away out of every house." Moreover, he commanded them to eat it "with their loins girt, and with their feet shod with sandals, and having staves in their hands." Thus does he command them with all haste to eat the passover of the Lord at even, and not to break a bone of it before the Lord.

They came out of Egypt, as the Egyptians were burying their first-born. And they had joy upon their freedom from the hard bondage. But these had grief and wailing for the destruction of their children.

All these things are the mystery of the soul, redeemed by the coming of Christ. If the soul groan and cry to God, he sendeth the spiritual Moses to deliver her from the bondage of the Egyptians. First, it cries and groans, and then does it obtain the beginning of its redemption. But then does he command that all the old leaven be purged out of every house, to cast out as much as possible all the actions and "devices of the old man, which is corrupt;" his wicked thoughts, and sordid conceptions.

The lamb ought to be slain and sacrificed, and the blood of it to *stain the doors*. For Christ, the true and immaculate Lamb, was slain, and with his blood are the thresholds of the heart anointed; that the blood of Christ, which was shed upon the cross, might become life and redemption to the soul.

Then, after the anointing is over, he commandeth them at even to eat the lamb, being girt about with girdles, and shod with sandals, having staves in their hands. For

unless the soul be prepared as much as in her lies, she is not allowed to eat of the Lamb.

He *bringeth* the souls out of Egypt, and out of bondage, her first-born being slain in their coming out. For some part of the power of the spiritual Pharaoh is already *fallen*. Grief possesses the Egyptians; for they groan with grief at the salvation of the captives. Blessed is that soul which is redeemed from darkness! And wo be to that soul which doth not cry and groan to him who is able to deliver her from those hard and bitter exactors. The children of Israel having kept the passover, depart. The soul advances forwards, having once received the life of the Holy Spirit, and tasted of the Lamb, and been anointed with his blood, and fed upon the true bread, the Living Word.

8. The *pillar of fire* and the *pillar of the cloud* go before, protecting them. The Holy Spirit supports these, cherishing them, and directing their souls in a sensible manner. Pharaoh, having knowledge that the people were fled, had the confidence, even after the slaughter of the first-born, to pursue after them, with the whole body of his people. How exact is the resemblance! when the soul has first made its escape, the power of God succours her, leading her into truth. But when the spiritual Pharaoh has notice that the soul is revolted, he pursues her hard with afflictions and temptations. Here is she tried; here is she tempted; here is her love towards him that brought her out of Egypt made manifest. She beholds the forces of the enemy coming upon her, and yet not having her in their power. For in the very midst, between her and the Egyptians, doth the Lord stand. Withal, she beholds before her the sea of affliction, and is unable to retire backward, having on that side also enemies ready prepared; nor yet can she advance forwards. She has therefore the sentence of death in her, by reason of the throng of the wicked spirits that surrounds her. Such is the way which God hath appointed to lead to life, viz. To be in affliction, and in straits, and

temptations ; that thence the soul may afterwards make her way to the true land of the glory of the sons of God. When therefore the soul has no hope in herself, through the overbearing affliction, and the death before her eyes ; in that very juncture doth she, with a strong hand, and an high arm, through the shining forth of the Holy Spirit, break through the power of darkness ; and passes through, escaping out of the frightful places, and having shot through the sea of darkness, and the all-devouring fire.

These are the mysteries of the soul, which are brought to pass in the man who is industrious to come to the promise of life, and who is redeemed out of the kingdom of death, and made partaker of the Holy Spirit.



HOMILY XXII.

It is not enough for a man to be taken off from the delights of this world, unless he attain to the happiness of the other.

I. IF any man who has renounced this world, and is estranged from the delights of it, both possessions, and father and mother, for the sake of the Lord, and having crucified himself, becomes a stranger, poor and indigent ; yet does not find in himself the Divine refreshment, in the room of the refreshment of this world,—and instead of the delights which are temporary, the delights of the Spirit ;—if, instead of this temporary and fleshly communion, he is not acquainted with the communion of the heavenly Bridegroom—and instead of the joy of this world, he possesses not within, the joy of the Spirit, the consolation of the heavenly grace ;—if, instead of this temporary fruition, he does not possess that incorruptible fruition of God—this person is pitiable above all men ; he is deprived of the things here, and hath no enjoyment of the gifts divine.

2. He that hath renounced this world, ought even now to pass in, through the Spirit, into another world, and there to have his conversation and his pleasures, and to enjoy the spiritual good things, being born of the Spirit, as the Lord hath said, "He that believeth in me, is passed from death to life;" for as much as there is another death besides that which is before our eyes, and another life besides that which doth appear. For, saith the Scripture, "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth:" and, "Let the dead bury their dead. For the dead shall not praise thee, O Lord; but we that are alive will bless thee."

3. The soul that is born of God, collecting all her thoughts, enters in unto the Lord, into "the house which is from heaven, not made with hands;" and all her thoughts become heavenly, and pure, and holy. For he that is once set free from the darkness of this world, findeth thoughts pure and divine, because God hath been pleased to make him partaker of the Divine nature.

4. If both your body and soul were spent every hour throughout your whole life for the sake of such good things, what would this amount to? O the inexpressible compassion of God, that so freely grants himself to them that believe, to inherit God, and for God to dwell in the body of man, and the Lord to have man for his house!

For as God created heaven and earth for man to dwell in—so hath he created both the body and soul of man for his own house; that he may dwell and rest in the body as in his own house, having the soul for his bride, made according to his image. "For I have espoused you," says the apostle, "to one husband, that I may present you a chaste virgin to Christ."

5. This is the Lord; she is a servant. This is the Creator; she a creature. This is the Workman; she the workmanship. There is nothing common to both natures. But through his boundless, unutterable, and inconceivable love and tender compassion, hath it pleased him to dwell in this work of his hands, his precious and

choice work, "that we might be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures," for his *wisdom* and *fellowship*, for his own mansion-house, for his own precious and pure Bride.

Wherefore such good things being set before us, and such promises made to us, and the good pleasure of the Lord towards us having been such:—Children! let us not be negligent, neither delay our quick return to eternal life, and to devote ourselves to the good pleasure of the Lord, wholly and entirely.

6. Let us therefore beseech the Lord, that, by the power of his Godhead, he would redeem us from the darkness of our vile affections; and that, having vindicated his own image and work, he would make it to shine out. And thus shall we be thought worthy of the communion of the Spirit, giving glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.



AN

E X T R A C T

OF

JOHN ARNDT'S

TRUE CHRISTIANITY.



TO THE

Q U E E N.

MADAM,

FALSE Christianity hath so much over-run the Christian world, that it is hard to find true Christianity in the midst of so many counterfeits. If Christianity be traced to its first original source, and considered in its primitive splendour and beauty, without any alloy of human inventions or additions, it must needs appear in a Divine lustre, in a celestial majesty, in an unmixed innocency, in an undefiled integrity, in an unspotted brightness. For true Christianity is of a Divine pedigree, and of a truly high descent. All the charms and beauties whereby it hath in all ages attracted the eyes of some men, are derived from no less an author than God himself; and all the graces, wherewith it is adorned, are the effects of his Spirit. Thus is Christianity, (as it relateth to men,) the Divine nature communicated to them. It is the image of God stamped upon the mind, and shining through all the actions of life. It is the righteousness and holiness of truth. It is the life of God within us. As many men as there are, so many living images of God there would be, had religion but continued in that heaven-born state whercin it was established at first.

But, alas ! what a sad inundation of evil has followed, after so noble and heavenly an establishment ! That sweet confederacy of all the powers of our souls with God, their first Original, is entirely broke, and an open enmity hath succeeded in its place ! Religion is now like a stream, which, by a continual remove from the Fountain-head, and by passing through so many channels by the way, (I mean the unhallowed hands and hearts of the managers thereof,) hath contracted such a deal of filth on the one hand, and lost so much of its original soundness on the other, that it is hard to discover but a few rays of its first light, in the midst of so many clouds that hang about it.

True Christianity, according to its intrinsic constitution, is an active, lively, strong, vigorous principle, seated in the inmost soul, and swaying by its dictates, all the actions proceeding from thence. But the Christianity now in vogue hardly touches the heart at all ; and the sacrifices the Christians now offer up, are generally without heart ; a thing the heathens themselves counted prodigious in their victims. It is easily content, if the Christian, such as he is, doth but tolerably keep up to an external decorum, and then sits down quietly with the thoughts of having done his duty. But if sin be an inward evil, (as most certainly it is,) Christianity must needs be an inward grace, in order to conquer and subdue it. True Christianity refines the inward faculties of the soul, (such as reason, will, and understanding,) from the pollutions which adhere to them, and then reinstates them in their former places and offices.

True Christianity is a creation of God : but the advocates of false Christianity do not rise above themselves,

but spin all their religious duties, as it were, out of their own bowels. There is nothing of heaven in it ; nothing of grace ; nothing of the Divine nature. Every duty they seemingly perform is a mere human creation.

True Christianity requireth that the word of the gospel, as the ordinary means of man's recovery, should become an ingrafted word ; a word mixed with faith in the hearer ; that so it may be able to save the soul : but the false Christian is apt to lean on an outward compliance with some set duties and modes of worship. True Christianity is an evangelical principle, a vital heat, an inward flame. Hence the works proceeding from it, are as so many free, ready, loving, steady, uniform, and unconstrained emanations : but the false Christian valueth himself upon some frothy moralities, legal performances, slavish observances, and a set of such duties as are off and on, according as either the terror of the law worketh within, or the approach of some great judgment haunteth the mind from without. All which will never nourish and sweeten, but cloy and sour the soul with troubles and discontent.

Another character of true Christianity is, to be principally concerned with the essentials and substantials of religion ; such as is the great work of faith and of the new birth, with the rest of the Christian virtues freely accompanying it, as resignation, mortification, imitation of Christ, self-abnegation, contrition, and others relating to the inward principle of grace, and its various motions and operations : but false Christianity is chiefly, if not only, busy about the ceremonial part, and some accessory and circumstantial points. It bringeth forth every age new schemes, new models, new projects of religion. And hence it is, that what religion produceth

now, is often contrary to what it is designed to produce, and to what it brought forth actually, when it first came to be known among men.

When Christianity made its first appearance in the world, it had then, as it were, its credentials in its hands, whereby it was abundantly made out, that it was of a Divine progeny, and sent on no other errand, but to make fallen men partakers of the Divine nature. Love was then the true characteristic and peculiar badge of Christianity. Hereby it distinguished itself from all the rest of religions in the world. Hereby it left the divinest convictions of its pre-eminence upon the most obstinate heathens, among whom it even passed at last into a proverb, "See how the Christians love one another!" And in this it came up very close to its author and original, who is Love. It laid then a holy violence on many of the most profligate sinners, and such as were most opposite to it; nothing being stronger than love, and nothing more effectual to reform wicked men into a liking of religion, than love; especially if this appear in its unmixed purity, and be fixed on its genuine object, whereon it ought to dwell.

And this spirit of love, as it is one of the noblest and first products, or fruits of Christianity, so it is never without a train of other graces inseparably attending it. Wherever this love resideth it swayeth all the faculties of the soul, and actions of the body, with a heavenly rectitude. For love is a royal law, and wherever it getteth the leading hand, there it getteth most sovereign commands; and where it is fixed, there it will fix also all that is in the soul. As Israel of old would leave not one hoof in Egypt, so this love maketh all the faculties, thoughts, desires, and inclinations of the mind, a sacri-

fice unto the Lord, without reserving any thing to the abuse of a profane and degenerate world.

One reason why the state of Christianity is degenerated so much from what is once was, and why it has lost in a manner its intrinsic power and beauty, is plainly this : people have long misplaced the name of Christianity. They have bestowed it on things which are none of its essential ingredients. What we now commonly call religion, Christianity, church, faith, worship, prayer, duties, are generally things that do not answer at all the nature and constitution, the power and energy, of the religion introduced by Christ. The hearing of sermons, the saying of prayers, the reading of books, (by which too many do now measure their religion,) even when they are duly performed, are not properly the Divine worship itself, as it is required by the gospel, but a means only to come at it : and yet how apt is the vulgar sort of our Christians to give it this name ? A thing which both good and bad are able to perform ! The stress we lay upon those external performances is too great, and the use we make of them too little.

Thus hath the common deceiver of souls all along endeavoured to cast a mist, (if not before the celestial brightness of the gospel itself, yet) before people's eyes ; thereby to involve and obscure the plainest religion in various errors and prejudices. And whereas we ought long ago to have rectified them by the original pattern left us by the Author of Christianity, and, at any price, purchased again a pure and undefiled religion, we are with the tract of times but still farther removed from this blessed original ; and instead of curing our mistakes, have multiplied them. And this is the reason that generally the transcripts, which the differing deno-

minations of Christendom make of this original in these days, prove so very lame, mean, and imperfect.

Yet there will be a time, when the church of Christ will “come up from the wilderness,” of various sects, parties, nations, languages, forms, and ways of worship, nay, of crosses and afflictions, “leaning upon her Beloved,” and, in his power, bidding defiance to all her enemies. Then shall that church, which now doth but look forth as the morning in its first dawn, after a continual growth in strength and beauty, appear “terrible as an army with banners;” but terrible to those only that despised her whilst she was in her minority, and would not have her Beloved to reign over them.

May the Lord enable your Majesty to do more and more what is acceptable to him, and continue, as he hath been hitherto, your Shield and Protector! May he lead you, in whatever you undertake, soberly! (which was part of Solomon’s prayer.*) And, since the devices of men, even of the wisest of men, are but uncertain, send his wisdom from above, that you may know his counsel; and, by the constant influence of his Spirit, be faithful in the administration of that great trust which is reposed in you! This heartily wisheth,

Madam,

Your Majesty’s most faithful,

Humble, and obedient Servant,

ANTHONY WILLIAM BOEHM.

* Wisdom ix. 11.

TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

THE FIRST BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

Of the image of God in man.

1. THE image of God in man, is the conformity of man's soul, of his spirit and mind, of his understanding and will, and of all his faculties or powers, with the Divine Being, the Infinite Good, with all the Divine attributes, virtues, and properties that can ever be imaged forth in a creature ; with the original pattern of the Divine mind, and the perfect standard of that will from whence all "righteousness and true holiness" are derived.

And hence this was drawn after such a manner, as that the Divine holiness, righteousness, and goodness, might shine forth in his soul, and send forth light abundantly in his intellect, will, and affections ; yea, and in his outward life also ; and that all his actions might breathe nothing but Divine love, Divine power, and Divine purity ; and man might live upon earth no otherwise than the blessed angels do in heaven, always doing the will of his heavenly Father.

2. Thus man was made to lead an heavenly and angelical life upon the earth: and by an efflux of this God-like image in him, he had dominion also over all things in this world; being for that end, but a little lower than the angels, and even that but a little while. Wherefore, the creatures of the earth, sea, and air, were universally put into subjection under him, that so he might rule them to his Creator's glory, by a Divine virtue and power inherent in him, according to the express decree concerning him, whereby this was originally communicated together with that image, saying, "Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." So that all this is the consequence of man's being thus Divinely formed, and sealed with the Divine image and similitude, as a representative and vicegerent of God; whom he was to have expressed continually in love, power, and holiness: for God was delighted to honour him. And this image he had made in man, on purpose to take his delight in him, and rejoice, as it were, in his soul, with the joy of a bridegroom in his bride, and a father in his child, born after his image; beholding himself in this his offspring, his rejoicing was thence "in the habitable part of the earth;" and his "delights were with the sons of men," as in whom he himself was *represented*. Thus God's chief pleasure was to be with man; in whom he rested as it were from all his labour. And our first parents and their posterity were to have always enjoyed this blessed communion, had they continued in his likeness, and rested in him, and in his will, by placing their delight in the original of this blessed image; which, as it was their beginning, was to be also their end. For though God rested in all his works, yet did he more eminently rest in man, than in them all, as in a sovereign *master-piece* of his creation, from which did shine forth the *excellent glory* in highest innocence, beauty, and lustre.

3. And to this end the great and holy God, created man altogether pure in the beginning, as an unspotted mirror of his brightness, without the least stain or blemish, being endued with such faculties both of soul and body, as were then perfectly blameless and unreprouable : that so the Divine image might in him be seen, not as a vain and lifeless shadow appears in a glass, but as a true and living image of the invisible God, and as the likeness of his inward, hidden, immensē beauty. Thus was man created after the similitude of the Divine being, in perfect beauty ; there being an image of the wisdom of God in the *understanding* of man ; an image of the goodness, meekness, and patience of God in the *spirit* of man ; an image of Divine love and mercy in the *affections* of man's heart ; an image of God's righteousness and holiness, integrity and purity in the *will* of man ; an image of his friendliness, his loveliness, his gentleness, his courtesy, and his veracity in all man's *words* and *actions* ; an image of his Almighty power in the *dominion* and government of man over the earth, and in the fear and subjection of all living creatures, that were granted to him ; and last of all, an image of God's eternity in the *immortality* of the soul.

4. From this image, man ought to have studied and learnt the knowledge of God and of himself : and this should have been done by him before all things. Out of this he might have known God his creator to be all things, the Being of beings, and the chief and only being, from whom all created beings have their existence, and in whom, and by whom all things that are, do subsist and have their being. Out of this image he might also have known God, as the original of man's nature, and fountain of his being, to be all that *essentially*, whereof the image and representation was shadowed forth in himself. And that the image of this ought to shine out clearly in man, to the honour and praise of God ; who had graciously vouchsafed herein to demonstrate, according to the

riches of his infinite power and wisdom, the most vivid traces of his unutterable goodness.

5. For seeing that man was to carry in him the image of Divine goodness, it thence follows, that God is the sovereign and universal goodness *essentially* ; and consequently, that he is essential love, essential life, and essential holiness.—Wherefore to God alone all worship, praise, honour, glory, magnificence, might, majesty, dominion, power and virtue, are to be ascribed as his due ; because he is all of these essentially. But not any of all these is due to any creature whatsoever, or to be given to any thing besides, either in heaven or in earth, but to God only.

6. Yet farther, man, out of this image of the Deity, should learn in the next place to *know himself*. He should know, that the distance between the creature and the Creator, must be beyond all conception great ; and that in him there is no goodness at all, even in his best estate, but a likeness only, or resemblance of the goodness of God. Man verily is not God, but God's image ; and the image of God ought to represent nothing but God. In man therefore, who was made the express similitude of God, the very character and image of Divine power, Divine wisdom, and Divine goodness ; God alone should be seen, God alone should be glorified. Besides God, nothing should live in man ; besides God, nothing should in man put forth itself : nothing but God himself should appear, operate, will, love, think, speak, act and triumph in him. For if any thing else besides God does move and work in man, then man cannot be the image of God ; but he is become the image of *that* whatever it be, which now moveth and worketh in him. If man therefore would continue the image of God, there is a necessity for him to surrender up himself wholly to God. And so quietly to suffer God to do and work all things in him, even as he willeth. Whence, by denying his own will, man ought in all things, without reserve, to fulfill

the Divine will, by a most true and perfect obedience ; as one resigned, devoted, and absolutely given up to God, in whom only he wisheth to live. This truly is a Divine accomplishment, and is begotten of God, to the end, that man may be a most pure and holy instrument of the Divine majesty, and of his works and will. Whereby it comes to pass, that man doth not move in his *own* will, but hath the Divine will instead of his own ; doth not seek his own honour, but God's ; doth not challenge either inward or outward good to himself, but refers all to the original good ; and being contented to possess God, consequently does not love the world. Thus should it indeed have been with man, who ought to have freely rendered himself the organ of the Divine operations ; that so God might be all in him, and do all in him, by his Holy Spirit. To conclude then, nothing was to be, live, and work in man, but purely God alone, and his word.

7. And herein did consist man's perfect innocence, purity, and sanctity. For what greater innocency can there be, than that the man should not do his own will, but the will of his heavenly Father ? What greater purity, than that man suffer God in him to work and finish all things according to his pleasure ? What greater sanctity, than for man to be as a well-tuned instrument of the Holy Ghost ? Behold here are innocency and simplicity in perfection. "This is the highest innocency, to be without all self-will." This is the highest simplicity, to be as a little child, in whom the world hath not yet imaged or portrayed itself.

8. In such child-like innocency and simplicity, man ought to have stood in absolute obedience to God ; and God should have ruled in him without a competitor, bringing all man's faculties and powers into subjection to his sceptre of righteousness and peace ; whereby a triumphant joy in the Divine image would have also arisen in him, and God would have taken delight in him, as in a beloved son. Thus should the kingdom of God

have been in man, and the tabernacle of God with the glory thereof, would have ever been with man ; had he but made such a total surrender of himself, in true filial resignation.

9. In such an holy innocency as this, was the image of God in Adam at the beginning, which he ought in true meekness and obedience to have kept. And for that end, to have watched over it, so that he might not be tempted or surprised, for the sake hereof, to think of himself, as if he were somebody, or were to be unto himself the chief good ; but that hence he might reflect on himself, as the image only of the chief good, and as a mirror of the Godhead. But while he considered not this as he ought, but chose rather to be this good to himself ; that is, to be as God, he fell thereby into the greatest and most abominable of all evils, being deprived of this inestimable image, and so alienated from that communion with God, which, by virtue of it, he had before enjoyed.

10. But there is remaining besides, another part of knowledge through the Divine image, which is greatly to be desired. Being rooted in humility, by the sincere knowledge of our own utter disability to effect any good for ourselves, by our having no more at best, but an image of the one good. We ought also to be rooted in faith, to the glory of God, even in the faith of his Divine operation ; to the end, we may not miss of the good gifts which do accompany the same. We ought to understand, that man was made capable of all the benefits of this Divine image, and, together with it, of unmixed delight ; of solid pleasure ; of flowing love ; of God-like peace and tranquillity ; and of all the fruits of the Holy Ghost ; and to know thence the revelation of the glory of God in man, even as it is in the angels of heaven. And this is a knowledge truly to be desired, which bringeth that peace that passeth knowledge, even the peace of God himself into the soul, as in his beloved image : and therewith spiritual fortitude, power, virtue, dominion,

majesty, harmony, life, and light, which are not to be separated from this Divine image. In consequence of which, it is plain, that God alone should in man have been all things ; and that man, by virtue hereof, would have been the tabernacle of God, so long as this heavenly image did abide in him.

11. Now had self-will but been excluded, this could not have departed from him ; and this abiding, God cannot but live and work in the creature. That God therefore, may fill man, made after his image, it behoveth man, before all things, to be *emptied* of himself, taking upon him the *form of a servant* ; and to *humble himself* as much as possible, and become *obedient* with him *unto death*. So it should be with man, made in the likeness of his Creator ; and the love, and honour, and praise of himself, being thus excluded, only God should be his glory, his praise, his honour, and worship. For every like is capable of its like. And so man being in the likeness of God, was capable of God, and should have rested in God, and in him continually rejoiced. And in this wise, God has decreed to infuse himself into man, with all the treasures of his goodness.

12. Lastly, man ought to understand, that he is, by means of this image, united to God. And that as on one side, the union of God with the soul is the only true rest thereof, from which, peace, joy, life, and happiness, eternally do flow ; so on the other side, restlessness and torment of the mind, with all vexation of spirit, cannot happen otherwise than by the breach of this union, or by ceasing to be the image of God ; which is, by man's turning himself to the creature, whereby he is deprived of the eternal good, from which, for the sake of the creature, he is turned away.

CHAP. II.

Of the fall of Adam.

1. **THE** fall of Adam was disobedience to God; whereby man turned himself away from God, towards himself, and robbed God of his honour, in that *he himself* thought to be *as God*. But while he was seeking thus to make himself a God, because he was but a thief, and a robber of the Divine honour, he was stripped of the Divine image, divested of the perfect righteousness, and spoiled of that holiness which cometh from God; being thenceforth, as to the understanding, dark and blind; as to the will, stubborn and refractory against his Maker; and as to the powers and faculties of the whole heart and spirit, universally alienated from God.

2. Now this abomination is in all men propagated, by means of *fleshly generation*; hence, by inheritance, it passeth into them all. The plain consequence of which is, that man is hereby become *spiritually dead*, and is made the child of wrath and damnation. Let not then any that are called Christians, deceive themselves; let them take heed, how they go about to lessen the transgression of Adam, as if it were no more than a trifle, the eating of an *apple* at worst. But rather let them assuredly believe, that the guilt of Adam, as well as of Lucifer, was, that he would be as God; that it was the same transgression in them both; the same most grievous, most heinous, and most detestable crime; the same wicked apostasy, the same vile treason, and the same tyrannical usurping the rights of the Divine majesty.

3. Man, when in honour, not knowing how to rest satisfied, in that he was numbered even among the sons of God; in that he came forth from the hands of the Almighty, both in body and soul, without blemish, and was one of the greatest master-pieces of *beauty* in the

creation ; and lastly, that he was not only a Son, but the *darling* of God, and his *delight* ; would, as if all this were a little matter, needs be for scaling heaven, and nothing less would serve him, than to *set up himself for God*. Whereupon he conceived in his heart, an enmity and hatred against God, his Creator and Father, whose throne and dignity he began foolishly to *affect* ; being disposed, had it been in his power, even utterly to *ungod* him, and drive him for ever out of the world. Now who could ever commit a sin more detestable than *this* ? Or what could there be thought of more abominable ?

4. Hence, after this, man became inwardly like unto the devil himself, bearing his express likeness in heart and mind ; since both the one and the other of them, had now sinned the same sin, had committed the same high crime against the Majesty of heaven. No longer doth man carry upon him the image of God, but the portraiture of the devil. No longer is he the instrument of God and *his* Spirit, but the organ of the devil and his spirit, and so capable of all manner of devilish wickedness. And thus man, losing the image that *was heavenly, spiritual, and Divine*, became altogether *earthly, fleshly, and brutish*, yea, *devilish*. For the devil, that he might imprint his own image upon man, by a train of enticing words, so prevailed on him, as to let him sow in him his *seed*, which is called the *seed of the serpent* ; by which *seed*, I chiefly understand, self-love or self-will ; and the ambition of being as God, that is, an affectation of supremacy, or Godhead.

5. Now out of this seed there is nothing else can shoot forth, but deadly and horrible fruit. Such as is the image of Satan, the offspring of Belial, and the *children of the devil*. For, just as there are in any other seed, how small soever, contained after a wonderful and hidden manner, the nature and properties of the whole plant or vegetable—the perfect standard and dimensions of its nature—the thickness, the length, the breadth thereof,

and all its proportions, in miniature, as also the branches, the leaves, yea, the flower—and, in a word, the whole tree, with all the fruits thereof;—even so in this seed of the serpent, which by fleshly generation hath passed into all men, there doth lie hid the *tree of death*, with all its branches, its leaves, its flowers, and the innumerable fruits of unrighteousness: and, in short, within it secretly lies the whole image of Satan, together with all the notes, characters, and properties of that diabolical image.

6. Consider, with attention, a little infant in his mother's arms; and observe how, even from the cradle, this natural corruption doth display itself; and how especially *self-will* and *disobedience* will discover themselves, by breaking forth early into act, and witnessing the root from whence they proceed. Consider him as he grows up; take notice of him step by step, and observe in the young stripling a natural selfishness, an inbred ambition, an appetite for worldly glory, a love of applause, a pursuit of petty revenge, a disposition to lying, dissimulation, and other such like qualifications. Then next after this “there cometh a troop.” And you may now observe in him, conceitedness, arrogancy, pride, fraud, infidelity, contempt of God, and of his holy Word; yea, moreover, wrath, hatred, envy, revenge, especially if outward occasions do but present themselves, to call forth into act the diabolical seed, and serve the turns of depraved nature.

By this means there may be seen to sprout out betimes, wantonness, unclean thoughts, and all the works of the flesh. You shall see also breaking out, as occasions present, drunkenness, rioting, and all manner of intemperance; with fickleness, humorsomeness, and delicateness; and all that may please the lust of the eye, or the pride of life. Besides, you may observe covetousness, extortion, impostures, undermining of others; all the mystery of knavery, and cozenage in trade: and, in a word, the whole *troop*, or rather whole *army*, of

wickednesses, villanies and crimes, so various and manifold, as it is impossible to declare, or tell the number thereof; according to that of the prophet, "The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" If to these, in the last place, there be added likewise seducing and *false spirits*, then may you observe schisms in the church, wicked and dangerous heresies; yea, the denial of the faith, the hatred and persecution of the truth; with all kinds of corruptions in doctrine, perversions of the Scripture, and very dreadful delusions. All which are but so many fruits of the serpent's seed in man, and the very image of Satan.

8. Learn therefore, O man, to know the sin of thy father Adam, and the *original corruption* of mankind! Learn, if thou art wise, to discern it in thyself: look into the same, not slightly or carelessly, but deeply, and as the importance of the matter deserves. For this infection is greater, this depravation deeper, this contagion more fatal than thou canst express with words, or even reach in thy thoughts. This corruption in thee is greater than a man can pierce into. *Know thyself!* and deeply consider what thou art, since that apostasy of thy first father; namely, how thou art transformed into the image of the devil, from the image of God, and so art become as an abridgment of all the devilish nature and hellish properties, being made like unto Satan himself in all ungodliness. For, as in the image of God, all the Divine virtues and properties are contained, and even the very *nature of God*; even so, in this image of the devil, all the diabolical vices and properties are contained, with the very nature of the devil.

9. Moreover as, before the fall, man did bear the image of the *heavenly* Adam; that is, was altogether heavenly, spiritual, angelical, and divine; even so, since the apostasy, he carries about him the image of the *earthly* Adam; and so is inwardly, and in the ground of his being, made wholly *earthly, carnal, and bestial*. Lo!

he is become as one of the *beasts* of the field ! For what, O fallen man, is thy wrathfulness ? and to whom doth it more properly belong, to a lion or to a man ? And as for that envy of thine, with that greediness, doth not both the one and the other evidently betray in thee the nature of a dog, and of a wolf ? And for thy uncleanness and gluttony, do they not tell thee, that thou carriest a swine within thee ?

Nay, didst thou but rightly look into thyself, thou wouldst find certainly within, in thine own breast, more yet ; thou wouldst make a discovery there of a whole world filled with unclean and hurtful beasts ; and even in the very tongue alone, that *little member*, according to St. James, ch. iii. 5, a lake and sea of pestilential creeping things : Isai. xiii. 21, 22, Rev. xviii. 2, “ the habitation of satyrs, and hold of every foul spirit ; the cage of every unclean and hateful bird ; and, in a word, “ a world of iniquity,” Jam. iii. 6.

10. Now, whosoever shall not correct this infernal corruption of his nature, and be *renewed* in Christ Jesus, but dies in such a state as is that of the *bestial* man by us now described ; such a one, I say, must retain for ever this his bestial and satanical nature, and abide perpetually arrogant, haughty, and devilish : and when he shall have neglected the time of his purification here, he shall carry about with him perpetually, in the blackness of darkness, the image of Satan impressed upon him for a testimony, that while he was in the world, he lived not in Christ, neither was renewed in him after the image of God, according to that of the Revelation, ch. xxi. 8, xxii. 15, “ Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”

CHAP III.

Of the restoration by Christ : shewing how man is renewed in him to life everlasting.

1. THE *new-birth* is a work of the Holy Ghost, whereby man, of a child of wrath and damnation, is made the child of grace and salvation, and of a sinner, is made *righteous*; so that his heart, with all the powers and faculties of his soul, more particularly the understanding, will, and affections are renewed, enlightened, and sanctified in Christ Jesus, and formed after his express likeness. And this change consists of two principal parts; the one, justification—the other, sanctification. Both which the apostle hath thus excellently expressed, “The kindness and love of God toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy, saving us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost,” Tit. iii. 4, 5.

2. So that the birth of every Christian man is *two-fold*: The first birth is after the flesh; the second, after the Spirit;—the first from beneath, the second from above; the first natural and earthly, but the second supernatural and heavenly. The one is carnal, sinful, and accursed, as descending from the *first* Adam, after the similitude and image of the devil; but the other is spiritual, holy, and blessed, as descending from the *second* Adam, after the likeness and living representation of the Son of God. This is the “renewing of the Holy Ghost,” and the beginning of true sanctification, which followeth the “washing of regeneration,” by which is given the seal of justification. Thus, by this new and second birth, this blessed regeneration through Christ, the Seed and image of God is manifested in us, and the *man of God*, heavenly and like unto God, is produced.

3. Now, then, let us see how we are regenerated by Christ: Even as the old birth is propagated carnally from Adam, so the new spiritually from Christ, through the Word of God. "For we are born (saith St. Peter,) not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." And thus blessed James, "He of his own will begat us by the *Word of his faith*, or by the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures."

This Word produeth faith, which faith apprehendeth in like manner the Word—and in that Word is apprehended Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Ghost; and by that Ghostly virtue, force and efficacy, the man is born again, or regenerated. Briefly, regeneration is effected, first by the Holy Ghost, and this doth Christ call, the being born of the Spirit:—secondly, by *faith*; whence it is said, "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God:"—thirdly, by *baptism*;* as it is also written, "Except a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

4. By Adam man came by the chief evils, such as sin, wrath, death, hell, and damnation; for these all are the *fruits* of the old nature: but in Christ man recovers the chief goods,—such as righteousness, grace, blessing, power, heavenly life, and eternal salvation. From Adam man hath a carnal spirit, and is subject to the dominion of wicked spirits; but from Christ he hath the Holy Spirit, with his gifts, and a most quiet reign and peaceable kingdom. From Adam man hath an haughty, swelling, proud spirit; but an humble, meek, and simple spirit from Christ. From Adam we receive an unbelieving spirit, yea, blasphemous also, and ungrateful; by faith in Christ, a believing spirit, faithful, acceptable and well-pleasing unto God. From Adam, a disobedient, a fierce

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\* Baptism may be a means of regeneration, when an adult person, already penitent and believing in Jesus, is admitted to that ordinance

and a rash spirit is given us ; but it is from Christ we take the spirit of obedience, gentleness, and of prudence, through faith in him. Again, from Adam we by *nature* possess the spirit of wrath, of revenge, and of murder ; but from Christ, by faith, the spirit of long-suffering, mercifulness, forgiveness, and universal goodness. From Adam, man hath a covetous heart, and a spirit that is churlish, seeking only his own profits, and catching at that which is another man's ; but from Christ, the spirit of mercy, generosity, and liberality. Furthermore, from Adam doth proceed the spirit of unchastity, and intemperance ; from Christ, a chaste, clean, and temperate Spirit :—from Adam is communicated to man a lying spirit ; from Christ, the spirit of truth and integrity. Lastly, from Adam we receive the spirit of the beasts, earthly and brutish ; but from Christ, a spirit which is celestial and Divine ; and for that cause it behoved Christ to take our nature on him, to the end he might be conceived by the Holy Ghost, and so abound with the same Spirit above measure, that of his fulness we might all receive :—yea, for this very cause it was convenient that the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of God, should rest upon him ; that so the human nature, in him and by him, should be renewed ; and that we, in him, and by him, and through him, might become new creatures, by receiving from him the spirit of wisdom, and understanding, for the spirit of foolishness and sottishness ; the spirit of counsel for that of madness ; the spirit of fortitude for a base and cowardly spirit ; the spirit of knowledge, in the room of our natural and inbred blindness ; and the spirit of the fear of the Lord, instead of the spirit of impiety and atheism.

Thus we are united in Christ to life eternal ; we are, after his likeness, regenerated by Christ, and become *new creatures*. And hence the works proceed which, by faith, may please God : for the works that please him

must be all of the new birth ; must all flow out of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, and out of faith unfeigned.

5. See, now, and behold thou, the most amiable, the most lowly, the most obedient, and the most patient Jesus, and learn thou of him. Live even as he lived ; live in him. For what was the cause he so lived ? That he might be thy example, and the rule of thy life. He, even he only, is the right *rule of life*. It is not the *rule* of any man whatsoever, or how holy soever is this *rule*, but the pattern of Christ only ; which all his apostles and evangelists have, after him, with one consent, set before us for our imitation. This, this is what they did alone point at. And this is the mystical ground of his passion, death, and resurrection ; even that thou, O man, together with him, shouldst die from thy sin : and again, *in* him, *with* him, and *by* him, rise spiritually, and “ walk in newness of life, even as he walked.”

6. Now, therefore, we see how our regeneration ariseth from the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ : whence St. Peter saith, “ God hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” The holy apostles every where lay the foundation of repentance, and of the new life, in the *passion of Christ* ; particularly St. Peter and St. Paul : “ For if we be dead with Christ,” because he that is dead is *justified from sin*, we have then faith, (as the latter of these argueth,) “ that we shall also live with him ;” we “ being dead unto sin, but alive unto God, through the life of Christ in us.” And therefore has the former likewise given this express charge, that we “ pass the time of our sojourning here in fear ; forasmuch as we know we are not redeemed with corruptible gold and silver ; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot ;” where you see the most precious ransom paid for our redemption, to be urged as the motive for our holy conversation. And St. Peter writeth afterward how “ Christ

his own self bare our sins in his own body on the cross, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed." And Christ also himself saith, "Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name."

7. By all which it is manifest, that from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ doth flow the Christian's true rule and pattern, and that thereby repentance and forgiveness of sins are best preached to us *in his name*. And so the passion of Christ is both the *satisfaction* for our sins, and also the renewing of our nature by faith; both which are required by God to the redemption and reparation of mankind; because this last is the fruit, and the true efficacy of the passion of Christ, working in us the renovation of lapsed nature. This, to conclude, is the means whereby we are born again, born from above, and renewed in Christ: neither is the laver of regeneration any other thing, wherein we are baptized into the death of Christ, but the dying with Christ from our sins, by the efficacy of his precious death, and the rising from sin by the grace of his glorious resurrection.



#### CHAP IV.

*Whosoever doth not imitate the life of Christ is not a true child of God.*

1. GOD the Father gave us his Son, that he might be our Prophet, our Teacher, and our Master, or Tutor: whom therefore he commanded us to hear, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Which office the Son of God did accordingly most punctually execute; not in words only, but by the

example of a most holy and unspotted life. Whereupon St. Luke saith, "The former treatise have I made, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day that he was taken up:" where it is to be observed, that the evangelist places *doing* before *teaching*; as if it were not enough to join deeds and doctrine together; but it were also of absolute necessity for the former to have the precedence in any that should set up for a teacher sent from God. For it certainly behoveth every one, who would teach others, first to do the things himself which he teacheth. Now such a teacher Christ evidently manifested himself to be; whose life, therefore, is the true teaching, and the book of life.

2. And for this cause also, the Son of God became man, and was conversant among men upon earth, that he might shew us a lively example of an heavenly, Divine, innocent, and perfect life; and that we might follow him as a light in the darkness shining before us, and leading us on. For which reason he calls himself, "the Light of the world;" and witnesses concerning himself, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Whence it evidently appears, that all they abide in darkness, who do not follow Christ, by walking in his steps. They all remain, and will remain, in the dark, that follow not this light. And what this darkness is, the apostle teacheth us, bidding us "cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light." That we might not be carried away by the common mistake of the world, to think Christianity to be somewhat notional only, and to be more in word than in effect, God has been graciously pleased to set before us his own Son, not only as a ransom and Mediator; but also as a mirror of piety, a glass of life, a perfect idea of a new man, regenerated according to righteousness. He is given unto us for this very end: he, who being in the form of God, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in our likeness, that there might be hereby the



same mind begotten in us which was also in him. Him it hath pleased God to place before our eyes ; that so looking unto him we might be more and more renewed after his image.

3. Deplorable experience daily teaches, that our body and soul are all filled with every kind of uncleanness, and polluted throughout with the filth of sin and wickedness, and every abomination and corruption. All which are the properties and works of the devil, operating effectually in the carnal man ; and of the depraved and perverse will through which the diabolical operation doth manifest itself. For the depraved will is the root of all sins : and that being taken away, there would be no sin remaining. The power and energy whereof doth herein chiefly consist, that it turns man aside from God, and averts his from God's will. For whatever departeth from God, who is the Supreme Good, cannot but be evil : and whatever is thus averted from the will of this sovereign good, by an inversion of the Divine order, cannot but be most perverse ; and is under the highest breach of the original constitution of our nature, as derived in the beginning from God himself.

4. From whence it is evident, that our flesh and blood are penetrated with the very diabolical nature itself, and that our carnal will is tainted with the satanical wickedness, and therewith infected as with deadly poison ; which poison is pride, together with lying, and the whole crowd of both fleshly and spiritual lusts, so repugnant to the Divine nature, and so every way contrary to God ; as a certain hellish ferment powerfully working in the soul, and perverting the right order of all its powers and faculties. And by reason of this *perverse* disposition, and *devilish* contagion, it is that Christ called the Pharisees " children of the devil," as if covetousness, lying, pride, and every evil concupiscence, were the devil himself, with whom the natural man is infected.

It moreover follows, that as many as lead a life full of pride, avarice, lust, and envy, they may all properly be

said to *live in the devil*, having the very nature of the devil in them. They partake of the diabolical nature; and they live in him, as he liveth in them. Notwithstanding which, they may put on the cover of outward honesty, and veil themselves under a fair show of moral virtues; nay, may make a very specious ostentation of piety; while nevertheless inwardly, they remain still devils: which, though it be a dreadful thing to speak, yet it is nothing but the truth, a truth confirmed both by the word and by experience.

5. Seeing therefore our nature is so extremely depraved, so utterly corrupted, so abominably perverted by the evil one, and so entirely vitiated in all its springs; there is an absolute necessity that it should be amended thoroughly, and to this end, *renewed* wholly. But how shall this be wrought? After this manner: as the chief evil hath pervaded our nature, and intimately tainted it, so must the chief good pervade and tincture this our nature, that it may be made like unto it. That, which the chief evil hath corrupted, by mingling itself with it, can no otherwise be corrected but by a thorough and vital penetration of the chief good, even of God himself.

6. Now the Son of God became man, that hereby reconciling us to God, he might make us partakers of the sovereign good; having purged us and sanctified us from evil for that end. Forasmuch as it behoveth that which is to be sanctified, that it be sanctified by God and with God—and as God is personally in Christ, so ought we through him, to be united with God by faith; so that we may live in God, and God in us; Christ in us, and we in Christ; and that the Divine will may be in us, and we in it, so that we may be made the righteousness of God in Christ, 2 Cor. v. 19, 20; which is the only means whereby Christ Jesus administers medicine to our corrupted and infected nature. And the more powerfully this medicine doth operate in man, so much more deeply doth it work upon the distemper, and destroy and pluck up the hidden evil sticking in nature.

7. But oh ! how blessed is the man in whom Christ is all, and doth all ! whose will, thoughts, sense, and words, are the will of Christ, the thoughts of Christ, and the sense of Christ ; and whose words are Christ's, and not his own ! whose mind is the mind of Christ, according to that of the apostle, "We have the mind of Christ." Whosoever lives this hidden life in Christ, hath overcome the wicked one, and is translated from darkness to light, and from death to life : for he liveth now in God, and Christ is henceforth his life : so that whereas the first and old Adam was before in him as a *living soul* ; the second and new Adam is hereby made to him a *quickening Spirit*. Thus his meekness is the meekness of Christ ; his obedience is the obedience of Christ ; his patience and humility are the patience and humility of Christ ; and lastly, his life itself is no other than that of Christ, by whom and in whom he liveth. This is that life of Christ in us, whereof St. Paul so experimentally speaketh, saying, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This is to live by the faith of the Son of God ; this is to follow Christ truly ; this is to walk in the light of this life, and to bring forth the fruits of repentance. For by this method the old man is destroyed ; and the carnal life declining and setting, the new, spiritual, and heavenly life ariseth, and breaketh forth as out of a cloud, in its full lustre. And whosoever hath this life in him, is a *real*, not only a titular, Christian ; he is a Christian not in word, but in deed ; not in show, but in truth ; and not in name, but in nature. He is a very member incorporated in Christ, a true child of God, begotten of God and Christ, renewed in Christ, and after his image quickened by faith.

8. After this we should continually aspire ; we should, from the inmost ground of our soul, and with our whole heart and mind, earnestly pant and breathe, wish and long, endeavour and study, that the kingdom of Christ, not of satan, may come into us, and that we may lead

the life of Christ upon the earth, by his Spirit living in us. Let then all our counsels, all our contrivances, all our cares, and all our inward groans and prayers, still aim at this ; and let this be all our strife, how we may more and more mortify the old man. For so much as any one dieth to himself, so much doth Christ live in him ; so much of corruption as is done away by the Holy Ghost, so much of Divine grace is introduced ; so much as the flesh is crucified, is the Spirit quickened ; so much as the works of darkness are destroyed, even so much is a man enlightened ; so much as any one loseth of his depraved affection, so much gaineth he of undefiled love. For the decrease of the animal life and love is the increase of the Divine ; and by how much the affections of the former, such as self-love, wrath, covetousness, and voluptuousness are lessened, by so much are the contrary affections of the Divine life, such as self-denial, humility, love, contentment, and patience augmented. And as those pass away and die, by the bringing in of these, so is the evil one in proportion cast out ; and he being cast out, Christ cometh in, and liveth and reigneth in the heart. The farther then a man's heart departeth from the world, from the desire of the eyes, the desire of the flesh, and the pride of life, so much the more there is of God, of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, which flow into him ; and so much the more deeply do they enter him, and the more intimately and profoundly penetrate him. To conclude, so much the more as nature, flesh, darkness, and the world, do domineer in man, so much the less is there of grace, of Spirit, of light, and of God found in him.

9. This new kind of life is enmity to the flesh, and is its most bitter cross. The life of Christ is to the flesh death itself, and to the natural man an insupportable burden ; but to the spiritual man it is an easy yoke, a light and pleasant burden, and a most still and quiet Sabbath. And verily, verily, the true rest and spiritual Sabbath of the soul is sought for in vain elsewhere, than

in the faith of Christ, and in his meekness, humility, patience, and charity. Therefore himself hath said, "Ye shall find rest to your souls:" and likewise, "I will give you rest." This you shall surely obtain, by coming unto him by faith, taking his yoke upon you, and learning of him: every thing by this means will be made easy and light. Verily, he that loveth Christ, will not think it bitter to suffer death for Christ: yea rather, it will be unto him exceeding great joy. And this is that sweet yoke of our Lord, that we are commanded to take on us, that our souls may be refreshed and eased; and being unyoked from sin, may find therein a Divine quiet and repose.

10. Whosoever, therefore, has a mind to take up Christ's yoke, and imitate his life with all diligence, let him, in the first place, shake off the devil's yoke, by that strength, which is given him from above, that the flesh may not proceed to insult the Spirit, as it hath formerly done. All must now be brought under the obedience of Christ, and subjected to the wise and righteous discipline of his law; that is, the will and understanding, reason and appetite, with all the carnal desires which did reign in the mortal body, Rom. vi. 12.

11. This flesh indeed is well-pleased to be honoured, courted, praised, and to abound with riches and pleasures. But to reduce all these under the yoke of Christ; to prefer ignominy, contempt, and poverty before them; yea, to count himself altogether unworthy of any thing, is the cross of Christ, whereby the flesh is crucified. This is the humility of Christ, which despises these things, which the world so greedily gapeth after. And this is the sublimity of the mind of Christ, to trample these grandeurs and pleasures under foot. This is that yoke and burden which are so *easy* and *light* to the Spirit, the law of love, the *commandments* whereof *are not grievous*, but delightful and pleasant. Lo! this is the way of Christ, and no other: walk ye therefore in it. For what else was the whole life of Christ, but holy

poverty, extreme contempt, and most sharp persecution? Who came not into the world that he might be served, but that he might serve us; for our sakes took upon him the *form of a servant*, making himself of no reputation: as coming into flesh to give his very life, for an atonement of our sins, and for a *ransom* of as many as should yield to follow him in the regeneration.

12. It is the property of the natural man, to pursue after honours, and all such things as appear great; but the spiritual man loveth the humility of Christ, cleaveth to it, and longeth to be nothing. The carnal man accounts it a folly to live as Christ lived, and thinks those only wise that live after their own wills, freely indulging their appetites, and taking their fill of whatsoever their hearts wander after. Such an one, even while he most of all *liveth in the devil*, is so blinded with the thick darkness overclouding his mind, that looking upon his own life, he most foolishly applauds himself in it. And thus it is, that these poor and wretched men, by giving themselves up to follow the *foolish light* of carnal wisdom, do both fall themselves into pernicious errors, and lead others into the same, to their common ruin. Whereas those, whom the true light hath illuminated, are so far from being attracted hereby, that they are stricken with the utmost horror of mind when they but cast their eyes upon the gaudy shews of the world, upon the ambition and pride, upon the wrathfulness and revenge, and upon the intemperance and voluptuousness of it. And this causes them, from the very bottom of their hearts, to sigh out their complaints, ‘Good God! say they, how far is this from Christ? Oh! how far from the knowledge of Christ, is the man that doth thus! How far from genuine Christianity! How far from the disposition of the new birth, or the nativity of the sons of God.’

13. In whom therefore the life of Christ is not found, the same is not a child of God. He is wholly ignorant of Christ; for he who would rightly know Christ, both as the

Saviour of the world, and as the exemplar of life, must know him to be mere love ; must be acquainted with him, as he is mere meekness, and must experience him to be mere patience and humility, by beholding the lively copy hereof in his own heart. These virtues then of Christ thou must needs have within thee, and must have a most deep love and sense of them in the inmost ground of thy heart, if thou wouldest know him truly. After this manner man is made to *taste how sweet the Lord is !* So is the truth known ; so is the supreme good perceived. Then is there an experimental demonstration, that the life of Christ doth vastly excel every other life, in goodness, pleasantness, dignity, and tranquillity ; yea, that it doth most sweetly conspire with life eternal itself, as being properly the beginning of it upon earth.

14. Seeing therefore nothing is better than the life of Christ, nothing pleasanter, nothing more honourable, or fuller of solid satisfaction and peace ; nothing ought to come into competition with it. But as it exceedeth all others, so is it above all to be desired, and most earnestly, beyond all, to be wished, longed, and sought for by fervent breathings and prayers. He, who is empty of this saving and experimental knowledge, not savouring the things which are Christ's, cannot know what the peace and tranquillity of eternal life is, what the sovereign good, the everlasting truth ; what the unperishable word, what the true quietude and joy of the soul ; or what, lastly, the true *light* and the true *love* are : seeing that all these are no other than Christ himself : and he that hath Christ, hath them ; for Christ is all these to him that believeth in, and adhereth to him alone. Whence his beloved disciple says, " Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God : but he that loveth not, knoweth not God ; for God is love." And hence,

15. It is manifest, that this new birth, doth not consist in any vanishing words, how sound soever they may be ; or in an external form, and shew of godliness, though

never so specious, but in an abiding substance, in the sovereign virtue and power of the mind, the very fountain of all the virtues besides ; even in love, which is God. For of whomsoever any one is born, he must have the same properties and essential qualities. He then that saith, he is born of God, let him demonstrate this by *love* ; for as much as God *is love*. And as he is love, “ Whosoever dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.” Which is the demonstration of this new and heavenly birth, shewing that it proceedeth of God, *for love is of God*, and hereby do we express our Father which is in heaven ; whom without this it is impossible ever to express, or to have the least title to call him by that name.

16. In like manner, the *knowledge of God* consists not in words, or in a certain shadowy and superficial science, but in a lively, amiable, pleasant, and most sweet sensation, a most pure and untainted pleasure, through faith gently insinuating itself into all the recesses of the heart, and innermost senses and powers of the mind, and quietly pervading and penetrating the same with an inexpressible Divine sweetness. Oh ! what is it to be filled with the very sweetness of God himself, by the means of such a loving faith ! This is the true, living, efficacious knowledge of God ; whereof the Psalmist speaketh, saying, “ My heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.” And again, “ Thy loving kindness (in this internal Divine sensation of a loving soul) is better than the life itself, or than lives ;” that is, all other lives beside the Divine life alone. Where it is plain, that this can be only meant of that lively joy and sweetness of Divine, experimental knowledge, which is infused into a faithful heart, and is shed abroad through the same, as a most sweet ointment. And thus, at length, man liveth in God, and God in man ! Thus a man knoweth God in truth, and is known of God !



## CHAP. V.

*Of Repentance, Faith, and Justification.*

I. REPENTANCE is the work of the Holy Ghost wrought in the soul, by which man acknowledging his faults, and the just wrath of God against sin, doth earnestly grieve for the same, and then understanding the grace of God by faith in Jesus Christ, obtaineth thereby the remission of his sins. And by this penitence is the mortification of the *flesh*, and of all carnal desires accomplished ; and, together with the same, the quickening also of the *Spirit*, or our resurrection in Christ. We said, but now, that by the fall of Adam, man became devilish, earthly, and carnal, without God, and without love ; so that every where, in all things, man now studies himself, favours and applauds himself, and sets forth and provides only for his own interest, honour and glory. And this is the effect of Adam's fall, who involved thereby all mankind with himself ; and this corruption and depravation of human nature must, of necessity, be done quite away, which it cannot be but by a true and Divine contrition, by faith, apprehending the remission of sins, and by the mortification of carnal desires ; and the crucifixion of self-love and pride. For true conversion doth not consist in putting away great and outward sins only, but in descending deeply into your own self, searching into the inmost recesses of the heart, the secrets and closets, all the windings and turnings thereof ; changing and renewing them throughout, with the grace that is given you : and so, by faith, you are converted from self-love to Divine love ; from the world and all worldly concupiscences, to a spiritual and heavenly life ; and from a participation of the pomps and pleasures thereof, to participating the merits and virtues of Christ, by believing his word, and walking in his steps. Lo !

this is the path of true conversion; and here is the ground of that mortification of the flesh, or carnal principle in man, which is so necessary for the quickening of the Spirit.

2. It follows, that a man must *deny himself*, must mortify his own will, and suffer himself to be led wholly by the Divine will; must not seek himself, must not esteem himself, but account himself the unworthiest of all creatures; must renounce all things he hath, for the love of Christ; must condemn the world, with all the pomps and honours thereof; must pass by his own wisdom, and all endowments of gifts, as if he saw them not; must trust in no creature, but God alone; yea, must *hate* his own life; that is, his carnal will and pleasures, his concupisence, pride, covetousness, lust, wrath, envy; must lay the ax to the root of all these; must not please himself; must boast of nothing, attribute nothing to himself, or to his own strength; must, in a word, die to the world; to the desire of the eyes, and of the flesh, and to the pride of life, and so be *crucified unto the world*, without which no man can ever be the disciple of Christ. This is the true conversion from the world, from himself and the devil, to God; without which, no sinner can have remission of sins, nor attain salvation. This is the true mortifying of the flesh, without which the Spirit cannot be quickened. This conversion is the denial of a man's self, and is the *true cross* and *yoke of Christ*, of which himself speaketh, saying, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." As if he should say, by earnest and inward *humility*, whereof thou hast an example in *me*, must thy self-love and ambition be tamed; and by *meekness*, thy wrath, and desire of revenge. And this is indeed to *crucify* our *flesh* with its affections and desires. Therefore they do greatly err, who know no other cross than tribulations and worldly afflictions; being ignorant of the inward mortification of the flesh, that *true cross* which we ought to carry after Christ daily: by

bearing our enemies with great patience, and by overcoming the disdain and arrogance of our malicious slanders and cruel adversaries, with all mildness and humility, after the pattern of the Lamb of God ; forasmuch as it becometh us to follow the example of Christ, and to be with him perfectly crucified to all worldliness, to all worldly splendour and glory, to all this world's interest and power, to all its fame and praise, and to every thing that is called great or noble: that looking unto him, we may thereby learn to endure the cross, even as he did, and with him to despise its shame.

3. To this are we called by Christ ; namely, to a true and inward *conversion* from the world to God. To which alone the imputation of his righteousness, through faith, together with remission of our sins, is promised. So that without this inward repentance, Christ profiteth us nothing ; for without it, man cannot participate of his grace, favour, and merit. These are to be apprehended only by a contrite, faithful, humble, and penitent heart. And truly, this fruit of the passion of Christ is *in* us, that we may die to sin by true repentance ; as the fruit of his resurrection is *in* us ; that Christ may live in us, and we in Christ.

This is the only true repentance, when inwardly in the heart, with earnest sorrow, and most unfeigned feeling of heaviness, for having offended a most gracious and good God, we are made first truly contrite and afflicted in spirit ; and then both holy and joyful, being purged and changed, being thoroughly amended by remission of sins, through faith in Jesus Christ, and so transformed inwardly from the image of the old Adam into that of the new ; whereby it cannot but come to pass that the outward life and manners must also be renewed and changed. But what if one should only perform bodily repentance ; should abstain from great sins, while no care is taken to enter into the inward and new life in Christ Jesus ; shall not such an one nevertheless be damned ? Yea, verily ; it shall not profit him a straw

to cry, Lord, Lord ; but he shall hear that terrible voice, " I know you not : " for most certain it is, not all that say, " Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but only those that do the will of the heavenly Father." Under which terrible sentence, men of all orders and ranks are comprised ; if they do not inwardly, and from the heart, truly repent, and so become new creatures in Christ.

4. Faith is a solid trust, and a firm and certain persuasion of the grace of God, promised to us in Christ Jesus for the remission of sins, and life eternal, enkindled through the word of God, and the Holy Ghost, in our hearts. By which faith we have conferred upon us the remission of our sins, and that freely ; for no merits of ours, but for Christ's alone, and out of mere grace, that so our faith may remain fixed upon a firm and solid foundation, and we be immovable in the Lord. And this forgiveness of sins is our justification, which is neither of men nor of angels, but by the obedience of the Son of God himself, and by his most precious merits and perfect ransom ; which by faith we appropriate to us, fixing and applying the same to ourselves ; whence, neither the imperfections of our life, nor any sins, are left remaining in us to condemn us, but they are covered as with the veil of grace, for Christ's sake, who henceforward liveth and worketh in us.

5. By this solid and firm faith, a man doth now dedicate his whole heart solely to God, in whom henceforth he resteth alone ; to whom alone he is fast glewed, with whom alone he entereth into fellowship. He is now joined to God, and so participates all things that are of God, and of Christ, and is thence made one spirit with God, gathering from him a Divine power and strength, with a new life, which hath in it new joys, new recreations, new occupations, wherein are peace, lightness of heart, and durable satisfaction, which make in us the soul's sabbath, and the Spirit's rest. For by this is justification, and by this is sanctification in the Holy Ghost.

Where true faith is, there Christ verily is with righteousness and holiness ; with all his merits, justification, adoption, and inheritance of life eternal. Whereupon the apostle, writing to the Hebrews, calls faith a *substance* ; thereby understanding the undoubted, solid, and firm trust of receiving such things as are hoped for, and a certain manifest conviction, sensation, and experience of such things as are invisible. And so great and powerful indeed is the consolation of a true, living faith in our hearts, that it cannot but convince, by arguing most firmly and most solidly from experience, and from a great taste of the sovereign good in the soul, from the quietude of heart, and from peace in God ; whereby the hope of salvation remains unshaken, which a Christian man doubts not even to seal with his blood. And this is that strength of spirit, that might of the inward man, that vigour and alacrity of faith, that *παρρησια*, *parrhesia*, or holy boldness, (Eph. iii. 12, Phil. i. 14, 1 John iii. 21.) This is that joy in God, 1 Thess. ii. 2 ; this is that *πληροφορια*, *plerophoria*, that immovable and firm certainty, that exceeding and superabounding assurance, 1 Thess. i. 5, for which one should even dare to die. But it behoveth him that believeth to be lively, and inward in most powerful consolation, that he may receive Divine recruits, and a celestial strength, whereby the fear of death, and the love of the world, may be utterly extinguished. Whereupon St. John well pronounceth, “ That he that is born of God hath overcome the world.” But now, to be “ born of God ” cannot be any figurative, or shadowy thing ; it must needs be a lively thing, and very powerful ; for it were a wickedness to believe that the living God can beget a dead offspring. God cannot, being a *living* God, but beget a *living man*, that may be after his likeness. And seeing our faith is the *victory*,\* who can doubt but this our faith, which is commanded by God, and by him



\* *Viva est, et victrix, si modo vera fides.*

Faith is living and victorious, if it be but true

empowered to overcome the world, must be lively and vigorous, active and potent, over-ruling all our affections, and working in us a Divine confidence, a heavenly vivacity, and an infallible and triumphant influence? Yea, how should it be otherwise? since Christ himself is apprehended by faith, fixed in our minds, and ingrafted in our understanding. And by this virtue of God we do as it were return into God, and become *one* with God. And from Adam, as from a *cursed vine*, we are thus transplanted into the living and *blessed vine*. In Christ we now possess all his goods; and in Christ, the Just One, we are, together with him, *justified*. Even as a seion that is engrafted into a good tree, grows, flourishes, and bears fruit; but without it, withers: so man, *without Christ*, is as a cursed vine, and all his works are sinful; the grapes of it being *bitterness and gall*; but in Christ he is blessed and justified.

6. By this then it appears manifestly, that works do not justify; because we must be engrafted into Christ by faith, before ever we can do any good work; and so this justification, O man, is the gift of God, freely given before, and preventing all thy merits. And we may as well say, that a dead man may see or hear, may stand or walk, or do any good of himself—as that, being spiritually dead, thou canst do any good of thyself. As he therefore that is dead cannot do any work, but he must first be raised from death to life; so thou likewise, that art dead in sin, canst not perform any work to God, unless thou be first raised by Christ to life. It necessarily follows that thy justification proceeds from faith in Christ: and a believer is like a new-born babe, just come into the world, weak and naked, destitute, and set before the eyes of its Saviour, from whom (as from its parent,) it receives righteousness, holiness, life, light, and the Holy Ghost. After this manner is the naked child, by the mercy of God, clothed; and his spotted garments being taken away, he receiveth of God, grace, health, truth, and holiness. This alone, this receiving Christ in the heart,

maketh a man both holy and happy ; and evidenceth that this true justification is only through faith, not through works : I say, *through faith* ; which apprehending Christ, with all his goodness, challengeth and maketh it all his own. Then sin, death, the devil, and hell, give bæk affrighted ; and in much confusion vanish away. And so powerfully doth the merit of Christ, through faith, work, that even the sins of the whole world cannot hurt such an one ; forasmuch as he is delivered from the bondage of sin and death.

7 Now seeing Christ by faith liveth and dwelleth in thee, never think that this his indwelling in thee is a dead work ; but rather that it is a living thing—a quickening principle, a vital force, a powerful working, an effectual transformation, a thorough renewing : for faith performeth two things ;—first, it *transplanteth* thee into Christ ; and giveth him freely to thee, with all that he hath :—secondly, it *reneweth* thee in Christ, that thou mayest grow green, and flourish, and live in him. Neither is the wild graft brought into the stock for other purpose, but that it should flourish and bring forth fruit. For as by the apostasy of Adam, the seed of the serpent, and the diabolical nature is sown in man, growing up into a tree, and bearing the fruits of death ; even so, by the Word of God, and by the Holy Ghost, faith is sown in our hearts as the seed of God ; in which seed, after a wonderful manner, are shut up and comprehended all the Divine virtues and properties, which day by day are manifested : from whence there doth flow a most glorious image of God ; and this bringeth forth a new tree, the fruits whereof are obedience, patience, humility, meekness, peace, charity, justice, temperance, fortitude ; and so the whole kingdom of God descendeth into man.

8. For true and saving faith reneweth the whole man ; purifieth the spirit, sanctifieth the soul, maketh clean the heart. It knitteth this when cleansed, and uniteth it fast to God ; and the heart, when it is thus purged and set free from earthly desires, then soareth easily heaven-wards.

It hungereth and thirsteth after righteousness ; it worketh love, it bringeth peace, joy, patience, strength, moderation in adversity : it overcometh the world, with the prince thereof ; it maketh us the sons of God, and co-heirs with Christ. But if any one be without this joy, acknowledging himself to be of little faith, yet let him beware he distrust not the mereiful goodness of the Lord, but rather let him trust in the grace that is promised by Christ. We may fall ; yet the grace of God remaineth firm to us, whensoever, by a true and serious repentance, we arise from our fall. For Christ is, and will be, Christ ; yea, he will be *thy* Saviour, whether thou take hold of him by a strong or by a weak faith ; if thou take hold of him indeed, for he embraceth both alike, even the weak and the strong : Christ is alike to all. Moreover, the promise of grace is universal and perpetual, upon which it is necessary faith should be founded, without difference or exception, be it great or little, be it firm or weak. In the mean time, lift up thy heart with hope, O thou that art heavy laden ! for God will, in his good time, bring that joy unto thee, although he hide himself awhile.

9. But if thou repent not of thy sins, then the merit of Christ profiteth thee not. For seeing that Christ proffereth himself to be the Physician of our souls, and his holy blood to be the medicine of our spiritual diseases—and no medicine, though it be never so precious or powerful, can cure the sick person who will not reform things hurtful, and such as resist the power of the medicine ;—it follows, that the blood of Christ, and his most precious death, can profit nothing to those that purpose not for the future to abstain from all sin. Moreover, if Christ, by his holy blood, become our medicine, who can doubt but that first we must know also that we are sick ? For the whole have no need of a physician, but the sick : and none is spiritually sick, so as to be sensible of it, who is not penitent ; and none can be sensible of it, as he ought, who is not sorrowful, from his very heart, for



his sins. For he who hath not a contrite heart, who is too secure concerning the wrath of God, who hath not resolved to flee all worldly desires ; but who seeks after honour, wealth, or pleasure ; such an one is not a proper patient for the heavenly Physician to work a cure upon : such know not that they are sick, and consequently need no physician ; and Christ hence profiteth them nothing ; for it is manifest they apply not themselves for a cure. Therefore, again and again, let this be remembered by thee, that Christ Jesus called sinners ; but it was to repentance that he called them : because only a penitent, contrite heart is capable of the most precious blood, death, and merits of Christ. And I account him happy, whosoever he be, that heareth his holy calling inwardly, and gladly obeyeth the same.

10. After true repentance, remission of sins doth follow immediately : \* neither is it possible that any one should have his sins remitted, but who repenteth ; or that he should be absolved, who grieveth not that he hath sinned. And yet there be many who, although in their life-time they never have repented from their hearts that they had sinned, nor have abated at all of their wrath, covetousness, pride, malice, envy, hypocrisy, and unrighteousness ; yet dare expect the remission of sins, and claim to themselves the merits of Christ :—which indeed is a most blind and deplorable impudence ; however they may baptize it with the holy name of faith. These are such as flatter themselves to their own exceeding great loss, fondly persuading themselves that they are good Christians, because they outwardly know the gospel, and believe that Christ died for their sins ; and by this means think assuredly they shall be saved.

11. But this is not faith, but fancy ; and thou art deceived after a most miserable manner, who canst suffer thyself to be deluded at this rate. For neither doth the

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\* That is, on condition they receive Christ by the faith described above.

Word of God teach that by this means life eternal is to be obtained ; neither did any of the prophets or apostles so preach ; but this is the unanimous consent of all the Sacred writers, “Thou who desirest to have thy sins pardoned, first repent, and learn to abstain from thy sins ; and thus grieving from thy heart that thou hast sinned, and proposing to be another man, believe earnestly in Christ.” But how should he be sorry for his sins, who never thinks how to avoid sin ? Or, how should he avoid them, who is not sorrowful for them ? Wherefore Christ, with all his apostles and prophets, doth teach thee, O man ! that thou must die to the world and sin ; die to thy pride, thy covetousness, thy lust, thy wrath ; and that thou must return with all thy heart to the Lord, and then ask pardon of him : which being done, thou art absolved, and made free from thy sins. And then the heavenly Physician taketh care of thee, who only healeth those that are of a contrite heart. If thou insist upon any other way, Christ will profit thee nothing ; and in vain is the boasting of thy faith.

12. For true faith is that which reneweth the man, which mortifieth sin, and quickeneth him in Christ. But how canst thou belong to Christ, if thou dost not “crucify the flesh, with all the desires thereof?” Go then and hear four or five sermons a day, and every month, yea, every week, go to the communion ; all these things, verily, are far short of remission of sins, if thou bring not with thee a truly penitent heart, which may make thee capable of this salutary medicine, the *body* and *blood* of Christ. It must be confessed, that the holy sacraments, and the Word of God, are most powerful remedies, and most sovereign helps ; but they are only so to those that truly repent of their sins, and with a daily mourning, detest their former life. For what profiteth it to anoint a stone with precious ointment ? or to administer a medicine to a dead man ? Or, what harvest shalt thou reap, if thou sowest amongst thorns and briars ? Therefore, thou must first pull up these thorns and thistles, that

choak the good seed, and root out all things that hinder thee from reaping a good harvest.

13. So then, whosoever thou art, O man! if thou cleavest to thy sins, rather than to Christ, it is most sure that Christ will profit thee nothing; for the *birth of Christ* helpeth him nothing, who careth not to be *born* with Christ; and the *death* of Christ is nothing to him who hath not determined to *die* unto sin. But if, with the prodigal son, thou deplore, hate, and flee from sin as from a serpent, and dost pray from thy heart to obtain pardon of God, for the sake of his beloved Son—then indeed, (and not before,) beholding by the eye of faith, Jesus Christ crucified, and applying to thyself his most precious wounds, thou shalt find pardon is at hand; whatsoever, and how great soever, thy sins may be, which thou hast committed against God. And so perfect is the redemption purchased for thee by the blood of Christ; such the grace and *real* imputation of the whole merit of Christ by faith, as nothing can be greater or nobler. It is the good pleasure of God to exercise mercy, and to pardon sins freely. “My bowels are troubled within me towards them; I am merciful, and I will have mercy on them, saith the Lord:”—for then the death of Christ is effectual; then it cometh to perfection; and then it bringeth forth its fruits; and therefore do the angels of God in heaven rejoice, because the blood of Christ is become profitable to sinners, for whom it was shed.



## CHAP. VI.

### *The antichristian life of the formal Christian.*

I. WHILE every one names himself a Christian, although he do not perform the part of a Christian; by such a conversation Christ is both denied and belied,

yea, contemned, derided, blasphemed, and crucified. According to which the apostle saith expressly, that certain persons “crucified the Son of God afresh.” I would to God it were only so *once*, and that Christ were not *again* in these days *crucified amongst us* daily, by the antichristian lives of them that profess his name. But alas ! his most holy life is no where almost to be found ! and this is a most true saying, *That where the life of Christ is not, there also Christ is not*, let there be never so much noise made about his faith and doctrine.

2. For what is Christian faith without a Christian life ? It is a barren tree *without fruit*, of which sort the world, alas ! is full. But which is no more than Christ himself foretold, saying, “When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth ?” Which saying we are not to understand of that faith which we may profess in our mouths, and yet deny in our works. But of true faith : now wherever true faith is, there Christ is, and there the life of Christ must be : on the contrary, whosoever doth not imitate the life of Christ, the same is without Christ ; yea, there can be in him neither faith nor Christ. And if any man follow not Christ, that man for certain hath no faith ; and whatever he may pretend, he hath not Christ, nor any part in Christ ; for Christ is *cut off* from him, and he from Christ ; Christ is *rooted up* in him, and is wholly *denied* by him.

3. Concerning whom thus speaketh the Lord, saying, “If any man shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father, and before his holy angels.” This *denial* of ours is not only transacted in words, as when we formally renounce Christ ; but much more, when in our deeds we resist Christ, and do despite to the Holy Ghost. And this is that which St. Paul calls *a denial in works* ; speaking of some, that, being unto every good work reprobate, “profess that they know God, but in works deny him,” Tit. i. 16. For it is certain, that Christ is no less denied by a wicked life, than if he were expressly abjured by open words. To such as these be-

longs the saying of St. Paul, "They have indeed a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof." Now, what else is it to *deny the power of godliness*, but to betray and violate ones faith towards Christ, and so to play the heathen, under the name and mask of a Christian? These, therefore, St. Paul rightly calleth infidels; in whom the spirit (not of Christ, but) of this world, *according to the course* thereof, *worketh*. Hence then, all they that usurp a Christian's name, and do nothing that is Christian, shall be denied also by Christ, saying, "Depart from me ye that work iniquity, because I know you not."

4. Should any one examine the life and manners of these times, after the standard of the life and doctrine delivered by Christ, he would doubtless find the lives of most men to be *against Christ*, or *antichristian*. For their lives would appear diametrically repugnant to the life of Jesus Christ, and their maxims to his maxims; and the most of them that call themselves Christians, would, alas! easily be discovered by this test to be of antichrist. For nothing is plainer, than that the world lieth at this day in wickedness, yea, in that *wicked one*; and that they, who have most solemnly renounced it, have nevertheless not forsaken it; but would marry light with darkness, and unite Christ and antichrist together. Since the greatest part of the world, whatever profession they may take up to cover themselves with, have in reality no other thing in them at the bottom, but the idolatry of covetousness; which is the study of getting more of the world, and of holding fast what they already have. Yea, what indeed are the lives of men now, if we look to the life of Christ and the lives of his first disciples? Ah! how have they departed from their *first love*? The world is brought into Christendom, and Christendom is brought into the world. So the love of the world reigneth every where instead of that of Christ. Many there are that make a noise for religion, and for the purity of the gospel: but after all, what are their

lives but covetousness and more selfishness? This is that, after which we so greedily run: honour, great possessions, or a great name. But how agreeth all this with the poor and humble life of Jesus? Or, how suiteth so much bustle and stirring as is every where seen, to a disciple of the cross? Or, how can so much clamour and impatience be reconciled to a follower of the meek and patient Lamb of God? But if this cannot be, what have they to do to take the name of Christ into their mouths? or what have they to do with the *profession* of Christianity, which they deny in their *conversation*? For what else do the lives of the men of this generation shew, but a sordid *unchristian temper*, and a base and earthly habit of mind? but self-interest, worldly-mindedness, and contempt of heavenly things; but the lust of the flesh and the wandering of the eyes; but the concupiscence of the heart, and the ambition of the head; but the pride of life, and affectation of grandeur; but vain gloriousness and presumption; but the politics of the world, and the wisdom which cometh not from above; but the restless pursuit after shadows, and senseless hunting after fame and glory; but a thirst after those things which can never satisfy, and an hunger for the serpent's food, even for *dust*; but the *deifying* of reason, and the degrading of the word of God; but infidelity and irreligion; false valour and despicable cowardice; but inconstancy and time-serving; ingratitude and disloyalty; but wrath and furious strivings, wars and seditions, civil and ecclesiastical; but discords and contentions, both from within and without; but the fire of jealousy, and the burning of revenge; but secret hatred and envyings; implacableness of malice, and incorrigibleness of injustice; but insincerity and hypocrisy; wicked deccits and frauds; but treacherous backbitings and calumnies, lies and perjuries; but all manner of uncleanness, and all manner of unrighteousness? In a word, the whole life of the children of this generation is made up of these ingredients, *the love of the world*,

*self-love, self-honour, and self-seeking* ; or, to say all in one, *covetousness* : so that they are lovers of the world rather than of God ; all seeking their own, not their neighbour's good, and affecting honour, profit, and pleasure in this life.

5. Now to this, doubtless, the life of Christ is most opposite ; which is nothing else but the most pure love of God and men, variously branching itself forth in humanity, in friendliness, in courtesy, in beneficence, in meekness, in patience, in obedience to the death, in mercifulness, in righteousness, in veracity, in simplicity, in purity, in chastity, in sanctity, in contempt of the world, and of worldly honours ; in refusal of wealth and pleasures, in denial of ourselves, in the bearing of the cross continually, with all manner of tribulation and affliction for Christ's sake, and in the daily study and thirst after the kingdom of God, and in an inexpressible desire to fulfil in all things the Divine will. Behold ! this is the life of Christ in man : this is to be *with Christ*, and *for Christ* ; and to be redeemed from the number of them that are *without Christ* and *against Christ*.

6. So then, he that is not *with Christ* is *against Christ* ; for " he that is not with me," saith our Lord, " is against me : " but the modern life of persons outwardly professing Christianity, is for certain not with him ; and, therefore, it is against him. It hath no communion with Christ, but is contrary to him ; that is, not Christian, but antichristian. Hardly are there any who are of one soul, one will, one mind, and one spirit with Christ : and none but such as these ever can be Christ's ; concerning whom, therefore, the apostle beareth witness, " We have the mind of Christ," 1 Cor. ii. 16. And again in another place, " Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," Phil. ii. 5. Wherefore all the children of the world, forasmuch as they have not the *mind* which was in Christ, nor the same manners and

conversation which he had, let them never so much call themselves Christians, let them never so much boast of their faith, or presume upon their orthodoxy, undeniably are not *with*, but are *against Christ*. But he that is not *with Christ*, is an *antichrist*. He may not be so in *doctrine*, but he is so certainly in *life*.

7. And this being so, in what place of the earth shall we find true Christians? They may well be called *a little flock*: with which the prophet Isaiah agreeth, when he compareth the faithful assembly of Sion, that is, the true church, to a little "cottage in a vineyard," and to a "watch-tower or lodge, in a garden of cucumbers." And so Micah compareth it to "a cluster of grapes," which the gatherers left by negligence in the vineyard, saying, "Wo is me, for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, with grape gleanings of the vintage: there is no cluster to eat; the good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none upright among men. And blessed David likeneth it to a solitary *turtle*, to a little *sparrow*, hiding itself under the eaves of the house; to a *pelican* in the wilderness, and to a *night-owl* in the desert. Such is the state of Christianity at this day. Oh! how few are the *true Christians*! And where are they to be found? Oh! that we could but tell who they were, and by what outward mark we might know them!

8. Whosoever they are, certainly Christ both is and will be with them, "even unto the end of the world;" neither will he ever leave them without succour or encouragement, according to his word, "I will not leave you comfortless." For the Lord knoweth his, and those that be his Christ's: and whom he is said to *know*, them he taketh special notice of, and distinguisheth signally from others. Amongst whom, if any would be, the apostle's admonition must be had in remembrance, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ," says he, "depart from all iniquity." But as for them that are



not so minded, let them get themselves some other name which may suit them better. Nevertheless, "the foundation of God standeth sure," with respect to all them that hear his call, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." And every one that is so, will *depart from iniquity*, and not name *his name*, without witnessing to *his life*."



## CHAP. VII.

*A Christian ought to die to himself, and to the world, and live to Christ.*

1. WE ought to live not to *ourselves*, but to him who died for us. But to live to him, before we be dead to *ourselves*, and to the world, is utterly impossible. If therefore thou hast a mind to live in Christ, thou must be dead to all the desires of the world; and if thou hast resolved to live not to thyself, but to Christ, then must thou be ready to renounce thine own natural life, with all that thereto belongeth. But if thou art inclined to live to thyself, and to the world, it follows, that thou must renounce all commerce with Christ. For "what communion hath light with darkness," or Christ with the world? And what concord or agreement can the Spirit have with the flesh?

2. There are *three* kinds of death; the one is *spiritual*, the other *natural*, and the third *eternal*. The first is, when a man dies daily to himself; that is, by a death to avarice, pride, voluptuousness, wrath, and all other sins and passions of the corrupt nature. This death is the beginning of life.

3. Of the *second* speaketh the apostle to his Philippians: "To me to live, is Christ; and to die is gain." As if he should have said, even when a Christian shall pass through

the *natural* death, Christ still remains his life ; and thus death is gain to him. For in that he exchangeth a short and miserable life, for an eternal and blessed one ; this cannot but be a most gainful exchange. And Christ having been here his life, when he comes to be translated into the arms of his beloved, whether it be gain for such an one to die, to leave this world of sin and misery to go to him, none can doubt.

4. Yea, thrice happy is that soul, to whom *to live is Christ* : the soul wherein Christ liveth ; or that hath in her the life of Christ, by a most lively copying after the original graces which shine so bright in him. Blessed is the man who thus liveth in Christ ! But alas ! the far greatest part of men have clothed themselves with the devil, have put on his life instead of Christ's ; and *to them to live is the devil*, seeing that their life is the devil all over. It is pride, wrath, lying, idolatry, covetousness, concupiscence ; and all this is the *life of the devil*.

5. But thou, O man ! consider who it is that liveth in thee. Blessed art thou, if thou canst say, *to me to live is Christ* ; not only in the world to come, but even in this present world. Here, even here, let Christ be thy life ; that he may be so for ever. And here to die unto the world, and unto sin, account it to thee all gain. For is there any thing more gainful, than the thorough mortifying of all the sinful lusts and affections in thee, that Christ may live in thee, and thou in him ? For the more any one dieth to the world, and to himself, the more doth Christ live in that person. On then courageously, and faint not ; but let Christ now live in thee in time, that thou mayest also live with him in eternity.

6. It is written of him, " The Son of man came not to be served, but to serve others, and to give his life a ransom." And again, " I am among you as he that serveth." And shall we doubt yet to love Christ again ? God forbid. What ? can we ever refuse for such love as this to serve him again, who took thus for us the form of a servant ; and for the love of him who hath done all this, even for

us, to make war all our life against his and our deadly enemy, the world? How is it that the love of Christ doth not even *constrain* us henceforth to die unto ourselves, that we may live unto him who died for us? Because we must judge, "That if one died for all, then were all of us dead!" Oh! can there be the least hesitation in returning him life for life, body for body, and soul for soul! Shall we after this, refuse to fight under his banner, to resist for his sake, even unto blood! No: let us in his name, defy the world to do its worst, which we have solemnly abjured: and never be so base as to entertain the least thought of ever *deserting* to it.

7. For the sake of Christ, thou must die to thyself; for the love of him be willing to die to all thy sins, and to the whole world. All good works must be done, and an holy and innocent life must be lived; but this, not to *merit* any thing hereby: but only out of *pure love* towards him. Thou canst merit nothing for thyself; Christ hath done that for thee, when he made himself *poor*, for thy sake, that so thou, by means of his poverty, mightest become *rich*. Let therefore this *pure love of Christ* prompt thee to all that is good; let this be the motive of mortifying thy flesh with all its desires: and let the remembrance of that death which he most willingly accepted for thee, make thee willing to lay down thy life for him; and out of sincere gratitude for all his inestimable benefits, to accept the cross at his hand, and to resist sin and the world even unto blood.

8. Be not deceived; for not in tongue or in word, but in deed and in truth, is he to be loved of thee. If thou lovest him, keep his commandments. Himself hath told thee, "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," John xiv. 23. *For this*, as the Holy Ghost witnesseth, "is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." For to him that loves Christ with all his heart, it is pleasant, for his sake, to want the sweetness

of worldly trifles ; it is a light burden to bear what the beloved is pleased to impose ; to keep, from a principle within, the commandments of love ; to forsake and to be forsaken of the world, and by a total death thereto, to live in Christ. But he that doth not embrace the love of Christ from the heart, doth all things that concern his duty, heavily and awkwardly, and as it were with an ill-will. And no wonder then, if every thing in the exercise of an holy life, be found sharp and difficult to him. Whereas, to a true lover of Christ, not even death itself, is in any wise terrible ; so far from it, that it produces in him joy and pleasure. For it is the triumph of love to suffer for the beloved. And therefore it is written, that “love is stronger than death:” and as a mark of true Christianity, it is delivered to us, that we be “in nothing terrified” by our adversaries, the world and the devil, but that we rather “rejoice and be exceeding glad,” if we be persecuted for his name’s sake. “For unto us it is given, (saith the apostle,) on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake ;” and that even to the laying down of our natural lives, if it should graciously please him, for his name’s sake, to call us to so great an honour.

9. Consider holy Paul, whose words are, “The world is crucified to me, and I to the world.” Behold this blessed apostle, whose life was a life of continual crucifixion to the world, and all that therein is ; whereby he became, with his beloved brother Peter, a true partaker of the Divine nature ; and thus trampling by faith upon the life of this world, received an eternal weight of glory. After whose example all good Christians are indeed in the world, but are not of the world. And although they live in it, yet no part of the love thereof cleaves to them ; they accounting it a shadow which passes away. So that to them all the glory of the world is no more than a little air or smoke ; all the desire of the eyes and flesh, with the pride of life, but deceit and vanity ; all are no better than shadows ; yea, all are in their best estate, vexation

and disappointment : honours, riches, and pleasures, are nothing esteemed by them ; they account them all but as dung that they may gain Christ. For the world is dead and crucified to them, and they to the world likewise are dead and crucified.

10. Happy man, who is dead to the world, and alive to God ! separated from the world, and collected into Christ ! Blessed is the man into whose heart such Divine graces are infused, as withdraw it wholly from every tendency to inferior things, and exalt it to the supernal light and glory in the heavens. To obtain which, it is needful to pray daily and instantly to God : seeing it is not possible for a Christian to live without it.

11. It is indeed a grievous cross to flesh and blood, to die thus to the world ; yet the Spirit overcometh, and triumpheth in us over all difficulties and oppositions. So great is the force of the Spirit, that Christians pass through all these things, as a most easy burden for the sake of their beloved. And although they are hated of the world, yet are they beloved of God. For the enmity of this world, is the friendship of God ; even as the friendship of the world, is enmity with God. For “who-soever will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God,” and whosoever consequently would be the friend of God, must not count it hard to be treated as an enemy by the world, or by the God of it. The words of the disciple, are, “Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God ? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God,” James iv. 4. And the words of the Master, are, “If you were of the world, the world would love its own. But because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you,” John xv. 19. We ought not therefore to be ignorant, that the world is an adversary to those that are dead to the world ; but that it is otherwise to as many as live in the pomp and splendour thereof, whom it commendeth and favoureth. Let us consider then these things, my brethren, and

remember the words of our Lord, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you."

12. Now he in whose heart the love of the world abideth not, is not received of the world, but is cast out by it; notwithstanding he is precious in the sight of God. For unto him indeed the world is dead, and he unto the world; this man liveth henceforth in Christ, and Christ in him. And all those that do so, Christ doth acknowledge for his own; but to others it will be said by him, *I know you not*, who *knew him not*; who acknowledged him not before men. Verily, verily, he will not know them in that day, who are ashamed of his meekness, of his humility, and his patience. He who refuses to live with Christ in time, how shall he live with Christ in eternity? And how thinkest thou shall he live in thee, or with thee, after this life; seeing thou canst not, or wilt not live with him in this life? For if thou wilt not suffer Christ to live in thee, before this world be ended, what expectest thou, O fool, in that which is to come? Ah! with whom wilt thou live hereafter, thou that canst not live with him *here*? Learn therefore, O man, here to die to the world, and to thyself, that so thou mayest live to God both here and hereafter, and thy life may be revealed in Christ when he shall appear. It remains then firm, that he shall not have life in the world to come, whose life in this world is not in Christ. Now therefore if it be demanded, *what is it to die to the world*? The answer is plain, it is no other thing than not to love the world, or the things thereof, but for the sake of Christ to despise them utterly. Wherefore also the Holy Ghost saith to these dying ones, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." For we are sure, that he who loveth the world is not of God, but of the world; neither can he be of God. For "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," 1 John ii. 15. If he love the world, he may be also loved of the world. But if the love of God be in him, no wonder is it, if the world hate him, which is so at enmity with God.

Moreover, if the love of God be not in him, but the love of the world, what shall he do in heaven? Will not heaven itself be to him as hell? And what likewise hath he to do in the world, who in his heart is dead to the world? Where the heart is, there the life is also. If it be with God, then it is not with the world; and if it be with the world, then it cannot be with God, or in God. If the heart be with Christ, the life of that man will necessarily be with Christ. But if it be not with him, then will he have no share in him, but in antichrist; and his life shall never be found to be in Christ, but in Satan. Neither is he to be accounted a child of God, but a son of Belial, whose heart is fixed not in God, but in the son of perdition; being ensnared by the love of the world, to the obedience of the prince of the powers thereof. And he that hath this world's love in him, shall easily be overcome by it, even as Sampson was by Delilah; and so must suffer all that torment which the world can bring upon him, and all that vexation of heart which the worldly life produceth.

13. Furthermore, man was not made for the world's sake, but the world for man's sake: man was made to be the Lord of the earth, not a slave of it; to *subdue* it, with the affections thereof; not to be *subdued* by it, or them; not to put his delight or joy therein, as in his paradise, and to know nothing, and hope for nothing but what is before his eyes. No, truly; for he must go hence, he is but a tenant for life, of this great world. He was not made for it; nor can he abide in it. And, as naked he came into it, so naked must he go out of it again. Into it many at once are born, and as it were by heaps, promiscuously and without distinction, death driveth them all out hence again by heaps, both they that did enter into it at one time, and they that successively made their entrance into it; and will not suffer any of us to carry with us the least mite of all the treasure we have gathered, but sendeth us quite empty away, if we have no other riches but those of this world; whereby it evidently

appeareth that this world was never designed to be the end of our creation. Another cause brought us into the world, and for that we were born ; which is God himself, and the image of God which we bear in Christ Jesus, and unto which we are renewed by the Spirit. We are created for the kingdom of God, and for life eternal ; which our Saviour Christ hath recovered for us, and into which we are regenerated by the Holy Ghost. How preposterous a thing then is it for any one to fix his heart on the world, spend his time on earthly things ? *Man*, who is the most excellent of all the creatures ; man, who was made to carry about him the image of God in Christ, and who by him is renewed after this image ! *Man, who was not created for the world, but the world for man.*

14. And therefore carrieth he about with him, the image of God in Christ ; of which the excellency is so great, that all men, with all their labour and might ; yea, and all angels could not repair one soul, or renew it in the image of God. But for this cause, it was necessary that Christ should die, that so the image of God, which was by sin defaced, might through the righteousness of Christ, be renewed by the Holy Ghost ; and man might henceforth become the habitation of Christ, and the house of God.

15. Man ought to love nothing but God alone. Whatever one loveth, in that his heart is fixed ; and where his heart is fixed, thereto payeth he his devotion. He is a servant of it, whatsoever it be, and *devoted* to it. Consequently we have, in this broken and divided state, as many lords as we have objects which we love. But if thy love, O man ! be simply directed towards God, then thou art subject to no other lord ; then thou art at liberty. Wherefore thou must be very eircumspect, that thou follow after nothing that may hinder the Divine love in thee ; and that thou suffer not thy affections to run out into any of the creatures. If thou desirest to possess God alone, thy *all* must thou consecrate to him. But if



thou please thyself, instead of loving and pleasing God, much sorrow and sadness will befall thee. Whereas if thou love God, and rejoice in him only, and 'dedicate thyself only to him, then will he be thy sure comfort, and never shalt thou be overcome with sorrow, or fear, and never depressed with sadness and melancholy.

16. He who follows after his own profit, praise, and honour, never attains to tranquillity; for always something or other meets him that brings perturbation. Therefore beware thou believe not that the increase of wealth, fame, or honour, is to thee good and profitable; but rather set before thee always the heavenly treasures, and condemn all such mean and passing things, and strive to extirpate the very root of concupiscence, which hinders thee in the pursuit of the love of God. Forasmuch as in this love thou shalt find all the riches of God, and all the pleasures of paradise.

17. Now seeing the commodities of this life, such as praise, honour, riches, pleasure, and even the world itself, which bestoweth them, are floating away, but the love of God endureth for ever; that delight cannot be durable, which thou takest in the love of earthly things. Whereas the mind that is firmly set upon Divine love, cannot but continually rejoice. Ah! how vain is all that which is not grounded upon God! Oh! how is all vanished—vanished away of a sudden! Behold, the dream is fled! But do thou, O Christian, forsake all things, and thou shalt find all things by faith. For he that findeth God findeth all things; but the lover of the world findeth not God. "I am," saith Christ, "the way, the truth, and the life." As if he should have said, "Without the way, no man goeth on; without the truth, nothing is known; and without life, no man liveth: therefore look upon *me*, who am *the way*, which you ought to walk in; the *truth*, which you ought to believe in; and the *life*, which you ought to live and hope in. I am the *way* that endureth for all ages; the infallible *truth*, and the *life* everlasting. The royal way to immortal life, through my merit: the

truth itself is in my Word ; and life is through the power and efficacy of my death ; and therefore, if ye continue in this *way*, the *truth* will carry you on to eternal *life*. If ye will not *err*, come follow me ; and if ye will possess *life eternal*, put your whole trust in me, who for you endured the death of the cross." And what is that royal *way*, that infallible *truth*, and that endless *life*—the best and most noble way, and truth, and life of all others ? Truly other way there can be none, but the most holy and precious merit of Christ ; nor other truth, but the Word of God ; nor other life, but love on earth, and immortality of happiness in heaven.

18. Now, then, if thou desirest, O Christian, to be immortalized in this glorious life, it behoveth thee to believe in Christ, and to follow his example in this world, which alone is the *King's way*. If thou wouldst not be deceived by the world, take hold on his *word* by faith, and follow the footsteps of his holy life ; because this is the infallible truth. If thou desirest to live with Christ, then through him die to sin, and become a new creature ; because this is life. In brief, Christ is the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life* ; and the life, no less by example than by merit. Let us therefore, with all our might, endeavour this one thing, that our life may, as nearly as possible, be Christ's life. So that if other things be wanting to confound the false Christians, this example of Christ may alone be sufficient.

19. For we may surely be ashamed thus to lead our lives in pleasures, when Christ Jesus led his in sorrows ; and to acquaint ourselves with earthly joy, when he was acquainted with grief, even to his death. And well may we be confounded, to court the favour of this world, when he was "rejected and despised of men ;" and to hide, as it were, our faces from him, as if we counted it a shame to have such a Captain of our salvation ; or to follow him, who, treading upon the world, endured the cross. Now, if a soldier forget his own ease, when he sees his captain, by fighting valiantly, receive his death—

but thou art for getting the pleasures and honour of the world, even before thy Captain's eyes, when he was used by it most contemptuously, and nailed to the accursed tree,—shall I not say, that thou verily dost not fight under his banner? For is not his banner the *cross*? But, alas! we will, notwithstanding, be accounted Christians.

20. If they that are Christians indeed, walking by the truth of his *doctrine*, in the path of his example, attempt to make the best of their way to *heaven*—it followeth, that thou that seekest honour, and wealth, and promotion, art in the ready way to *hell*. Come out of that broad way, which leadeth unto death: come into this safe *way*, wherein the traveller cannot stray, and embrace the *truth* that cannot deceive, and live in him who is *life* itself.



## CHAP VIII.

### *A Christian's inheritance not of this world.*

1. **SEEING** God created temporal good things, and bestowed them on man in his pilgrimage, it is meet they should be taken from our most loving God with thanksgiving mingled with fear and trembling. And whatsoever things are more than necessary, these are all left to man as a trial by God to prove him; that it may be seen whether he adhere to God alone, and seek only after invisible goods; or whether he feed on the things of this temporal life, and prefer this earthly paradise before the heavenly. God, the most free of all beings, gave unto man, his offspring and image, a free choice; that so, by riches, by honours, by the talents and graces of nature, and by other goodly gifts, it might be manifested whether he did truly cleave unto God, eye him, move in him, live in him: or whether, being seduced with false shews

of the creature, he turned his mind from God, cleaved unto the creature, and respected God's shadow in it more than God himself.

2. Every one who does this, is, by his own sentence, declared guilty ; according to that of the law-giver, who, having delivered the law, made the people such an address as this, " Consider what I have propounded this day before thee ; I have set before thee *life and good, and death and evil* ; that thou mightest choose life, and mightest bless thyself by cleaving to the Lord thy God alone, and walking in his ways, *because he is thy life, and the length of thy days* ; and to obey his voice is blessing for evermore. Wherefore let not *thine heart turn away* from thy God, neither suffer thy will to be *drawn away* to the creature, to love and serve that ; but adhere to him only ; and let thy delight be to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply, and thou mayest dwell and prosper in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give them." And for certain, nothing can be more solemn, or a more full and authentic declaration of this liberty, than what he had said in the presence of them all, *viz.* " I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing ; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live," Deut. xxx. 19. To love God is *life* ; to love the creature is *death*. There is none *good* but God ; and there is no *evil* but in a separation from the one only Good. All things therefore in this world are exposed to our senses ; not to drag us down to them, but to lift us up to God ; not for deliciousness and pleasure, but as proofs and trials of our fidelity.

3. For it is the part of all true Christians to think, that they are in this world strangers and pilgrims, whose wants these earthly things should serve, not for delicateness, but for necessity : they should not, therefore, place their delight in the world, but in God alone . if they do

otherwise, they do but entangle themselves in sin ; and so, being seduced with wicked concupiscence, while they become womanly, wanton, and effeminate, they, with Eve, eat of the forbidden fruit. Hence they that are *Christians indeed*, do not desire deliciously to feast themselves, but hunger after the food which corrupteth not : they follow not the pomp and finery of apparel, but aspire after the clothing of Divine light, and of glorified bodies. In a word, to a true Christian, the things of this world that please others, are nothing but a cross and temptation, but allurements of sin, and baits of death. A Christian, therefore, useth all things with the fear of God ; and, as a stranger, watching himself with diligence, and having a great care that he offend not his heavenly Father either in meat or in drink, or in clothing, or in houses, or in any other good thing of this life, either by his own intemperate use, or by that of his friends and companions. With the eyes of faith he beholdeth steadfastly the future good things, and for the sake thereof regardeth not this mortal body. For what profiteth it the body, which by and by is to be eaten with worms, if in this world it swell in all kinds of pleasure ? “ Naked (saith holy Job,) came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return again.” A naked, infirm, and frail body, we all bring with us into the world ; yea, as an unprofitable burden we bring it with us, and carry it through the world ; which, as the spoil of death, is taken from us again when we go out of the world ; for we carry it not out again, but it is carried out by others, having been stripped first *naked* of all that is in the world. And all know that the rich and poor here are *one*. As we brought nothing, so we carry away nothing with us : lo ! all is gone as a shadow. We shall find nothing in our hands of all that we have grasped ; we shall awake every man empty out of his dream ; the prince and the beggar go forth alike, when they have acted their parts here. Whatsoever we had even from our birth to the hour of death, and which

was in this world the poor solace of a miserable necessity, is all taken from us in one moment : yea, even the bread of mercy and of grief too, is taken away. Nothing therefore is more wretched, and poor, and naked, than a dead person, if he be not clothed with Christ, and rich in God.

4. Go to then, because we are strangers and pilgrims in this world, and because we must leave all these things when we die, let us acknowledge it to be one kind of madness, (and not the least,) to gather wealth with great labour, for a frail body, which body we cannot carry out of the world, especially seeing there is another world, and another body, and another life. Call these things to mind : to you I speak, who in truth are strangers and pilgrims before the eyes of God. That we may not abide without understanding, and without honour, like to *the beasts that perish*, we must firmly imprint this in our minds, that we are strangers and pilgrims in this world, after the example of Christ. Though he was the most noble of all men, yet he chose voluntarily that life in which nothing noble might appear according to the world ; nothing besides extreme poverty, and a contempt of honour, wealth, and pleasure\* : which *three* are held by the world for *three gods*, and set up in the room of the true God, blessed for ever. These he contemned, to whom all the world did sacrifice ; and therefore he confesseth, “ The Son of Man had not where to lay his head.” Neither was blessed Job of another mind, when he rejoiced in his Redeemer ; nor Peter nor Paul, nor any of the other apostles, who sought not the riches of this world, but the riches of another ; and, therefore, took upon them the poor life of Christ, walking in his charity, lowliness, and patience, whereby they contemned this earth, and triumphed over the world. They prayed for them that cursed them ; they thanked them

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\* Quæ tria pro trino numine mundus habet.

that reproached them ; they blessed them that reviled them ; in persecutions they praised God ; by many tribulations they professed that they were to enter into the kingdom of heaven ; and when they were slain, they (with Christ their head,) prayed, “ Father, forgive them, and lay not this sin to their charge.” So dead were they to all wrath, revenge, bitterness, ambition, pride, and love of the world, and so did they live in Christ, and in his love, his meekness, his humility, and his patience. And thus were they perfectly made alive in Christ by faith ; and by this faith they lived.

5. The true Christians delight to be always *reading* of Christ, *meditating* upon Christ, *studying* Christ, and to be continually busied in *transcribing* him ; so they would gladly, if they could, never so much as look off upon any other book. These say, with the apostles, “ We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal.” And with all the holy ancients, “ We have here no continuing city, but we seek after one to come.” A true Christian rejoiceth in his spirit, that he was ordained to eternal life, and hath a continuing city prepared for him in the heavens, for which he was created after the heavenly image. And attending this one thing, how he may grow rich in God, and attain the blessed end of his creation, he seeth the madness of those that being blind with the love of the world, fear not miserably to afflict their own souls, for the sake of things which can give them no real satisfaction, and for which they are so unhappy as to lose their souls. The character of a true Christian is to have more care of *eternal* than of *temporal* honour ; to seek more the glory that endureth, than this which is but *momentary* ; to thirst after the *heavenly*, and let for their sake the *earthly* riches go ; to neglect *present* things, in pursuing after those *to come*, though to us here *invisible* ; and, lastly, to crucify and

mortify the *flesh*, that the *spirit* may live. This it is to be a true Christian.

6. It is the sum of all Christianity to follow Christ our Lord. For *the whole of religion consists in this, to imitate him whom thou dost worship* : or that thou thyself be a follower and a copier of the God whom thou honourest and servest. This, out of the light of nature, was well understood by Plato, in whose school this was the maxim, “The perfection of man consisteth in the imitation of God.” Hence nothing else is left to us, but that Christ be the pattern of our life ; and that all our counsels, studies, and purposes, only respect that one thing, how we should come to him, that so we may live with him eternally, expecting in the mean time with joy the dissolution of this our earthly prison. And to that blessed state for certain we shall attain, if we thither direct all our labours, actions, and endeavours ; making this our business, and go earnestly on with a firm desire and hope of eternal life. We need never fear to attain it, if we never lay aside the memory of this eternal happiness in our actions, but look steadily to the *end* in them all ; because thus habituating ourselves to the presenee of God, there is begotten in us a holy desire of eternal things ; and the desire of earthly things, which is insatiable in its own nature, is restrained. Wherefore, according to that saying of St. Paul, “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

7 It is indeed extreme ingratitude and contempt of God to forget God, *for* whom we bear about us both body and soul, and *from* whom we received them both ; and instead of him to worship the idols of the creatures, and to set our hearts upon them, which God alone chal-lengeth to himself. They are not given to usf or *them-selves*, but that they might be unto us as prin<sup>t</sup>., foot-steps, and testimonies of God, whereby we may come



nearer to the knowledge and love of God, the author of them all. Which, when the world dares arrogate to itself, then are the slaves hereof, by the most just vengeance of God, together with other idolaters, turned into *the fire of hell*. I deny not that all creatures are of themselves good ; but when men once set their hearts upon them, then they become an abomination before God, no otherwise than images of gold and silver, and so they become the fuel of eternal fire. For from the love of the world nothing else can follow but death and damnation ; forasmuch as the world passeth away, with all the pomp thereof ; while he that doth the will of God continueth for ever.



## CHAP. IX.

*Of poverty of Spirit.*

1. To whom, saith the merciful Lord and Saviour, should I shew respect, but to the little and poor ones, and them that are of a wounded and contrite heart, fearing before me, and trembling at my words ? Thus doth he set forth his tender regard for as many as their own misery hath taught to despise themselves, and to seek with fear and trembling, a remedy suitable to what they want. But will God look to him that is poor ? to him that is wretched, and blind, and naked ? Be not thou then ashamed to acknowledge before him thine own littleness and poorness. Be not thou discouraged from confessing unto him thy wretchedness, and blindness, and nakedness. Will he have respect to a contrite and a bruised spirit ? Will he look down upon a trembling reed, or upon broken stubble, which feareth to be scattered by the breath of his Word ? Let thine

heart then melt before him, and let thy spirit break in pieces at his presence. Despise thyself as a weak reed, that hath no strength, and as chaff itself, which is driven about by every wind: and so fear thou before the Majesty of the Lord, humbling thy soul to the dust, and acknowledging thyself unworthy of all grace and favour. This is the first step to obtain acceptance with God. Whosoever then is desirous to find grace and mercy, let him own himself altogether unworthy of them; let him account himself as *nothing*.

2. But who is this that is nothing in his own eyes? He is indeed inwardly and in heart so, who thinketh himself worthy of no Divine benefit, either corporal or spiritual. For he that arrogateth any thing to himself, esteemeth himself something, when in truth he is nothing; and therefore is the furthest off from Divine graces, and most of all unfit to be a subject for God's new creation. For he that thinketh himself to be something, when he is nothing, must of necessity lose all the benefit of God's grace; because it is nothing to him, so long as he accounteth himself not unworthy of it. Lo! this is that which rendereth grace itself of no effect, and shutteth out that which containeth all things in it; and to which all things are possible, when received with faith and thankfulness. Since the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ abideth not with any man, neither can abide with him, who holdeth himself to be something, or who judgeth himself worthy of any thing that is given him from above. Because if he judge himself *worthy* of any thing, he taketh not all things *freely* of God; whereas it is *grace*, not merit, whatsoever we are, or obtain from heaven. Nothing is proper to man, except sin, misery, and infirmity; all other things are God's, and being God's, freely flow from God.

3. Behold the shadow of a man, which is no more something than it is a man; and consider that man himself is no more than a *shadow*, as he is *in himself*, that is, independently of God. As therefore the shadow fol-

loweth constantly the motion of a man, from whom it hath its being ; even so should man follow the motion of God, from whom he hath his. And what else is the whole creation indeed but a shadow, compared with the Infinite Being, on which it depends, and whereby it subsists ? But a man that would depend on himself for any thing, walketh more especially in a *vain shadow* ; and therefore all his thoughts are *smoke*, and his devisings nought but *emptiness* ; because *in himself* he hath neither life, nor motion, nor being ; but all that he hath is in God, and of God. Thus man as a shadow, carrieth his life, his motion, and all that he hath received, of God ; according to that of St. Paul, “ In him we live, move, and have our being.” Consider, in the like manner, the shadow of a tree, yea, of a good tree, and bearing good fruit ; and ask of the shadow what it hath to boast of ? Be not deceived ; a shadow beareth no fruit ; and although apples *appear* in the shadow of the tree, they do not belong to the shadow, but to the tree. Now think thou the like as to thyself ; the good fruits that appear in thee are not thine own.

4. When a man is truly helpless in his own sight, and at all times trusteth only in the heavenly grace of Jesus Christ, beholding himself out of Christ as nothing, then doth God graciously respect him ; which Divine respect is never without a secret efficacy attending it ; but is full of a real virtue, life, and consolation. And as none but humble and contrite hearts are capable of this heavenly favour, so the more clear, and more frequent it is, the less do they think themselves worthy of it.

5. And indeed, if a man should weep a whole sea of tears, it were by no means a sufficient price for the least heavenly favour or consolation. Therefore, as is universally confessed, the *grace of God* is a most pure and free gift ; and the *merit of man* nothing else but punishment both here and hereafter. Consequently every man is guilty of his own misery, and is most graciously pardoned and justified of God ; but this cannot be without *acknow-*

*ledgment*, and that not of the mouth, but of the heart. Whereupon St. Paul saith, “If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities;” and gives us to understand, that therefore he would boast of his *infirmities*, that the power of Christ might rest upon him. For such truly is the mercifulness of God, that the weaker the creature is in itself, so much the more fortitude is divinely infused into it; for in the weakness of man, the power of God is exalted; according to that which the Lord said unto Paul, “My grace is sufficient for thee;” for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Wherefore the more vile a man is in his own eyes, the more freely doth God pardon him, to the greater manifestation of the riches of his glory in a vessel of mercy; the more doth he delight to visit him with the heavenly consolations, which are infinitely more noble than all human joys.

6. Furthermore, it is not he that is destitute of human comfort, but it is he that from the bottom of his heart, acknowledgeth his transgression, and is grieved for his sins; who is the proper subject of Divine mercy. If sin were not, there could be no misery in the world; and so much misery could not befall man, but that he is worthy of much more. Far be it from us then to fret, because many heavenly benefits are not bestowed on us; seeing we are not worthy even of the least of them, no not of the very life we carry about with us. Wherein then should a man open his mouth? Whoever thou art, it is better for thee to lay thine hand upon thy mouth, than to open it at all in thine own justification; it is better for thee to open it only in these two words, *Peccavi* and *Miserere*; that is, “Lord! I have sinned; have thou mercy upon me a sinner.” And certainly God himself requireth not of a man, but that he deplore his sins, and humbly crave pardon.

7. Weep not therefore, O man! for thy body, either because it is naked, or because it is afflicted with hunger and cold; but humble thou thyself before the Lord, and

send forth tears for thy soul, which dwells in flesh and blood, in a *house of bondage*, and is thereby obnoxious to sin and death. This consciousness of thine own misery, this godly sorrow working repentance, this thirst after the grace of God, this faith firmly fastened on Christ alone, open to thee the door of grace in Christ, by which God cometh into the soul. Be zealous therefore and *repent* : “ For, behold I stand (saith the Lord) at the door and knock ; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and I will sup with him, and he with me.” Which *supper* is the perfect remission of sins, with Divine consolation, and a Divine life and happiness.

8. At this sacred *door of faith*, our most loving God, at his own time, doth meet the wretched soul, and enter in, that he may take possession, filling the same with ineffable joys ; there it is that truth ariseth from the earth, and righteousness looketh down from heaven. Here it is that mercy and truth meet one another ; that righteousness and peace do kiss each other. And thus, O Christians, it appeareth how by the acknowledgment of your own misery, and by faith in Christ, ye may attain the grace of God. And that the more vile any one is in his own eyes, the more is he beloved of God ; and shall be by him adorned with the greater favours and the higher blessings.

9. True Christianity consists only in pure faith, love, and an holy life ; which holiness of life springing up in the soul with faith and love, hath its beginning out of *true contrition*. And this contrition is never without a knowledge of one’s self, whereby we perceive daily more and more our own defects, and amend them day by day. And thereby we arrive at a participation of the righteousness and holiness of Christ by faith. Wherein if we do walk, as having the continual fear of God before us, after the example of good children and loyal subjects, we must be sure not to nourish any thing that belongs to the *flesh*. “ All things are lawful for me (saith the true

Christian) but all things are not expedient. All things are indeed lawful for me, but all things edify not." For as a dutiful son in his father's house doth not all what seemeth good unto him, though it were lawful for him so to do; but warily observeth the will and pleasure of his father, and, as it were, setting him still before him, doth consult with him, before ever he say or do any thing: so a true Christian, as the child of God, will behave himself in his Father's house, which is the church of God; will not allow himself in all things lawful, but will chastize his senses with Christian moderation, and will never do or speak any thing without consulting first his Father in heaven.

10. By daily contrition, and habitual mortification of the flesh, man is day by day *renewed*, bearing heavenly fruits and celestial graces, of an unexplicable sweetness. Contrariwise, the pleasure of the world bringeth heaviness of heart, vexation of spirit, and a wounded conscience: yea, so great hence is the calamity of the soul, and so heavy the loss of the heavenly gift, (a loss which necessarily flows from the pleasures of the flesh, and from worldly delights,) that he who duly calls the same to mind, cannot but exceedingly fear and dread any of the fleshly and worldly joys, which serve but to divert him from those that are spiritual and heavenly, and to quench in him the most sweet grace of devotion that brings the soul into the kingdom of God.

11. A Christian rejoiceth very sparingly (if at all) in earthly things, being full of the Divine pleasures, and of life eternal. Neither is he carried away with calamities, or adversity, but for the loss of the soul only. For this only, even for this immortal spirit, that it may not be lost, he is concerned. He knows he loseth nothing of these things which perish, but he shall receive for it a thousand-fold in another world; but if the soul once perish, it can never be recovered. Blessed then is the man that findeth this *godly sorrow*, and, with that, findeth the celestial and spiritual pleasure. But how often,

alas ! do we absurdly laugh, when we ought rather to weep ! seeing there is no solid delight, but in the fear of God, and in a right conscience ; which, without faith, and an holy life, can never be attained nor kept. For faith, accompanied with this holy Divine sorrow which is wrought by the Holy Ghost, doth go on day by day to correct all the defects of man. Which most sure means if any man neglect, he loseth the best part of living ; farasmuch as he hindereth the kingdom of God in himself, he continueth a captive under the chains of sin ; neither can he be set free from the weight of corruption, nor cured of the blindness and hardness of his heart.

12. Therefore he only deserves the name of a wise man, who declineth with all his might, whatever he understands to be an obstacle to his amendment of life, and to his proficiency in the heavenly gifts. Neither doth he that is thus minded, determine to flee those things only whereby calamities may arise in the body ; but much more those which he perceives to be any way burthensome to the spirit, and an impediment of the soul's spiritual progress.

13. Blessed is the man who flees from whatever may obstruct the correction of his faults, or stop his progress in the way of Christ. For this is the true wisdom ; and to withstand all that may oppose our eternal happiness, is the true valour, which shall be crowned with immortal honour. Fear not therefore, but be of good courage : yea, be thou strong in the Lord, and very courageous, *that thou mayest observe to do according to all the word and the law of perfection, which (not Moses the servant, but) Christ the Son hath commanded thee.* Be thou a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and strictly observe all his orders, not *turning* from them *to the right hand or to the left*, that so thou mayest indeed *prosper whithersoever thou goest* ; when thou goest forth to battle against his and thine enemies, and in all whatsoever thou dost. Be of good cheer then ; for, behold, he will be with thee ; and approve thyself a man of valour, in resisting the world,

and the evil thereof; “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” The contrition of the heart is the beginning of the way which leads to the blessed kingdom of light and love. And happy art thou, if thou art entered into this way, and walkest therein as through the valley of tears; for thou shalt surely reap in joy at the day of harvest. Others shall be converted to God, gladly submitting to walk with thee in this way, when by the light of thy conversation, they shall be convinced that thou art led of God.

14. The more and oftner a penitent man deploreth his sins, the less is he attached to the world. So that he passes through it as unconcerned in it; being touched neither with the good, nor with the evil of it. He hath no longer any affection for the things thereof. He pitieth them, and mourneth over them, that are attached to it. A fountain of tears is opened, both for them and because of his own captivity in a strange land. Why did Christ weep over Jerusalem, even Jerusalem which persecuted him, and put him to death? Their sins and blindness were evidently the cause of it. Let us then think the same thing of ourselves, and take up in like manner with him, our lamentation even for ourselves, and for others; since no matter can be more worthy of tears, than both our own sins, and the impenitence of the world.



## CHAP. X.

### *Of the true worship of God.*

1. THE worship used under the former dispensation, was *outward* and typical, full of figures and shadows, exhibiting the Messiah at a distance; pompous also with ceremonies, which the Jewish nation was strictly, and



according to the rigour of the letter, bound to observe. In which rites and images, the faithful of that people beholding the Messias, as it were afar off, were saved by *faith* in him, according to the Divine promise. But that which God under the New Testament commandeth, consisteth not barely in *external* figures, rites and ordinances : but is *inward*, requiring spirit and truth ; principally demanding *faith* in Christ, because in him was the temple, altar, sacrifice, ark of the covenant, and priesthood, with the whole moral and ceremonial law completely verified. Whence it follows, that we are delivered from the curse of the law, and Jewish ceremonies : so that we may serve God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, *with a free heart and willing mind*.

2. To the true, spiritual, internal, Christian worship, there are *three* things principally required. 1. The knowledge of God, which is by faith. 2. The knowledge of *sin*, accompanied with repentance. And 3. The knowledge of *grace*, together with remission of sins : these three that make up the true worship of God, are one, and yet three. For in the knowledge of God alone, is contained both repentance and remission of sins.

3. The true knowledge of God apprehendeth Christ, and in him, and through him, discerneth God ; his omnipotence, love, mercy, righteousness, truth and wisdom ; all which are God himself. For what is God ? Surely no other, than pure Omnipotence, pure Love, and Mercy, pure Righteousness, Truth, and Wisdom. And the same is to be said of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit. But whatsoever God is, that he is not to himself only ; but also to *me*, by his gracious will made manifest in Christ. Thus to me is God omnipotent, to me merciful, to me eternal righteousness, through faith and remission of sins ; to me also everlasting truth and wisdom. Thus also is it with Christ, who is made to me eternal omnipotence, the Almighty head and prince of life, my most merciful Saviour, everlasting love, unchangeable righteousness, truth, and wisdom ; according to that of the

apostle, "Christ is God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." All which is also true of the Holy Spirit. This is "the true knowledge of God." It is not a naked science, but a cheerful, vivid, and effectual reliance, in which I feel the rays and influences of the Divine omnipotence really to descend upon me, insomuch that I perceive myself by him to be upheld and preserved, "In him to live, move, and have my being;" and that I also sweetly taste the riches of his goodness and mercy. Is it not of pure love, whatever hath, by God the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, been done for thee, me, and us all? What more consummate love than that, by which he sets us at liberty from sin, death, hell, and the devil? And do not his truth and wisdom always, and in all things, conspicuously appear?

4. This is the true and substantial faith, which consists in a living and effectual reliance upon God, and not in any noise and vanishing sound of words. In this knowledge of God by faith, we must, as the children of God, daily make further and further advances towards perfection. And hence the apostle poureth out most fervent prayers, "That we may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge;" as if he had said, Though the whole care of all our life, were only employed in learning the love of Christ, yet would there still remain a continual and never-failing matter for our further search. Neither is it to be thought, that this knowledge consists in a barren and inactive speculation of the love of Christ; but we must, in our own hearts, partake, taste, and experience the sweetness, delight, power, and vital influx of this immense love, through the word and faith. Can we say that he hath known the love of Christ, who never tasted its sweetness? Hence it is by the apostle said of some that had learnt it by an experimental perception, that they had "tasted of the heavenly gift, and the word of God, and the powers of the world to come;" all which is effected by faith through

the word. The same is also understood by "the shedding of the love of God abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost," in which consisteth the fruit and efficacy of the word of God. And this only is the true knowledge of God, that proceeds from tasting and experience, and is founded on a living and operating faith. And this knowledge of God, that arises from a living faith, is not the least part of that inward and spiritual worship of God; seeing faith is a spiritual, living, heavenly gift, yea, the very light and power of God.

5. When, therefore, this true knowledge of God is attained, by which God presents himself as it were to be touched and tasted by the soul, (according to that of the Psalmist, "O taste and see that the Lord is good,") it is impossible, but that straightway there must ensue, a real renovation of mind and life. For, from a sense and stable knowledge of the Divine omnipotence, proceeds *humility*. Since he must needs submit himself unto the mighty hand of God, who hath perceived its irresistible power. From a taste of the Divine mercy, ariseth love towards our neighbour: for no man can be uncharitable who hath experienced the Divine compassion. Who can refuse any assistance to his neighbour, that considers how God, out of his pure mercy, hath bestowed himself upon him? From the long-suffering of God springs a wonderful *patience* towards our neighbour, and that to such a degree that, were it possible, a true Christian could be killed seven times a day, and as many times restored to life, yet would he always willingly forgive his murderer, mindful of the boundless mercy of God unto himself. From the Divine righteousness comes the *acknowledgment of sins*, so that with the prophet Daniel we confess, "Righteousness belongeth unto thee, O Lord, but unto us confusion of face." From an apprehension of the truth of God floweth *fidelity* and uprightness towards our neighbour; so that all fraud, deceit, and lying, is now relinquished; God forbid I should deal deceitfully with my neighbour: for

so I should offend the truth of God, which is God himself; who having dealt so faithfully with me, it would be great wickedness if I should do otherwise by my neighbour. The consideration of the eternal Divine wisdom produceth the *fear of God*. For he who knows God to be the searcher of hearts, viewing its most secret recesses, must needs dread the eyes of that Divine majesty. "There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves; for behold his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."

6. And thus much of the true knowledge of God, which brings the knowledge of sin, and is accompanied with amendment of life. And this knowledge, together with those things that attend it, makes up the *other* part of the inward Divine worship, and is that sacred fire, by the appointment of God to be used with the sacrifices, lest the Divine wrath should be kindled against us, and we be consumed by the fire of his incensed vengeance.

7. This knowledge of sin brings us to the knowledge of grace and "remission of sins;" which, as it is only to be obtained through the merit of Christ, so the benefit of this merit can no man claim to himself, without repentance; nor consequently, neglecting this, expect the remission of sins. Wherefore repentance was necessary, even to the thief on the cross, that, his sins being remitted, he might accompany Christ into paradise. Which, that it was not careless or superficial, but proceeding from the bottom of the heart, affected with a holy contrition, appears from the reproof to his companion; "Dost not thou fear God?" and, "We receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss:" and from his humble and serious request to Christ, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom;" which are certain proofs of a contrite heart, faithfully embracing Christ.

8. This gracious absolution from sins, which a penitent heart, by a true faith, apprehendeth, supplieth all our deficiencies; and that through the death of Christ, which he suffered for annulling them, and as it were rendering undone all our offences, by his most abundant satisfaction. Hence it is, that God is said to *forget* sins, and “no more to call them to remembrance;” for whatever is fully and completely paid, yea, blotted out, must needs be buried in oblivion.

9. This then is the *third* part of the inward spiritual worship, a real and experimental knowledge of *grace*, with an intimate sense of the full and meritorious satisfaction of Jesus Christ, issuing from the knowledge of God; which knowledge, in like manner, is the source of repentance, as repentance is of remission of sins: which, though three, yet are indeed but one, and are sustained as on a foundation by the solid knowledge of God.

10. And thus the outward law of Moses is changed into spirit, or an inward, holy, and new life, and its sacrifices into repentance, by which we offer unto God our body and soul, together with sacrifices of praise, ascribing unto him alone our knowledge, conversion, and remission of sins, that God alone may be all, his grace worthily acknowledged, and with thankful hearts and tongues celebrated unto all eternity.

11. It appears then, that *the true worship of God* is in the mind, and consists in the knowledge of God, and in true repentance, mortifying the flesh, and through grace renewing man after the image of God. In this order is man made the holy temple of God, in which, through the Holy Spirit, a worship is performed that is truly Divine; namely, faith, love, hope, humility, patience, supplication, thanksgiving, and the praise of God. But though this worship and service hath regard to God himself, and is performed to him only, yet far be it from us to believe, that God hath any want of our adoration or service, or receiveth any advantage thereby: let us rather think, that such is the great mercy of God to

miserable men, that he is willing to impart himself wholly, with all his good things, unto us, and in us to live, operate, and dwell, provided we, on the other hand, are ready, by the true knowledge of him, by faith and repentance, to entertain him, that in our hearts he may bring his own work into perfection. For of God no work is approved and accepted, but that of which himself is the author in us. Therefore hath he commanded us to repent, believe, pray, fast ; not that to him, but to us, the benefit might redound.



## CHAP. XI.

### *Of a Christian Life.*

1. NOT the Christian name, but a *Christian life*, sheweth a true Christian ; for in him Christ is manifested, and made visible to others, by charity, humility, and benignity of nature. In whom, therefore, Christ liveth not, he, of consequence, is not a Christian. And this life having fixed its root within, in the very spirit and heart of a man, must spring from this inward principle, as an apple from the internal virtue of the tree. Yea, it is necessary our life should be directed by the Spirit of Christ, and fashioned after his example ; according to that of the apostle, “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” For all life proceeds from spirit ; but such as is the spirit that inwardly acteth, and governeth in any, such will he outwardly appear to be. From whence it is evident, *how necessary the Holy Spirit is to a truly Christian life* ; which, therefore, Christ hath commanded us importunately to pray for, by which we are quickened in Christ, unto a new, spiritual, and heavenly life. And

from the life and never dying power of this Spirit must spring every Christian virtue, "And righteousness must flourish as the palm-tree, and like the cedar of Lebanon, which the Lord hath planted."

2. Whence it follows, that a man must be *first internally renewed* in the spirit of his mind after the image of God, so that his desires and affections, being conformed unto Christ, may produce a suitable life; and that the outward life of a man may be nothing but a constant expressing of that vital principle within. Yea, seeing God "searcheth the heart and reins," it is surely most reasonable that a man should possess, in the secret of his heart, even more than appears in his outward life visible to all. This inward principle must renew our body, soul, and spirit, and clothe us with an holy life. And this life must yet daily wax more and more vigorous, and further increase in Christ. Now so much does any one grow in Christ, as he maketh progress in faith, by virtue and a Christian life, and advanceth in holiness. In a word, so far he profiteth as Christ liveth in him.

3. A Christian ought to be daily *renewed* in tending heavenwards, to strengthen himself every day with fresh purposes of walking suitably to his new name, and with unwearied endeavours to avoid a false and counterfeit Christianity, no otherwise than if he had this day been first initiated in the principles of true religion. For as one that enters into an office has nothing more at heart than to acquit himself therein with applause; so also should we do, who are *called* unto Christ "with an holy calling." This holy purpose, if it be not most deeply rooted in our minds, no amendment of life will ensue, no vigour in piety, no increase in Christ. Yea, the very quickening Spirit of Christ is wanting. For such a resolution of doing well is the first work of the Holy Spirit, and that *preventing* grace that allureth, inviteth, and moveth all men. Happy, therefore, is the man, who with his heart is attentive and obedient to him, and hearkeneth to the *voice* of the wisdom of God, "utter-

ing her voice in the streets ;” who duly considereth, that all things he vieweth with his eyes, are so many memorials of their Creator, by which he endeavoureth to draw mankind to the love of himself.

4. Which Divine drawing, so soon as ever we perceive, we should immediately put our hand to the work, and take care that so precious a moment do not slip away. If this be neglected, other days may possibly succeed, in which we cannot think, hear, speak, or do good : which being foreseen by the eternal Wisdom, she every where calls on us, that by our carelessness we lose not the time, and neglect not the opportunity presented.

5. Call to mind, O man, the shortness of life ! Seriously consider how many opportunities thou hast neglected ! One half of thy life hath possibly been consumed in sleeping, and the other in eating and drinking, and other natural actions ; so that when thou comest to the brink of the grave, thou mayest be found scarcely to have entered upon a Christian life. *Every one ought so to live as he would wish to die.* If thou art afraid to die wickedly, lead a pious life : if thou desirest to leave the world as a Christian, endeavour to be one in thy life and actions. Now he liveth as a Christian, that so demeaneth himself, as if he were every day to die ; well knowing that a good servant will at all times be ready at the call of his master. And God by death, as his officer, summons us all before him.

6. “Blessed therefore is that servant, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching.” And who is he that watcheth, but he that suffers not himself to be seduced by the world, or its adorers ? Thou wilt therefore do well to avoid the familiarity of worldly men. It is ever best with the soul, when it is at rest in its own habitation and resting-place, which is God. For whenever it wanders forth from this, thither it must return, if it will enjoy true repose. Wander wheresoever thou wilt, thou shalt find no rest any where but in him ; no liberty but in him : no power also but in him alone



But thy soul shall attain in him to the true liberty and power, and thou shalt find certainly that rest which the world cannot take from thee.

7. Wherefore be sure not to scatter thyself abroad. It is never worse with the soul, than when it gaddeth from home : it is never better with the soul than when it is at home ; that is, resting in God, its true original. For since it is God's offspring, needs must it return to God again, and live in God as in its true element ; if it desire to be quiet, and meet with lasting satisfaction. Return, O return to the Fountain of thy being, for here will be thy rest : here thou wilt live in thy own element ; here, and here only, will happiness of life be found for thee.

8. Nothing is more dangerous than the familiarity with the world, and worldly persons, to the life of a Christian. He that allows a liberty of gadding abroad to his sons and daughters, creates mischief to himself ; and he that, by giving loose reins to his tongue and thoughts, suffers them to run at large through all the transactions of men, as so many circles of vanity, is sure to bring down much evil upon himself. But assure thyself thou wilt decline many grievous inconveniencies, if thou endeavour to confine them within the bounds of thy own breast.

9. Whatever doth not promote the repose of the heart, and continual renovation of the mind, should neither be heard, nor spoken, nor read, nor so much as entertained in thought, by a disciple of Christ ; who will avoid many inconveniencies, by keeping within his heart what ought not to be promulged abroad. Thus, in the *tents* of the Lord his God, he flourisheth as a goodly *plánt*, spreading forth his branches as the cedar of Lebanon. Whatever then doth not further the quietness of the heart, let it be far from thine ears, thy mouth, thine eyes, and thy thoughts. For the trees of the Lord do attend to nothing but how to grow and profit in Christ. Now, Christians are those trees of God, that should daily grow and take

deeper root in Christ. Hence St. Paul witnesseth of himself, that besides "Christ, and him crucified," he desired to "know nothing." And this hath been the general method of all the saints of God, who have, to the utmost of their power, endeavoured, by carefully cherishing this blessed tranquillity of mind, to imitate those holy and heavenly spirits, who, retreating under the pavilions of the Most High, do rest in him alone. Wherefore they strive with all diligence to hide themselves in God alone, as in the only centre of their souls.

10. He that will speak well, let him first learn to be *silent*; for to talk much is not eloquence, but prating. He that desireth peace and serenity of mind, let him keep watch over his tongue, and endeavour to maintain a good conscience. For an evil one is like the troubled sea; yet shall it find rest, if it return unto Christ by repentance. The dove which Noah sent out of the ark, not finding any place of rest, returned thither again; so thou, in like manner, remember to do: as oft as, floating in a sea of worldly business, thou findest thyself in danger, retire immediately into thy heart to Christ, lest, by being too much tossed on the billows of the world, thou art altogether deprived of tranquillity of mind. Whilst thou conversest amongst men, and dealest in affairs of the world, see thou always do it *with fear and with humility*. Persuade thyself it is no less unsafe trusting to the world, than to the sea. The external joy of the world, howsoever for a time it may sooth a man, and may seem to promise every thing prosperous and agreeable, yet, as the sea by tempest, it may soon be disturbed, leaving behind nought but the sting of an evil conscience.

11. But because the Lord is "a God that hideth himself," let the soul approach him in a manner secret and remote from the noise of the world, that she may the more readily participate of his Divine communications; and being *hidden* with him, let her, according to the Psalmist, say, "I will hear what the Lord will speak in

me." Thus the further our souls retire from the world, the more familiar they become to God: even as the patriarch Jacob, when separated from his children and kinsfolk, conversed with God and angels. For it cannot be expressed in words, how much an holy soul, that is sequestered from the friendship and fellowship of the world, is loved by God and his angels; seeing they continually delight in the company of such a Christian.



## CHAP. XII.

### *Of the Love of God and our Neighbour.*

"Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. i. 5.

In this assertion, the apostle setteth before us the high and noble virtue of *love*, and certifieth us, concerning it, these four things.

I. First, that love is the end of all the commandments, and the fulfilling of the law: that therein are comprehended and fulfilled, all the precepts of God, both under the first and the second covenant; and without which, all gifts and virtues are fruitless and unprofitable.

II. The second is this, that true love cometh "out of a pure heart," that is cleansed from the love of the world. Wherefore St. John warneth us "not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world;" under which he specifieth the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life;" because the mixture of any of these is absolutely inconsistent with the pure love of God. For, "If any man," saith he, "love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

III. The apostle, in the third place, teacheth, that love must be "out of a good conscience." Now this

properly concerneth the love of our neighbour, and instructeth us, That man ought to love his neighbour, not for the sake of interest or worldly advantage, which is a false love, and *out of a bad conscience*; but for the sake of God, and of his commandments, and out of a consciousness of our duty.

IV The last thing by the apostle here asserted, is this, That love must be “out of faith unfeigned.” This is the sum of what is contained in this short saying of the apostle; of which we shall now speak more particularly.

I. 1. In the first place, “love is the end of the commandment;” it is a fulfilling of the whole law; it is a summary of all the precepts of Jesus Christ; it is both the beginning and motive, and the end and perfection of all virtue. That love which is out of a right faith, is the noblest, the best, the highest fruit of faith. God hath changed the heavy yoke of the Old Testament service, and the many commandments and ordinances of that dispensation, into *faith and love: and this commandment is not grievous*. It is not so to an enlightened Christian; for the Holy Ghost maketh a free, willing, and ready heart; and he is the inspirer of courage which faileth not, but surmounteth all difficulties.

2. Neither doth God require of us great skill or great ability; it is only love which he will have from us. And so this be but hearty, without dissimulation, God is more delighted therein than in all the knowledge and wisdom that any man upon earth, in his best works, can ever express. And where love is not, all wisdom, all knowledge, all works, and all gifts, are altogether unprofitable: yea, he is dead, whosoever liveth without love. Though thou speakest with the eloquence of angels, concerning heavenly and Divine matters, yet if thou hast not love, thou art but “sounding brass,” and thy seraphical oratory is but a “tinkling cymbal.” And though thou hast the revelation of all futurities in the church, and the understanding of all mysteries, Divine and natural, and the interpretation of all languages, dead and living, and

an universal knowledge of all that either men or angels can know, whether in the heights above, or in the depths beneath ; and though thou hast also therewith a wonder-working faith, so as by it to "remove mountains," yet if thou hast not this love of God, all verily will profit thee nothing ; all shall cease, all shall vanish away ; and every thing shall come to an end, but love. This then is the distinguishing mark of a true Christian. Great abilities are common to heathens and Christians ; great works are common to believers and unbelievers ; great natural parts, great moral accomplishments, great acquirements, of several kinds, are alike common to the one and to the other ; only love is the right test of a right Christian, and doth separate betwixt the counterfeit and the true.

3. Without it, every work is of no moment ; and with it there is nothing but what is accepted of God. It is far dearer than the arts, and more precious than the wisdom of the whole world. It is the Christian's badge, and the seal of the Holy Ghost. It is love alone which uniteth us to God. For we know that "God is love ; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." Where love is not, God is not there ; and he that abideth not in love, hath no portion in God, in Christ, or in heaven, which is the kingdom of love. So then, where love is wanting, there is no good ; and where that is present there no evil can abide ; for God himself is there. Love is pleasant and acceptable with God, because it is of his own nature ; and so is every man that exerciseth it, and bringeth forth the fruit thereof. There is no work *without* it but is a *dead* work : and there can be no work *with* it, but it is a *living* one. For in this love, there is an endless spring of life ; it is the communication of the Divine life itself, and an essential ray of the Infinite Goodness.

4. And whereas the arts and sciences, and all the knowledge and wisdom which man graspeth after, are not gotten but with great labour and study, with much care and solicitude,—this heaven-born love cheereth and strength-

eneth both the body and mind. Neither is it loss to any, but bringeth most ample fruit ; for love is the reward of the lover ; this virtue is a reward to itself. Love ariseth stronger and stronger, exulting under all difficulties—findeth, in the hardest trials, a most sweet refreshment ; and in the very lion's belly discovereth honey. When the other faculties of the body and mind are faint and wearied, love fainteth not—love is never weary, nor ever ceaseth. Howsoever prophcey may pass away, and tongues may cease, and sciences may be destroyed, and arts may be lost, and the knowledge of mysteries may vanish away : yea, and *faith* itself may also fail ; this *never faileth*. For when all that is imperfect is done away, this abideth for evermore.

5. This should be the spring of all our prayers ; and without this, all is but lip-service. He that loveth God, prayeth well, and praiseth well. But he that loveth not God, neither prayeth or praiseth as he ought ; because he neither prayeth unto him, nor praiseth him from the heart. The true prayer consisteth in spirit, in faith, in love. It consisteth not in bare words. Think upon Christ, and how he prayed. Think out of what a tender merciful heart he cried, " Father, forgive them," Luke xxiii. 34. He that loveth not God, that man prayeth not. But he that heartily loveth God, knoweth how to *pray*, and for him to pray, it is both easy and comfortable. In his heart is the prayer of peace, and from his lips goeth forth a *burning stream* of charity, as having been touched with a *coal* from the heavenly altar. His inward eye is fixed continually upon God, and unto him doth he send up a pure and living sacrifice from a fire within him, which is never quenched. Consequently he esteemeth nothing so sweet as communion with him, or so refreshing as the worship of him, which is performed in truth, by the Spirit of holy love.

6. Faith should do all things in a Christian through love ; and all the things that are done in him, ought thus to be wrought by faith united with love ; even as the

soul worketh through the body. As the soul sees, hears, tastes, smells, and speaks through the body, and doth all things in and through the body, to which it is united ; so should the love of God, as the soul of thy soul, do all things in and through thee. Whether thou dost eat or drink, whether thou dost hear or speak, whether thou dost commend or reprove any one, let all be done in love. If thou beholdest thy neighbour, behold thou him with the eyes of love ; if thou hearest him, hear him with all love and tenderness ; and if thou speakest with him, let thy speech be with the meekness of wisdom, and the merciful bowels of Christian affection.

7. Preserve the root of love always in thee by faith, that so nothing but what is good, may grow up. So shalt thou fulfil the commandments of God ; seeing that they are all comprehended in love. Wherefore a certain holy doctor spake after this manner : ‘ O love of God in the Holy Ghost ! which art the ravishing sweetness of souls, and the Divine life of men, whosoever hath not thee, is dead even while he liveth ; and whosoever hath thee, never dieth before God. Where thou art not, there the life of man is nought but a restless dying. Where thou art, there man’s life is made a foretaste of eternal life.’

Secondly, 8. The love of man to God, must be *out of a pure heart*. The heart of man, that desireth to love God, should be cleansed from all worldly love ; so shall God be to him the highest good ; and he shall be able to say, “The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup : thou maintainest my lot.”

9. God therefore should be the most beloved of our souls, and our hearts should rest in him ; because he is our highest and best good, the good of all goods. He is all goodness, and all virtue. All that is, or can be called good, he is in the truest and most supereminent sense. God is the only good, and there is none besides him. He is purely and merely good, purely and merely love. And if it be asked, what God is ? we may well answer, that God is mere grace, love, clemency, truth, consola-

tion, peace, joy, life, and salvation. Now all these hath he laid up in Christ; and whosoever hath Christ, the same hath all these. And if any man have the love of God, he hath also the truth of God, with his merey, his goodness, and the whole body of the virtues; for seeing that he loveth God, thereby loveth he not one, but all the virtues, even as they are in God.

10. The right lover of God then hath a love to all that God loves; and an aversion to all that God hath an aversion for. He liketh and disliketh all things, even as God liketh and disliketh them. Hence if any man love God, he must love righteousness. And therefore also should he have a love for truth, seeing God is truth. Moreover man ought to love mercy; seeing that God is mercy. For the same reason ought he to love meekness and humility; in conformity to the meek and humble will of Christ. And on the contrary, God's true lover cannot but hate all ungodliness, and all the works of unrighteousness. For that which is unrighteous, is against God, and is the work of the devil. Therefore also the lover of God hateth a lie; forasmuch as the devil is the father of lies. Moreover he must needs hate unmercifulness, pride, and all other sins; because they are part of the devil.

11. But thou must remember that thou pray to God, for this love, which is *out of a pure heart*, who through the grace of Christ, will most freely enkindle the flames thereof in thine heart; if thou pray unto him for it, and cease not to importune him, by offering up to him thine heart every day, yea, every hour, and every moment, in a constant habitual resignation of thy will to him. And if it happen, that thy love wax cold and weak at any time, rouse up thy heart, faint not, but stir up the gift of Divine grace within thee, and never be discouraged. Yea, shouldest thou, through the weakness of thy love, sometimes fall; get thee up in the name of God, rise again, and go to work, and renew the acts of thy love. For inasmuch as thou art sensible of this thy coldness and weakness, be thou sure that the eternal



light of Divine love is not extinguished, though it be eclipsed; and therefore never doubt, but that God thy most gracious and tender Saviour, will enlighten thee again, and fire thy heart with his love, as in the days of thy first espousals to him, so that thou mayest sit down under his shadow, and rejoice in the light of his countenance. Yet howsoever it may be with thee, thou must be sure to abide humble; and whensoever he shall visit thee again with his gracious consolation, and shall enflame thy heart with his love, thou oughtest to pray unto his holy Majesty incessantly, that he may never at any time hereafter, suffer the most bright fire of Divine love in thee to be quenched. Thus much of the love *out of a heart*, which is *purified* from the love of the world and of the creatures.

Thirdly, 12. The love of man to his neighbour, must be *out of a good conscience*. The love of God and of our neighbour, cannot be separated. But he that loveth God, will love his brother, who was made after the image of God. For the love of God cannot abide in an heart that is leavened with hatred and uncharitableness. And if thou hast no pity on thy brother, whom thou knowest to stand in need of thy help, how canst thou love God, who needeth not any thing that is thine, and hath commanded thee to express thy love towards him by the marks thereof to thy brother?

13. Faith uniteth to God, love uniteth to our neighbour. It is the property of love to bewail and compassionate the infirmities of others; forasmuch as they represent to us, as in a glass, our own condition. Wherefore when thou seest another overtaken in a fault, consider that thou also thyself art a *man*; and endeavour, if possible, to restore him *in the spirit of meekness*. And inasmuch as thou bearest his burthen, thou by so doing dost *fulfil the law of Christ*, which is the perfect law of love; whereby we are obliged to “receive one another,” and to bear one with another, *as Christ also received us*, and bore with us, to the glory of God; in all

patience, humility, and gentleness, with brotherly kindness, as considering ourselves, lest we also should be tempted.

Fourthly, 14. Love must be *out of faith unfeigned*: and being so, it puts no difference, for the sake of God, between what is bitter and sweet, painful and joyous, for the present; but loveth them and embraceth them alike. It rejoiceth in adversity, even as in prosperity, and fainteth not when it is tried. The man that heartily loveth God, is well pleased with every thing wherewith God is well pleased. He that hath a love for God, cannot but have a love for his cross, which he hath given him to bear. Let us look unto our Lord, and behold how willing he was to take his cross upon him, because it was God's will. "I have a baptism, (saith he) to be baptized with; And oh! how am I straitened (and in pain) till it be accomplished." In like manner have all the holy martyrs carried after him their cross with joy. For to them that unfeignedly love God, out of a sincere faith, it is not hard to bear their cross. The loadstone draws to it heavy iron; and shall not the heavenly loadstone, the love of God, draw that which is heavy to it? Shall it not lift up after it the burden of our cross, as if it were most light and easy? Shall not the sweetness of Divine love make the cross sweet, let it be in its own nature never so bitter to the flesh?

15. This love is a beautiful image; and lovely foretaste of eternal life; wherein the saints do mutually love each other sincerely, do receive singular delight one from another, and do converse together in a wonderful and ineffable concord, and inexpressible sweetness and affection. Whoso therefore doth desire to have an antepast of the Eternal beatitude, let him study *love*, wherewith he shall be delighted with singular pleasure, in the most inward ground of his soul.

16. And how much purer, and more frequent your charity is, so much the nearer it approacheth the Divine nature; forasmuch as in God, in Christ, and in the Holy

Ghost, charity is most pure, and most fervent. Now love is *pure* when we love not for private profit, but only for the cause of God alone; who we know in like manner loved us, for no good of his own, but ours. The Christian loveth his neighbour, God and Christ, without any ignoble or selfish ends; and thus is his love preserved pure and sincere, which is the true love. And this love, as it is pure, so it is also *fruitful*; yea, nothing is more fruitful than love. Hence is love fitly called the fruitful mother of all the births both in heaven and earth. It bringeth forth by the Holy Ghost, all the fruits of righteousness from the heart, which is divinely impregnated with this *seminal* principle. Lastly, love is *fervent*, when it vehemently drives on the lover to act *vigorously* for the good of the beloved; when it is accompanied with abundant mercy and compassion; and when the affairs of our neighbour go as near to our heart as our own, so that we be ready even to *lay down our life* for him.

17. Yea, we ought even to love our enemies, according to our Lord's commandment: "Love your enemies, do good to those that hate you, and pray for them that persecute you, and revile you, that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven. For if you love (only) them which love you, what reward have you, (or shall you have,) do not the Publicans the same?" In this therefore consisteth the excellency and dignity of a true Christian; namely, in subjecting nature to this Divine principle, in taming his flesh and blood, and overcoming the world, with the evil that is therein, by *goodness*. Therefore, "If thine enemy hunger, give him meat." Though he be thine enemy, treat him as thy friend, and endeavour to make him so by all possible means, heaping as it were *coals* of love *upon his head*. Lest we might think it sufficient not to hurt him, we are commanded to do good unto him, to support him, relieve him, and cherish him with food and helps convenient for him. Which if any man refuse, he cannot be the child of God, or a

member of Christ, because he loveth not his neighbour, be he friend or enemy.

18. And whom would not the patience and meekness of the Son of God himself, move to love his enemies? To this end our blessed Redeemer hath set his example before our eyes, that it might be an ever-living mark to us in our whole life; by which, whatsoever was proud or lofty in us, might be abased; whatsoever was weak, should be strengthened; whatsoever was crooked, should be made straight; whatsoever was defective, should be supplied. This blessed example let us constantly behold, that so we may be conformed to it. For what pride of man may not be healed with the extreme humility of the Son of God? What wrath, that this meekness cannot mollify? What desire of revenge, that his patience cannot assuage? What inhumanity so great, which Christ with his charity and benefits, shall not expel? Lastly, what heart so hard, that is not softened with the tears of Jesus Christ?

19. Now who would not wish to be made like to him, and to represent him in humility, patience and charity? Oh! who would not bear his most lovely image, who loved his enemies to so high a degree? Or, who would not wish from the bottom of his heart, to be like God the Father, and his Son, and the Holy Ghost, and to carry within him the excellent image of the holy Trinity, which chiefly consisteth in love and forgiveness? For it is the highest of all the Divine properties, to have mercy, to spare, to pardon, and to be gracious. And doubtless, that is the highest of all virtues, by which we become most like unto the Most High God.

20. On this consideration God was made man, that he might set before our eyes, a living and breathing image of his own love; and that he might manifest by his image, his love which was before hid in the inscrutable abyssal, incomprehensible essence, that so men should be transformed through charity into this image of God.

21. O happy mankind, if we could all live together in love? Then frauds would cease, then injuries would not be known, neither would there be a man found to vex another. And that we might think of this, God in the beginning, when he had brought forth *many* beasts and plants, created but *one* man; from him a little afterwards, producing Eve; to the end that human kind being thus all derived from one stock, might conspire all in love, and unite in mutual affection one towards another. *For how good and how pleasant*, would it have been for all men, like *brethren*, to have *dwelt together in unity*! This would indeed have been like precious *ointment* distilling from the *head* of the everlasting High-Priest, and descending to the very utmost *skirts* of his garments, in an *holy generation* of sons and daughters. This would have brought down *heaven*, as it were, upon *earth*; and would even now turn our *wilderness* into *paradise*. O happy and blessed life of loving souls, upon whom God hath *commanded* a blessing for evermore! Oh charity; how amiable art thou! and how joyous is thy yoke to them that find thee! What is there hard in it! Love is the easiest thing in the world, and beareth all things without feeling the burthen. It is love that quencheth the fire of hell in the soul: but by enmity it is blown up, and wrath fanneth the sparks thereof. Love maketh our minds quiet and easy; hatred and revenge grievously torment them. Wherefore in order to attain true tranquillity of mind, if thou hast acted contrary to love, that method of reconciliation must be taken which God hath appointed himself by his word.

22. How reconciliation is to be made with an offended neighbour, we are taught by Scripture; which commandeth the offender to be reconciled to his neighbour, and, 1, to ask pardon of him; 2, to restore the thing taken from him, whom he has defrauded or offended; and, 3, if there be none to receive it, to give it to the Lord. This restitution of things unlawfully taken away, is a part of repentance. Whereupon St. Augustin saith,

“The sin is not remitted, unless the thing taken be restored.” And presently he addeth, “When the thing taken away, may be restored, and is not, there is no repentance.” Because it is the property of true repentance, to condemn all earthly goods, and to esteem all things as dung in respect of the grace of God.



## CHAP. XV.

### *Christ the light of the world.*

1. God is *light*, saith St. John. But what is God? God is a Spiritual, Eternal, and Infinite Being. God is almighty, merciful, gracious, righteous, holy, true, faithful, all-knowing, and only wise; God is unspeakable love and faithfulness: he is the most sovereign good, and all good essentially; and the true and everlasting light. Whence every one that departeth from God, departeth from the light; and whosoever walketh not in his love, his mercy, his righteousness, and his truth, the same walketh not in his light, but wandereth out from it, and falleth into darkness. For without God there is nothing but darkness, but mere darkness, but everlasting darkness. O how dark therefore is that soul in which God is not!

2. Now if God be light, then the *devil is darkness*; and if God be love, then the *devil is hatred*; which hatred is sown in the darkness, even as love is sown in the light, and springs up out of the light; so extinguishing the powers of darkness. For this heavenly love, having the light everlasting for its sun and its shield, is stronger than death and hell; and sin and torment must flee before it. Wherefore as God is light, yea, very light; and Christ is light of light: even so the devil is darkness, yea, very darkness, in the children of disobe-

ence. He is all wrath and envy, all malice and uncharitableness, and *in him is no light at all*; and they that walk in the darkness, as he is in the darkness, have fellowship with him, being made partakers of his nature and wearing his form. And certainly, if God be in his nature *charity*, the devil is in his, nothing but *inordinate self-love*, the fruitful womb of sin and torment. To which whosoever joineth himself, as likewise to the sbominable offspring thereof; (namely, wrath and arrogance, envy and hatred, malice and revenge, with a numerous train besides) the same is changed into darkness and the devil, and hath the vile form of the serpent in his soul. From which there is no deliverance, without a total renovation of nature, and a thorough transformation and transplantation. No man can hence be delivered before he is converted from darkness to light, from sin to righteousness, and from the devil to God. And this must be the work of faith alone, whereby our hearts are purified. For whosoever believeth in Christ, he turneth from sin; that is, from the devil to Christ. For even as Adam by sin, converted himself from God to the devil, so it behoveth every one of us to flee by true repentance and faith, from the devil to God.

3. It followeth hence that man, without returning to God, which is light, cannot be enlightened. For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? or, light with darkness? Darkness is unrighteousness, but the light is the true knowledge of Jesus Christ, which can no ways therewith enter into fellowship; so that it is impossible that those should be enlightened by the light of eternal truth, who live in the darkness of unrighteousness. To which appertaineth the saying of St. Paul, "When they shall be converted to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away;" that is, their darkness, blindness, and ignorance shall cease, and Christ shall enlighten them.

4. What thicker mist can cover the minds of men than infidelity, with the fruits thereof; such as pride,

covetousness, wrath, and lust? Therefore, where these are, it cannot be that a man should truly acknowledge Christ, or that he should know him, until he give up himself to be saved by him. For how shall he understand the humility of Christ, whose mind knoweth not himself through pride? Or how shall he know the meekness of Christ, he that is full of wrath and envy? But whosoever understandeth not the lowliness and meekness of Christ, he knoweth not Christ, but is a stranger to him. For truly to know him, it behoveth thee, by faith, to have the very heart and understanding of Christ in thee, and to perceive his meekness, patience, and humility, within thee in thy heart. Since as a plant is known by the taste and smell, so Christ, the Tree of Life, by tasting and by sensible trial, is understood and perceived; even by tasting in faith his lowliness and humility, his meekness and patience, and by eating of his fruit, that is, of his love and peace, whereby thy soul may find rest and tranquillity, and be made capable more and more of Divine favour and consolation.

5. Christ is mere love, humility, meekness, patience; the which whosoever hath not, he is ignorant of Christ, though he can finely talk of him, and for a cover usurp his name. After the same manner the word of God is nothing but Spirit. Whence they who live not in the Spirit do not know what the word of God is, although they prate never so much of the Scriptures, and dispute about them every where. In like manner, it belongeth not to a man to judge of love, who exerciseth it not; or of the word of God, who hath not the taste of it in his soul. For all knowledge begins with sensation and experience. Nor is it his part to discourse of the light, who never hath moved a foot out of his own darkness to see the light. And what is light in man, but faith and charity, according to the saying of Christ, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven?"

6. Now seeing the most holy life of Christ is nothing



but mere love, if we draw from him true faith, humility, meekness, and patience, according as he hath given us commandment, then truly we are transformed into his image, and beautified and adorned with his love, no otherwise than if he were covered and clothed with Christ himself, who is the eternal and true light, according to that of the apostle, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give thee light." It followeth, that as many as do not awake from the sleep of the world, that is, from the desire of the eyes, and of the flesh, and from the pride of life, their souls cannot truly be illuminated by Christ; and that they on the other side, who follow him in faith, are illuminated according to that of the gospel, "I am the light of the world, he who followeth me, (in faith, love, hope, patience, meekness, humility, the fear of God, and the life of prayer,) walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life." As if he should say, only those that imitate me have the light of life, and the *true knowledge* of God. By reason of the same faith and life of Christ it is that St. Paul calleth the faithful by the name of *light*: "Ye were (saith he) sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." And again, "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor darkness, having put on the breast-plate of faith and love, and the helmet of salvation." They that have indeed seen Christ, that is, have looked upon him with the eye of faith, these have seen the light of heavenly beauty, the virtue of virtues, and the unspotted mirror of righteousness. These have by faith seen and handled the word of life; and having seen and had this experience, they are even ravished with the love of Christ's life, and so enamoured with the beauty of his holiness, as to seek above all things, how they may sanctify in themselves the name of the Lord their righteousness; he being made to them both sanctification and redemption. Wherefore we are admonished of the Holy Ghost, always to *look unto Jesus*, as both the beginner

and finisher thereof in us ; resisting with him even unto blood, and striving against all sin, that so he may be glorified in us.

7 Now seeing the very heathens had an high esteem and veneration for virtue, and were so much in love with it, as if it were the most super-excellent beauty that the human nature could be capable of ; what esteem and veneration ought Christians to have for it, and how much rather in love ought they to be with it, since it is now made so exceedingly more lovely and beautiful in him whom they have taken for the exemplar of their lives ? And if they so very much desired to see it who had not the advantage we have, and were so charmed with but a little imperfect glimpse of it ; how much more ought Christians to esteem and love it above all things, who have it set before them in the manifested glory of the only begotten Son of God, by his most heavenly life upon earth ? For if virtue be to be loved, and even loved as it is *in itself*, how much more as it is in *Jesus Christ* ? In him is all the beauty of virtue, and the loveliness of grace displayed most fully, that of his fulness we may partake, and so become most beautiful in bearing some part of his likeness. Is virtue lovely ? He is *mere virtue*. Is truth commanding ? He is *mere truth*. Is beauty amiable ? He is *mere beauty*. In him righteousness *incarnated* itself, and all the graces were in him *embodied*. These must also take, as it were, a body in us ; and he must be made our righteousness by his dwelling in us, that we may behold his beauty reflected upon us, in a conversation like unto *his*. Impossible, therefore, it is for us to exceed in our love and esteem for virtue ; seeing that Christ is virtue itself, and love itself, yea, God himself.

8. In humility Christ liveth, and the Spirit of Christ is upon the meek and the little ones. And hence, upon him that hath the meek light, the heavenly grace abideth ; the humble life of Christ dwelleth in him, the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, and he shall receive

the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Behold the Spirit resteth upon such an one; even the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, even as upon Christ himself. For Christ is in the man in whom his light and life are; so that they are the *same*, he in Christ, and Christ in him. If any man desire to be set free from the blindness of his heart, and from the inner and the outer darkness; yea, from the devil himself, who inhabiteth the darkness; let him imitate Christ, by walking in his holy steps. The nearer you are to Christ, the nearer you are to *eternal light*: and the nearer to unbelief you are, the nearer you are to darkness and to the devil. For even as in faith Christ and all his virtues are knit together; so in unbelief, the devil and all the vices. They cleave so fast together as not to be separated.

9. Behold with me the apostles imitating Christ in faith, in contempt of the world, in denying themselves, and in living for eternity; by which means they were found fit for the heavenly illumination, and consequently were enlightened and “filled with the Holy Ghost.” This the rich young man would not do; therefore he remained in darkness, and was not enlightened by Christ to *eternal life*. *For he who loveth not, remaineth in the darkness.* For nothing is truer than that he who is without love, or faith working by love, is without light. Let him pretend to never so much light or knowledge, he is certainly in *darkness*, “and walketh in darkness;” without the serious and upright exercise of faith, without a course of mortification and self-denial, without recollection and the inward sabbath of the soul, no man can receive the Divine light. In short, as much as the works of darkness, by the Spirit of God in any man are destroyed, so much is he *illuminated*, and no more. And by how much more powerfully, on the other side, corrupt nature bears rule, so much more of darkness is in him, and so much less of grace, of light, of spirit, of God, and of Christ. Therefore it remaineth firm and steadfast,

that without daily and continual renovation, no man can be truly *illuminated*.

10. He that will not resist one sin, doth give an opportunity thereby to many. For there cometh always one sin out of another, and spreadeth itself like a weed, and bringeth forth continually abundant increase, fitted for destruction. When, therefore, a man hath not thoroughly resisted so much as one vice, but bringeth forth perpetually the same sins, with increase; how great must the darkness of that man be! And as the darkness ceaseth not to wax greater and greater, as the sun departs farther away, so the farther we are removed from the life of Christ, the farther we are from the true light, and sin and darkness grow still thicker and thicker in us, till at length we are brought into an eternal night of darkness. So also the Christian virtues, as rings, are linked one to another in a gold chain: which admirable connexion is by St. Peter expressed thus, "Use diligence, by adding in your faith virtue; and in your virtue knowledge;" that is, adding virtue to faith, and knowledge to virtue; and then pursuing in knowledge, *abstinence*; in abstinence, *patience*; in patience, *piety*; in piety, *brotherly love*; in brotherly love, *charity*; by superadding one of these continually to the other. "And if we do these things, and abound" therein, then he tells us that we shall not "be found barren, nor without fruit, in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." He that holdeth not this *chain* is not linked to Christ; and he that exerciseth not these virtues knoweth not Christ; but he that by faith groweth in virtue, groweth also in Christ. All others, as the proud, the wrathful, the covetous, the impatient, grow not in Christ, but in the devil. Wherefore, if we hold fast by this chain, and follow the heavenly conduct, then shall we, (even as a child, by little and little, groweth up unto a full stature of a man,) grow in faith, and by an experimental knowledge of the Son of God in the study of solid virtue, "unto perfect men, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

11. But, “ he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.” As if he should say, it is certain Christ by his death did bear all our sins ; but then it is as certain, we must beware that we addict not ourselves to sin hereafter ; but rather that, by the death of Christ, we give all diligence to die to the world, and to live in Christ ; which whosoever doth not, to this man it is plain, the purging of his *old* sins can profit nothing ; since he hath not been diligent to *make* thereby “ his calling and election sure.” According to the advice immediately joined with it, “ Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure : for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.” Whereby it is given us to understand, how necessary a thing repentance is, and a thorough change of heart and life. For although Christ died for our sins, blotting them out, and abolishing them with the price of his most holy blood, yet we do not partake of that merit, unless we *repent* ; and without this it profiteth nothing. And howsoever every man is promised pardon for his sins through the merit of Christ ; yet that promise pertaineth not to the unbeliever, nor to the impenitent, but to those alone who, by faith, amend their lives ; and that too, according to the true standard which is set them. For those sins shall not be remitted, which a man will not leave ; but those only which he is willing to part with.

12. But wherever unfeigned conversion to, and faith in God is wrought in a soul, there is *pardon* and Divine grace ready for her. And where this is, there is Christ also ; without whom, no grace can be obtained. Where Christ is, there he is accompanied with his precious merit, and the satisfaction he hath made for our sins. Again, where this is, there is righteousness, and with righteousness, peace, and sweet serenity of conscience. It is then that “ righteousness and peace kiss each other” in such an heavenly soul. This clearness of conscience

is attended with the Spirit of God ; which being a *spirit of joy*, will certainly pour forth the *oil of gladness*, and therewith *life eternal*, which is nothing but joy and glory without end. And this is that eternal light of eternal life, that eternally triumphant joy, wherewith those only are crowned that live in Christ, and do the works of a daily repentance ; this being the beginning of a spiritual life, as the *death* of Christ is the foundation whereon it is to be raised. On the contrary, where there is no repentance, there is no pardon of sin. Where there is no inward remorse and spiritual sorrow, there no grace can take place. Where this is wanting, there Christ himself is wanting, with the whole extent of his merits and satisfaction, let the pretensions of the *false* Christian be ever so fair and specious. Where this satisfaction is not thoroughly applied to the soul, there is no righteousness neither, and consequently no peace, no good conscience, no comfort, no Holy Ghost, no gladness of heart, no calmness of mind ; lastly, no life eternal ; but death, hell, condemnation, and everlasting darkness.



#### CHAP. XIV.

*The purity of doctrine is to be defended, not so much by disputation, as by true repentance and an holy life.*

1. THE purity of doctrine, and the verity of Christian faith, must be defended against sects and heresies, after the example of the holy prophets, who preached against false prophets in the Old Testament ; after the example of the Son of God, who disputed vehemently against the pharisees and scribes ; after the example of St. John the Evangelist, who wrote his gospel against Ebion and Cerinthus, and the Apocalypse against the false church of the Nicolaitans and others ; after the example of St. Paul, who defended most strongly the

doctrine of justification by faith\*, of good works†, of the resurrection of the dead‡, of Christian liberty§, and of such like, against false apostles; after the example of the holy fathers of the primitive church, who wrote strongly against the Pagan superstitions, and the heretics of those times: and lastly, by the example of Martin Luther, by whose writings the Papacy, and other heresies, were much weakened. All this is as clear as the noon day: and therefore it is requisite both to preach, write, and dispute; that so the purity of doctrine may be made manifest, according to the apostle, who will have *a bishop to be powerful to exhort in doctrine that is sound*, and to hold fast the *faithful Word*, as he hath been taught, that by it he may *argue with those that contradict*, so as to *convince the gainsayers*.

2. But although this be in itself both lawful and laudable, yet it is so fallen out, that, amongst all the disputations and sermons of controversies, and the infinite heaps of writing and counterwriting at this day, the memory of the Christian life, of true repentance, devotion, and charity, are in a manner abolished; no otherwise than if the sum and substance of the Christian religion did consist in disputation and controversy, and not in the practice of the gospel, and in true Christian erudition. Whereas,

3. I. If we behold the examples of the holy prophets and apostles, as also of the Son of God, it is manifest they did not only dispute against false prophets and apostles, and also against the superstitions and abominations of the Jews and gentiles, but did, with no less fervency, exhort all to repentance and to a Christian and holy life; and shew that impiety is the cause why God useth to take his Word away from men. Thus Christ himself saith, "Walk in the light, whilst you have it, lest the darkness overtake you." For what is it to imitate Christ, who is the light? or what to be overtaken with

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* Rom. iii. 21.

† 2 Cor. ix. 8.

‡ 1 Cor. xv.

§ Gal. v. 1.

darkness, but to lose the purity of the gospel? Whence it appears, that none can, without true repentance and an holy life, enjoy the light; forasmuch as the Holy Ghost, which is the true enlightener of our hearts, fleeing the ungodly, chooseth holy souls only, to make of them friends and prophets of God. For the beginning hereof is the fear of God. And who then doubteth impiety to be the beginning of folly, ignorance and blindness?

4. II. Moreover, the true knowledge of Christ, and his pure doctrine, with the profession thereof, doth not consist in words only, but in deeds and a holy life, according to that which is written, "They profess to know God, but in works they deny him." And again, "They have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof." Whereby it is given us to understand, that Christ and his Word is denied by a wicked life, as well as by words; and that he hath not the true knowledge of Christ, who puts it not into practice. For he that never feels or tastes the humility, the meekness, the patience, and the love of Christ, in his own heart, knows not Christ; and therefore, where necessity requires, such an one cannot confess Christ: because to confess and preach only the *doctrine of Christ*, is to divide Christ, and to maim him, if you do not also profess and preach his life. Now what is doctrine without life, but a tree without fruit? Or how should he follow the doctrine of Christ, who imitateth not his life? For the sum and substance of the doctrine of Jesus is, "Charity from a pure heart, with a good conscience, and an unfeigned faith." But we live, alas! in that age wherein there is a great number of persons, whom, if you hear them disputing of the doctrines of the Christian religion, you would think to be men of great worth; but if you behold them narrowly, and touch them nearly, you will find them full of pride, envy, and covetousness; of whom therefore we must beware. Observe what St. Paul saith; he doth not rashly join *love* and *faith*; but upon his own most deep experience, chargeth his spiritual son to hold fast the

form of sound words, "in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

5. III. And although we cannot arrogate to our own piety to be the price, or *meritorious* cause of our happiness, knowing, with St. Peter, "that we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation;" yet we must profess this, that by an *antichristian life* the Spirit of God will surely depart from us, with all his gifts. It followeth, that without a holy life, purity of doctrine cannot be preserved; and that the wicked who will not imitate Christ, are not likely to be enlightened with the true Light. On the contrary, those that walk in the light, that is, who persevere in the blessed footsteps of Christ, are guided by the true Light, which is Christ, and divinely preserved from all hurtful errors. Therefore it is most true, which a holy writer saith, "So soon as a man dedicateth and yieldeth himself up to God, and denieth his own will and flesh, then immediately the Spirit of God doth begin to illuminate him, and to endow him with true and solid knowledge; because this man doth celebrate the true sabbath of the heart, resting from all sinful concupiscences, and from his own will and works."

6. IV. Not without cause, saith the Lord, then, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life;" calling himself first the *Way*, as he who sheweth the way unto us. But how? not only in his doctrine, but also in his most holy life: which life of our blessed Lord was a living faith, working by love, and exercising hope, patience, meekness, humility, prayer, and the fear of the Lord; and, in a word, a true and perfect turning of the heart to God, whereby the soul is drawn to the *Truth* and to the *Life*; and wherein the whole of Christianity doth consist, and all books are comprised, and which is the summary of all the commandments; the true and royal way to life and truth; the book of life, in the revolving and perfect learning of whereof, we ought to spend all our life. This is that "straight way, that narrow gate, which few do find."

This is the book of life, which almost none do read, although in it all things are contained which a Christian ought to know ; so that we shall need no other book to our eternal salvation. Which is the reason why also the Holy Scripture is contained in a very few and small books, that it might hereby appear that Christianity did not consist in the multitude of commentaries and great volumes, but in a living faith, and in the imitation of Christ ; according to that of the wise man, "There is no end of making many books ; and much study is weariness of the flesh. Wherefore let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter : Fear God, and keep his commandments."

7. V. Moreover, in the parable it is told us, "that the devil, when men are asleep, cometh and soweth tares among the wheat:" which teacheth us, that when men neglect repentance, and sleep on in sin, then doth the devil sprinkle his seed of false doctrine in the *field of pride*, whence arise so many sects and heresies. Whereupon St. Paul saith, "Awake thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light;" being willing to shew, that no man can be divinely enlightened, who hath not shaken from his eyes the sleep of sin, according to that admonition of St. Peter, "Repent, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

8. VI. That only is the true Christian faith, which worketh by love ; by which man is made a new creature ; by which he is united with God, by which Christ liveth in him ; by which the Holy Ghost dwelleth and worketh in him ; by which the kingdom of God is established in him ; and by which, lastly, through the Holy Ghost purging and enlightening him, the purification and illumination of the heart is begun, carried on, and perfected. To which do belong many golden oracles of the Holy Scripture, such as that in particular, "He that is joined unto the Lord, is one Spirit." And what is it to have the Spirit of Christ, to be *one Spirit* with him, but to have the same mind and understanding, and the same heart and

will? Which joint breathing and oneness of Spirit, is nothing else but a new, holy, heavenly, spiritual life of Christ in us. Another oracle of truth is this; "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:" where *to be in* Christ, is not only to believe in him, but to live in him. Also, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever: in faith I will espouse thee to me." Which passages indeed signify nothing else but that a man wholly and spiritually is to be united to Christ; so that where faith is, there is Christ; where Christ is, there his life is in man; where the life of Christ is, there is love; where love is, there is God himself, forasmuch as God *is love*; and there the Holy Ghost remaineth, being the Spirit of love.



CHAP. XV.

Rules for leading a Christian and devout life.

"Exercise thyself unto godliness; for godliness is profitable unto all things; having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," 1 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

1. IN this admonition of the apostle, there is contained a brief description of the Christian life:

By which we are taught, that a Christian ought not to spend his time in studies which profit but little or nothing; but to "exercise himself" in the noblest and most profitable study, which is that of true Christian piety. For a Christian is one that is exercised "unto godliness," after the image of him whom he serveth; and who is one inwardly and in spirit, not outwardly, and in shew. For "bodily exercise," or discipline, and exterior acts of religion, can profit but little; and sometimes may hurt, where the spirit and life are overlooked, as too frequently they are. Wherefore it behoveth us highly to attend

hereunto, and not to spend our whole time in the study of an interior and godly life, earnestly pursuing after piety, according to the charge here given; which is a compendium of all Christian virtues; and that, first, because it is "profitable for all things," and in all things: in all our words and deeds, blessing them and sanctifying them: and next, because the most gracious God doth reward it, both in this life and in the life to come. And for our encouragement in this exercise, let us endeavour to keep in remembrance these following rules:

I. If thou canst not live so holily and perfectly as the Word of God commandeth thee, and as thy heart, moved by the Holy Ghost, gladly would, nevertheless despond not: if thou canst not do what thou wishest to do, yet thou must never cease to wish ardently for it. For after this manner the holy desires of the saints have been always acceptable to God. These God alloweth, and approveth, because he is the respecter of the hearts; not merely of the works.

II. In all things thou either thinkest or doest, be diligent to preserve thine heart pure, and set a watch over it, lest thou be defiled with proud thoughts, or evil imaginations. For the desire of the flesh is the door of the devil. Therefore have an especial care of this one thing, namely, to crucify thy flesh, and not suffer it to domineer over the spirit. See that thy heart be clean, and that nothing unclean do enter into it to pollute it. Beware of pride, selfishness, and wrath, and such like devilish operations, in the soul; forasmuch as by these the heart of man is set open to the devil, and shut up from God.

III. See thou avoid, with all diligence, the care and sorrow of this world. Be not solicitous for that which perisheth; but for that which endureth for ever. Because as *worldly* sorrow engendereth *death*, so *godly* sorrow begetteth *life*. Indeed, a man ought to bear the loss of no worldly goods so heavily as the loss of the heavenly substance. By avarice, envy, or overmuch care of a family, see that thou forget not this main care: but

embrace thou the work of patience, and lay hold on that blessed mourning, which proceeds from meditation on thy sins, and on future punishments, and thereby works a stable salvation in the soul, with a solid peace and joy in God.

IV. Hold fast to the cross, and bear it as thou art directed. If thou canst not bear thy cross with such cheerfulness as many of the saints have done; at least take it from the hand of God with patience and humility, acquiescing in his Divine will and pleasure: for the will of God, thou art sure, is always good; neither doth it respect any other thing than thy salvation. Whatsoever then God shall appoint in his wisdom for thee, whether thou be poor or rich, high or low, vile or excellent, let this always be in thy mind, "Thus it hath seemed good unto God, and is expedient and profitable for me. His will, not mine, be done." Let not that therefore which pleases God, displease thee; but rather rejoice thou, if he carry all things according to his will and thy salvation; whatever thy own silly heart may dictate to the contrary. For "all the works of God are good;" and nothing is more sure and certain than that "the Lord is just in all his ways, and holy in all his works." Hence, far better it is that God, who doth always good, and who can never swerve from his own end, which is perfect goodness, should in thee do all his will, and thou willingly submit to the same; than that thou, who art by nature always inclinable to evil, and canst of thyself do nothing that is good, shouldst do and follow thine own will.

V. Receive Divine consolations with humble thankfulness, taking heed that thou be not therewith exalted: and if thou art not visited with joy and comfort, then know for a certainty that the mortification of the flesh will be of more profit to thee than joy in the Spirit. For by reason of great spiritual consolations many fall into spiritual pride. But the Lord knows who are fit to be

led in a pleasant way, and who in a stony path. Think it always best for thee to arrive at life by that way which the Divine wisdom hath chosen for thee, however different it may be from thine own opinion, or the devising of thine own heart. Remember that "sorrow is better than laughter; for by it the heart is made better." And forget not his admonition, who tells thee, That "the heart of the wise *will* be in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools in the house of mirth."

VI. Make an offering to God of all that thou hast; and dedicate to him all that is in thy power. And if thou canst not bring great offerings of devotion, prayer and thanksgiving, offer at least to him that which thou hast. The will and desire is an acceptable sacrifice to God, for the sake of his beloved Son. He requires nothing of thee, but that his grace may work in thee: nor canst thou return him more than he hath first conferred on thee. In the mean time, desire thou of the Lord Jesus, with humble and sincere prayer, that he would graciously supply thy sacrifices with his own most perfect sacrifice; because he, and he only, is the perfection of thy religious service. Thine, on the contrary, even all that is of thine own, is most lame and imperfect. Say therefore in faith, "O my God and my Father, let my devotion and dedication of myself unto thee, be accepted by thee: let all my acts of faith, and hope, and love, be received up before thee as sweet incense: let all my prayers, and praises, and thanksgivings ascend up before thine heavenly altar, and be acceptable in thy sight. Graciously behold them all in thy beloved Son, and esteem them not for their own worth, but for the merit of his all-sufficient sacrifice. O look upon that, and upon all that he wrought for me in the flesh; and it cannot be but that his most perfect works should be pleasing to thee, and mine also, for the sake of them. For he, O God, shall abundantly supply whatsoever is wanting in me." And thus, how imperfect soever thy prayer and thanksgiving may be, there is given in exchange for the

merit of Christ, the greatest weight of glory and heavenly dignity.

VII. Let not injuries, reproaches, and revilings provoke thee; take them as trials of thy heart, whereby God designs to prove thee, that he may make appear what is in thee, and what doth lie hid in the secret of thy mind. If thine heart be indeed endued with meekness and lowliness, thou wilt easily bear all contempts and injuries. Nay, whatsoever shall happen, thou wilt, after the example of David, when he was reviled by Shimei, accept it as a Divine punishment for thy desert, saying, "God hath commanded, or in his providence wisely ordered, such or such an one to revile me, and thus despitefully use me: and I will take it as from the hand of God, against whom I have sinned." Moreover, thou must think the contempt which thou endurest from men, to be a part of the reproach of Jesus Christ; which a living member of him ought to be a partaker of, according to that warning of the Holy Ghost; "Let us go forth therefore unto him, bearing his reproach." Let us go to Christ, bearing our infirmities and crosses, not being unmindful with what lowliness of mind he did, for our sake, bear his reproach; that for him thou, in like manner, mayest bear thine. Say not thou, "Shall I suffer these things from him, or her?" If thou wouldst be his disciple, all things must be moderately borne by thee, even as he bore all that was contrary to flesh and blood. And furthermore, thou art to consider, that his mercy towards all that suffer reproach for his sake, is so great, that he is ready to reward one reproach that an innocent person doth suffer, with many goodly gifts and favours. Thus David knew in spirit, when he received the revilings of Shimei, that this was a pledge of honour to come. Wherefore he said, "The Lord hath bidden him: it may be that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." Let not then the calumnies of the world disturb thee; but rather rejoice thou, in that the glory of God's Spirit doth rest upon what is accounted vile by the world;

remembering the words of the apostle Peter, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of; but on your part he is glorified." 1 Pet. iv. 14.

VIII. Study to overcome thine enemies, and them that speak evil of thee, and persecute thee, with benefits and kindness. Exercise thyself in pacifying an adversary and a bitter detractor, with gentleness and long-suffering; conquer him with goodness, and generosity: not with wrath, or revenge, or returning evil for evil. As one devil doth not drive out another, so one evil never driveth away another evil. A man that is wounded, and is afflicted with many sores and bruises, is not to be healed with blows. And if he be so mad as to beat and cut himself, he is to be pitied and taken care of; and not treated in the way, in which he treats either himself or others. So in like manner, if a person be evil affected towards you, and in his frantic humour treat you barbarously both by word and deed; he is nevertheless to be handled by you with lenity, and not with cruelty; and by sweet and gentle means to be pacified. Since this is that very method which God himself takes to overcome us by; so conquering our malice with his goodness, and our wrath with his love. And St. Paul hath recommended the same art unto us, saying, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

IX. When thou observest a gift in thy neighbour which God hath adorned him with, before and above thee, and others, take thou heed not to envy this in him; but rejoice and give God thanks for it. On the contrary, if thou perceivest any misery in thy neighbour, lament it even as if it were thine own; as considering that the condition of all men is equal, and alike subject to evil; and that the weakness of all flesh is the same, without the grace and power of God. Christ hath set the example. And he that hath no compassion on his neighbour, let him pretend whatever he will, he is no member of

Christ. For he looked upon our state as his own ; and by bearing the infirmities of our nature, delivered us from all our enemies, and all our miseries. To which appertains that of St. Paul, “ Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ,” even that law of love and mercifulness which he imposed on himself to fulfil towards us.

X. Think all men frail, but none more frail than thyself. For before God all men are of equal condition ; forasmuch as we have all sinned, neither have we any thing of which we may boast before God. How great soever a sinner then thy neighbour may be, believe not that thou art any better before God. Remember this warning, “ Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall.” Thou canst never be too low in thine own eyes. He that makes himself the lowest of all men, keeps the grace of God. And certain it is thou no less standest in need of the mercy of God, than the very greatest sinner. Wherefore blessed Paul accounted himself as the *chief of sinners* ; and says, that *for this cause* he obtained mercy, that in him Christ might shew forth all long-suffering. And with this agrees what he elsewhere declares, saying, “ As for myself I will glory in nothing but my infirmities, that so the power of Christ may rest upon me.” 2 Cor. xii. 9.



CHAP. XVI.

The conclusion of the first book.

I. AFTER having treated so copiously concerning the extirpation of the diabolical image in man, by faith and repentance, in order to the restoration of the Divine image, and shewn wherein the Christian religion doth properly consist, and how it is to be distinguished from the counterfeit of it ; it only remains that I admo-

nish thee, O Christian, especially of one or two things. And these are, 1. Why I have so largely treated upon the nature of *true repentance*. And 2. Why I have spoken of the Divine gifts and graces in such a manner, as to put them out of man's reach.

2. I. In this book throughout, the true nature of *repentance* is fully and fundamentally set forth, together with the several *fruits* thereof; and is so plainly described, that every one that hath eyes may see, and understand, and be converted, by laying hold on the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. I have been purposely so copious, in treating of this main point, not without sundry causes and motives.

3. For, first, it is the beginning and foundation of true Christianity, or of an holy life, and walking with Christ: I say repentance is the *foundation of true Christianity*, and is, through faith and hope, the *beginning of our blessedness*. Secondly, there is no true consolation can ever be felt by man, unless first he understand the nature of that original depravation which is in him, and which can never be sufficiently deplored by him; and unless he be made to discern the fruits thereof, and what kind of horrible, pestilent, and diabolical a poison it is, and what a seed of all evil. Wherefore when we have read all we can, in vain will be all the books of spiritual consolation, if we be not first well acquainted with our own miseries and infirmities, and the terrible corruption that is in our nature. For the nature of man, in this fallen state, always seeks to flatter itself, looking more for comfort than for cure, and is for palliating the wound, that needs to be searched into. Whereas no cure can be expected without a deep and thorough search; nor any solid consolation, without previous contrition.

4. Since therefore the knowledge of thine own corruption is so absolutely necessary, it was necessary, that this, as preparatory to thy cure, should be most clearly set before thine eyes. And since nothing is here more easy for thee to fall into, and nothing more dangerous

than *self-flattery*, it was highly requisite to undeceive thee in this matter, and to make thee truly sensible of thy disease ; a disease which has run in the blood of thy ancestors from the beginning, and which by thy own folly has been exceedingly heightened. And verily there is no worse symptom, than for one, where the sickness is so deeply rooted, to fancy himself well ; nor any thing more pernicious, than for thee to be persuaded of the health of thy mind, which labours under the contagion of an hereditary distemper, with sundry other maladies engrafted into it ; for so there is no remedy for thee ; which otherwise might have been obtained with no great difficulty by an earnest application to the great Physician, who *freely* offers thee his assistance, and is both willing and able to heal thee, if thou wilt but come unto him, and open thy case. Which if thou refusest to do, there is then no hope of cure. Flatter not then thyself, but take the *bitters* which are prescribed for thy good. And be not earnest for consolation, but rather for purification, how sharp soever this may be. There is no health to be expected by any other method than this, nor true comfort to the soul without this health obtained.

5. The process is here set before thee at large. But take heed that thy heart deceive thee not, and tell thee that thou art in a better state than really thou art. This is the ordinary reasoning of corrupt nature ; and the men of the world are generally carried away with it. But to this the reasoning of the holy Scripture, the whole tenor of God's revelation, is just contrary ; which is, that a medicine is to be prepared for the sick, not for the sound ; according to that saying of our Lord, " They that be whole need not a physician, but they that be sick." So then Christ, the true physician, and the physic which he has prepared for thee, and the cordial of consolation that is to follow upon it, can be of no use to thee, without owning thy disease. This is the beginning of true repentance, which brings forth, in the end, solid comfort, that will never deceive thee. Be thou advised, and let

no man deceive thee, as if this treatise were too severe. There is no other way to the immortal crown, but through the cross ; nor to the river of pleasures, which is at God's right hand, but through the valley of tears, and the shadow of death. Lo ! this is the way to life, follow thou it. Lay up in thy heart what thou readest, and forget not to bring it forth in thy life, the grace of thy heavenly Father assisting thee.

6. Let no man, therefore, divert thee from prosecuting the method here laid down ; let no man persuade thee, that the way to heaven is *broader* than I have described it for thee ; let no man entice thee to fling this book away, because it flatters not the corrupt taste of thy nature. Matter not the foolish judgment which may be passed by any upon these elements of true Christianity ; because they are most unsavory to the natural man, and therefore doubtless will be by him condemned. This thou mayest be satisfied of. Therefore regard not thou what the men of the world, or the outward and formal Christians exclaim ; for, however they may be conceited of their own wisdom, they are in truth, the most ignorant of men ; while they have no knowledge of the wretchedness and corruption of their own nature, or of what Adam and Christ are, or how Adam must die in them, and Christ is to live in them. Be thou not infatuated to listen to the voice of the false and deceitful wisdom, the wisdom of this world. Blind they are indeed, refusing to walk in the light, because it discovers to them their own misery and darkness. And whosoever disdains this notice, it is certain that he has his mind muddled with the darkness of ignorance. Neither doth he understand what *repentance* is, or *faith*, or the *new birth*, or *mortification*, and in what points the whole course of living and real Christianity is contained. And this is the reason why I have been so copious in treating on *true repentance*, and the effects and fruits thereof.

7 II. The *second* thing I have to desire of thee is, that above all things thou be mindful to keep thy heart from

all *spiritual pride* ; for which end thou shalt find herein the grace of God, and the gifts of his Spirit, mentioned in such a manner, as to preserve thee from presuming on thine own strength. Wherefore, after God shall begin, by his grace, to work in thee spiritual gifts, new habits, new sensations, and new knowledge, see that thou aseribe none of these to thine own power or wisdom ; but wholly to the power and wisdom of God, and to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. For while thou aseribest ought to thyself, thou robbest God of his glory, and makest the grace of Christ of no effect.

8. Wherefore beware thou of the devil's devices, and give not place to him so much as for a moment. The more thou hast received of the heavenly gift, beware the more thou abuse it not to thine own honour, but offer up all again to the great Author thereof ; aseribing to him alone, after the imitation of the heavenly hosts, all the glory, and honour, and power. It is sure that all, whatsoever God doth, is *perfect*, and his righteousness in the soul is the *perfect thing*. And it is as sure, that all that thou dost is *imperfect*, lame, and defective. Let nothing, therefore, that is good, be ever aseribed to thyself, but let all thou dost be done in the humble fear of God, and fail not to render to God that which is God's, and to thyself that which is thine ; that is, all *good* to God, but all *evil* to thyself. Neither let the tempter deceive thee, by carrying thee as it were through the air, and setting thee upon the pinnaele of God's temple. Nor be thou tempted to say in thine heart, " I have now a mighty faith ; I have fervent charity ; I have great knowledge ; I have great gifts, I thank God, above this or the other person." Be not deceived ; for wherein art thou better than any other ?

9. For, 1. None of these things are thine, but they are God's, without whose illumination thou art blind to all Divine things, and without whose all-quickening power thou art but a dead stinking lump of earth. These gifts are no more thine, than the light and heat of the sun

are the earth's which is penetrated by them. Thou art at best but the casket to hold the treasure. And no more doth the glory of these belong to thee, than the lustre of a jewel or precious stone doth belong to the box in which it is kept. So when God placeth in thee his jewels, then thou shinest with the lustre thereof, and art made *all glorious within* : but when he taketh away his precious gifts, then art thou truly *empty and void*. And is it not a great dotage to boast thyself of the goods of *another*, which are but laid up in thee ! 2. Thou art to consider, that even as the lord of a treasure may remove it hither or thither, according as he pleases ; so God may deposit his heavenly treasure in thee, and take it from thee again, as he sees it convenient. Him, therefore, thou oughtest to fear with holy reverence, and with all diligence to keep thyself from spiritual pride ; which will be the inevitable loss of the celestial jewels which are given to thee in trust. 3. Moreover, thou art to think, that Almighty God will require of thee an exact account of all that which he shall intrust to thy care. Wherefore be not thou lifted up for what thou hast, but rather bow down thyself before the Almighty, and remember always the more thou hast received of God, the more will he require of thee. 4. Thou art not to think that thou hast all the gifts which may be given thee, hadst thou even the greatest that were ever given to any of the saints. Be they never so great and high, they are yet but the beginning, and there is a great deal, an exceeding great deal, still wanting to thy being full : much, much is behind. These are but the *first-fruits*. 5. Furthermore, it is thy part to know and understand, that there are none of these gifts to be either obtained or preserved but by prayer. For every good and perfect gift descendeth from God by the means of it ; and without it, whatsoever they be that thou hast, they are but dead seeds, bearing no fruits, but withering away.

A PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY God, vouchsafe, I beseech thee, so to enlighten the eyes of my mind, that I may thoroughly see my deplorable fall in Adam, whereby I am departed from thee, the Fountain of Light, walking, alas! in my own darkness. Hence thy word, O Lord, plainly declareth, that my understanding is darkened, not having the light of life; that my reason is rebellious, and still apt to thwart the heavenly dictate of thy word; that my will is opposite to the drawing of thy most holy will, and utterly impatient of thy yoke. It pronounceth the mind of man in this present state to be vanity, his conversation folly, his heart hardened, his life alienated from the life of God, his conscience overwhelmed with the load of sin, his inward eye closed against thy light, his ear stopped to the sweet whisper of thy voice, his throat an open sepulchre, his tongue used to deceit, his mouth full of cursing and bitterness. Moreover, thou hast manifested to me, by thy law, that not only my passions have been immersed in the love of the world, and have wandered far from the way of peace, which they have not known: but that also my body and all my members have been reduced under the hard bondage of sin. My thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; and wasting and destruction are in my paths. My hands are feeble to do the good that I would; and my feet run to evil. Ah Lord! how inexhaustible is the abyss of my misery! and the depth of the corruptions of my nature! Grant, O gracious God, that out of the abyss of my misery, I may call upon the abyss of thy mercy, and may be made partaker of that purifying virtue, which is derived out of Christ, thy Son; that so the power of darkness being driven away, my understanding may be illustrated with the Divine light! That the distemper of my sickly reason being healed, it may cheerfully asquiesce in the obedience of faith! That my will may be entirely sub-

dued to thy will ! That my mind and coversation having shaken off the yoke of vanity, may cleave to the true simplicity that is in Christ ! That my hard heart may be softened ! That my life may sweetly conspire with the life of God ! That my conscience, throwing off the dominion of unrighteousness, may, under the influence of Divine grace, govern all the faculties of my soul ! That the inward eye in me may be opened to admit the light of truth, and the spiritual ear prepared to receive the Divine inspirations. And for this end, vouchsafe me thy help, O Lord, that I may not superficially look into this bottomless deep of the corruption of nature ; but know and acknowledge the very root thereof, out of which the whole harvest of vices doth grow up ; and that I may so kill the same, and so perfectly destroy it, that the root and seed of grace, which is reached forth in Christ Jesus, may spread itself freely and universally through the powers of the soul. Remove from me, good Lord, all those impediments which obstruct the saving knowledge of myself, that so, with an open face, I may both see and deplore the abyss of this my misery, and may also feel and taste the most plentiful emanations of thy mercy, to the utter destroying of the devil's image in me, and the new formation of thine own blessed image in all the powers and faculties of my soul, through thine only beloved Son, who is the brightness of thy glory, and the express image of thy person, Jesus Christ our Lord, who intercedeth for me, and for the whole church, sitting at thy right hand in the majesty of thy glory, now, and for ever ! Amen.



ASPIRATIONS.

1. GRANT, Lord, that I may look so deeply into the corruption of my nature, that I may taste the grace which is revealed in Christ for the restoration of nature.

2. Teach me, Lord, to know myself : O make me perceive what Adam is, and what Christ is ; and how the first must die, but the second live in me.

3. Lord, I am taught by thy apostle, that the natural man discerneth not spiritual things ; create therefore in me, a spiritual understanding, that I may discern those things which are from above.

4. Grant, Lord, that I may have a right knowledge of my present lost state, and a right discerning of the gracious means which thou hast appointed for my recovery, to thy honour and glory.

5. Suffer me not, Lord, to walk in the darkness of my own perverse understanding ; but deliver me from all blindness and hardness of heart, and from the sophistry and stubbornness of corrupt reason. O enlighten my eyes, that I may behold the things which make for my peace, and follow thee, who art the true light.

6. O immense Sea of Love ! when wilt thou ravish me from myself ! I am ashamed and confounded when I look into myself. O deliver thou me from myself, or I perish.

7. O Infinite Love, make speed to help me : O haste to assist me, that by losing my own life, I may find thine !

8. Turn me, Lord, unto thee, by true contrition of spirit ; and say unto me, Turn again, O thou child of Adam ! So shall I be turned unto thee by true humiliation of heart, that I may enjoy the gracious light of thy countenance.

9. Lord, give me thy Spirit, that may teach me by the true purification of my heart to aspire after and attain the Divine light, and so to walk in the light, as to arrive at the inheritance of light, and to awake in thy likeness !

TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

THE SECOND BOOK.

PART I.

AN INTRODUCTION INTO THE HOLY LIFE OF CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

*That Jesus Christ is given us by our heavenly Father for
an Antidote against the deadly poison of sin, and a
Fountain, good against all the calamities and evils
both of body and soul.*

1. AS our distemper is exceeding great, mortal, damnable, and out of the power of any creature to remove, it is needful that we should also have a remedy proportioned to the disease ; a great, a high, a Divine, an everlasting remedy, flowing out of the pure mercy and love of God. Hence hath he made the blood of Christ the grand restorative of our nature, and the cleanser of it from all the contagion of sin, and given us his quickening flesh, with the immortalizing power thereof, for our

bread of life; his precious death, for an abolition of ~~our~~ death, both temporal and eternal. For he will swallow up death in victory, and lead us unto the living fountain of waters, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb. All tears shall be wiped away; and there shall be no more curse in nature; but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, whereby it shall be made all paradisiacal and heavenly.

2. This most costly medicine man is incapable of purchasing; and by his own skill or power, it is impossible for him ever to reach it. What then is to be done? We are altogether sick, sick at heart; there is no health in us. We by nature strive against this heavenly cure; and resist the remedy which should help us. Wherefore, unless thou thyself, O most faithful Physician, administer to me what thou hast prescribed for me, and lend thy hand to reach forth to me this precious medicine, which by thyself alone is prepared, it will avail me nothing, the disease will grow worse, and all will be lost upon me. See then that I take what thou hast ordered, and trust me not to myself, if it be thy will that I should be made whole. If thou trustest me to myself, I am lost; for it is, thou knowest, in the very nature of my malady, to long for that which will hurt me, and to shun whatsoever is likely to do me any good. Yea, I am abundantly more afraid of the physie, than of the disease. O how dost thou therefore wait upon me, that thou mayest prevail upon me to accept life! O the amazing condescension! for thee, my Lord, and prince of life and health, thus to wait upon a vile and despicable Lazar! But unless thou didst wait, what would become of me? Or what would become of all thou hast done for me? Thou knowest all mine infirmity, and thy heart hath pitied me, and gently borne with me all this while. O bear with me yet a little longer; and leave me not, lest I perish: yea, lest I perish out of the city, the city of my God, and my name be written in the dust, with them that go down to the pit. O tarry with me yet a little

longer ; and let not my folly and my untowardness drive thee away, lest I descend into darkness, and the purchase of thy blood be lost. O let it not be ! Thou hast caused me to hope, (blessed be thy name !) that this sickness of my soul shall not be unto death, but unto thy glory. For again and again, thou sayest unto me secretly, in the deep of my heart, *what wilt thou ?* Lord ! what else should I will, but that I may receive my health ? To receive health I am indeed willing ; but not to receive the medicine which alone can give it. I shrink back when I hear it mentioned. And hence I did not seek thee, but thou hast sought me ; and thy will is, that I should be restored ; for therefore art thou come unto me. I find, alas ! no disposition in me to take what thou so kindly reachest forth. But dispose thou me, and I will be disposed for it : and so manage thou my will, as that it may most freely submit to thine ; that so I may obtain that perfect cure, which thou art both willing and able to effect for me. O sweet constraint of love, that breaks the will ! thy love and thy patience force me to yield. It is impossible longer to resist so great a love, so wonderful a patience. Needs must I follow, when thou thus drawest me. Needs must I obey, when thou so sweetly commandest me. For while thou drawest me with the cords of thy love, I run unto thee, in whom alone is my health ; and thy commandments are sweeter to me than honey, and more precious than diamonds. But without this attraction of thine, thy commandments would have been even bitter as gall ; and the very dust of the earth would have been by me preferred before them : I should have dreaded above all things thy presence, and should always have chosen death rather than life. O draw me therefore, that I may run after thee : O lead me to the springs of salvation, and give me of the water thereof to drink, which is able to heal all my infirmities and miseries. For thou knowest, that without thee I can do nothing ; there remaining no strength in me. To destroy myself is with

me; but it is thou only, Lord, that canst restore me. Wherefore it is meet and right that I should cast all upon thee, that thou mayest in all things draw, lead, and move me, as thou wilt. Since if thou sufferest me to run after the devices of my own will, I inevitably run upon my own ruin: and if thou lettest me lie in my sickness, without due provision, that I be obliged to take such medicines as thou hast appointed for me, there is no remedy, notwithstanding help is no near, but I must be for ever lost. Let me not be left to my own care in this manner, but abide thou with me, and give me thyself that which is prepared for me. Do all thou seest fit with me, only trust me not in my own hands. In thee is all my hope. And were but my heart converted unto thee, all would go well with me, and my life would henceforth be laid up in thee, O Eternal Fountain of eternal life! Turn thou me, therefore, and so shall I be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Heal me, O Lord, so shall I be holpen; for thou art the health of my life, and my glory. So long as thou keepest back thy mercy, I remain in the shadow of death. And so long as thou forbearst to quicken me with thy salvation, and to bring up my soul from the horrible pit, so long am I holden in the chains of death, and am a captive to the powers of darkness. "Make haste to help me; thou art my Helper and my Redeemer; O my God, make no long tarrying."

3. Ah Lord! shall not thy mercy raise up a poor sick man, seeing I am not able to raise up myself? Is thy mercy too weak to help such a weak one as here lieth before thee? Is thy love too cold to communicate some of its living warmth to such a miserable object as I am? Wilt not thou be so condescending as to come unto me; seeing I cannot of myself come unto thee? Hast thou then first loved me, before ever I loved thee? Is thy mercy so strong, so powerful, so mighty, as that it should even overcome thyself; as that it should be able to lift thee up upon the cross, and to sink thee down

into death ! Who, or what, is so strong as to overcome thee, the *Strong One*, with whom is all power, but thy *mercy* ? Who, or what, hath so great might as to apprehend thee, to bind thee, to crucify thee, to put thee to death, but thy *love* ; even the love wherewith thou didst love us, when we were dead in trespasses and sins. For thou wouldst rather thyself suffer death, than that we should abide in death.

4. Thy mercy, Lord, hath made thee to be all ours, and given us a full propriety in thee. For us wast thou born : for us wast thou given ; that so the Father might accept thee in our stead, and we for thy sake might have all things given us. For us a Lamb is given ; for us salvation is brought forth ; and therefore will we rejoice, “ drawing water out of the wells of salvation,” because God, even our God, hath now given us all things in thee, O Lamb of God.

5. Behold the wisdom of God ! God hath made himself to be ours, that we might be made his. For, being purchased with a price, we are not our own, but his who has bought us, and has given himself for us. Whence it follows, that we ought to “ glorify God both in our body and in our spirit, which are God’s.” And as we are God’s and Christ’s, so God and Christ are ours. Now whosoever possesseth any good for his own, may doubtless make use of the same to his own profit, in the best manner that he can. And so is Christ become ours, that we may use him for our salvation, which is an everlasting profit, according as we will ourselves. Wherefore thou mayest make use of him, for

The Medicine of thy soul, to restore thee ;
 Thy Meat and thy Drink, to refresh thee ;
 Thy Fountain of Life, to quench thy soul’s thirst ;
 Thy Light, in darkness ;
 Thy Joy, in sadness ;
 Thine Advocate, against the accuser ;
 Wisdom, against thy folly ;
 Righteousness, against thy sin ;

Sanctification, against thy unworthiness ;
 Redemption, against thy bondage ;
 Thy Victory, against all thine enemies ;
 Thy Champion, against all thy persecutors ;
 Thy Way, against thy wandering ;
 Thy Truth, against lying and vanity ;
 Thy Life, against death ;
 Thy Everlasting Father, when thou wast an orphan and desolate ;
 Thy Prince of Peace, against the adversary ;
 Thine Everlasting High-priest, who intercedeth for thee.

6. Behold what Christ is given unto thee for ! And pray thou daily, that the proper use may be made by thee, and that in thee may he fulfilled all that is contained in any of these his relations or offices : but pray thou in faith, not doubting, and it shall be so. Wherefore, since he is thy medicine, fear not but thou shalt be healed : since he is thy bread, fear not but thy soul shall be satisfied, and thou shalt be made to hunger no more. Is he to thee a fountain of life ? then shalt thou be no more athirst. Is he to thee thy light ? then shalt not thou remain in darkness. Is he thy joy, who then shall afflict thee ? Is he thy Advocate, who then shall gain the cause from thee ? Is he thy Truth, who then shall deceive thee ? Is he thy Way, who then shall make thee to err ? Is he thy life, who then shall slay thee ? Is he thy Wisdom, who then shall be too cunning for thee ? Is he thy Righteousness, who then shall condemn thee ? Is he thy Sanctification, who then shall eat thee away ? Is he thy Redemption, who then shall be able to hold thee in captivity ? Is it he that is thy Champion, and the Captain of thy Salvation, who fighteth for thee, of whom then art thou afraid in the battle ? And who is he that shall be able to strive with thee ? Is he thy King, who then shall expel thee out of his kingdom ? Is he thy High-priest, who then shall hinder thy sacrifice and thy intercession from being accepted ? Is he thy Saviour who bleseth thee, who then shall unbless thee ? Or who shall make the salvation which he has wrought for thee of no effect ?

If he save, who shall damn? How canst thou have a greater present? It is a present of more worth than thou thyself, than all mankind, or than all the world, and all that therein is. It is a present which is even greater than all the sins, miseries, and calamities of the whole world; and which is of sufficient virtue to extinguish and annihilate them all.

7. See now, what an infinite good thou hast in Christ, to oppose all thy miseries and calamities. Didst thou but rightly understand this, then would no cross be grievous to thee. Because Christ is become to thee all; and all things are thine; forasmuch as he is thine: thine, I say, not only as a *crucified Christ*, but also as a *glorified Christ*, with all his glory, and all his majesty. "For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world; whether life or death; whether things present, or things to come; all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

8. O poor, miserable, reprobate, accursed, damned sinners, as we by nature all are, how came we to be thus favoured and honoured with so high a present! Because thou, O Lord Jesus, art to us Jehovah: yea, thou art

Jehovah our Righteousness ;	The Health of the sick ;
A Mediator between God and	The Protector of the simple ;
man ;	The Author of faith ;
Our Everlasting Priest ;	The Anchor of hope ;
The Christ of God ;	The Incense of prayer ;
The Lamb without spot ;	The Tree of health ;
The Desire of the patriarchs ;	The Fountain of blessedness ;
The Inspirer of the prophets ;	The Bread of life ;
The Light of the confessors ;	The Head of the church ;
The Crown of the martyrs ;	The Bridegroom of the soul ;
The Praise of all the saints ;	The Precious Pearl ;
The Glory of the blessed ;	The Rock of salvation ;
The Joy of the angels ;	The Living Stone ;
The Consolation of mourners ;	The Heir of all things ;
The Righteousness of sinners ;	The Prince of Peace ;
The Hope of the afflicted ;	The mighty Lion of Judah ;
The Strength of the weak ;	The Sun of Righteousness ;

The Morning Star ;	The Life, quickening all things ;
The Brightness of the everlasting glory ;	The Light, enlightening all things ;
The Splendour of the Divine majesty ;	The Truth, judging all things ;
The Treasure of wisdom ;	The Love, upholding all things ;
The Abyss of eternity ;	And, the Comprehension of whatsoever is good.

Lo ! here is the great and infinite gift which God hath bestowed freely upon mortal man, out of the unsearchable deep of mercy, and his love past finding out.



CHAP. II.

That justification before God, depends only on the merit of Christ Jesus, and consists in the pardon of sins received by faith, which produces all the fruits of righteousness.

1. As a skilful builder, who is to raise a lofty structure, takes care to lay a deep foundation ; so the most merciful God, being to erect the everlasting palace of our salvation, thought fit to lay the foundation thereof, in the depth of his mercy, upon the person and office of his dearest Son Christ Jesus, as on an immovable rock, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, “ Behold I lay in Sion, a tried Stone, a precious Corner-Stone, a sure Foundation.” Which *Stone* Christ intimates to Peter, saying, that “ thereon he will build his church,” which shall be so steadfast, “ that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

2. This is the Head-Stone of the heavenly temple ; this is the Rock that was preached by the apostles Peter and Paul. Upon this foundation hath God built our righteousness, faith, and eternal salvation. And as God hath placed the ground-work of our salvation in the depth of his mercy, in his well-beloved Son ; so he hath also founded the

same in the depth of our heart, that through the power of a Divine faith enkindled in us by the Holy Spirit, the righteousness of Christ may be apprehended; and freely by the same faith, without any respect to our own works, whether antecedent or consequent, be made over, and given us.

3. To the end that, in the *first* place, by this means he might purify man from the most inward centre of the soul; even as man had by satan been infected and depraved thoroughly in all the powers thereof: for without faith it is impossible ever to go so deep, or to search and cleanse the ground both of good and evil in us.

4. Secondly, our righteousness must proceed from faith *only*, because this is the work of God himself, that so our righteousness may be the operation of God: not some external action, like that of the Pharisees, specious in outward appearance only, but not possessing the heart. This righteousness and holiness, which by faith he gives us, is much more excellent than that which Adam, though he had not sinned, would have left us. The obedience of Christ was far more acceptable to God, than the innocence of Adam; so that a thousand such as Adam could not have equalled Christ alone. For however he, had he continued in the state of innocence, would have left us an hereditary righteousness, of which we should have been possessed: notwithstanding, unspeakably greater, and more excellent, is our union with God in Christ, since he being made man, hath so purified and exalted the human nature in himself, that the primitive state of Adam is not once to be compared with it.

5. Angels cannot, and much less can man, be the foundation of our righteousness. For neither had an angel died for us, nor was any of the angels found able to open the book of life, when it was shut: and inconstant is all the righteousness of men; which, being defiled by the pollution of sin, soon tumbleth to the ground: for “when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, all his righteousness that he hath done, shall not be

remembered." And therefore must our righteousness be founded upon a better, yea, upon an immovable and eternal foundation, and must stand unshaken, "though the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed;" according to what is foretold by the prophet Daniel, "Everlasting Righteousness shall be brought in:" and by Isaiah, "My Salvation shall be for ever, and my Righteousness shall not be abolished." Nor surely can it be other than a most excellent and an Infinite Good, which a Person most excellent, by an infinite satisfaction, hath for us acquired.

6. The cause why God will have our righteousness to be apprehended by faith, is his *truth* and promise, upon which faith resteth and stands firm, and by which God hath ascertained righteousness to Abraham, and all his faithful seed. Whence St. Paul argueth, that "our righteousness must be of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end that the promise might be sure." Upon this promise therefore of grace, fulfilled in Christ, hath God established our righteousness; according to what is asserted by the apostle to the Galatians, "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scriptures foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham: In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham." And thus "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." But,

7 God hath made his grace, and the merit of Christ, the basis of this righteousness, that Christ alone might have the honour. "In him alone is our help." Of our righteousness and salvation he is the beginning, the end, and the all, "That every mouth may be stopped; by grace ye are saved, through faith,—not of works, lest any man should boast." If our righteousness were of ourselves, and from our own works and merits, then should there be no room for grace, nor should we have occasion

for merey or pardon of sin. Moreover, there should be no place for humility, nor for the fear of God ; neither would faith and prayer turn to any effect ; yea, we should have no need of a Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour. Christ had then died in vain, and it would lie on us, by an external and internal obedience, to fulfil the whole law. So inconsistent is the doctrine of *justification by works*, with the foundations of the whole Scripture.

8. In fine, that our salvation and righteousness are established upon the grace of God, and the person and office of Christ ; and that we are through Christ made righteous, holy, blessed, and sons and heirs of God ; also that the righteousness of Christ is ours ; his life ours ; his happiness ours, and so *whole* Christ, both according to his Divine and human nature, is ours : this verily is our highest consolation, glory, joy, peace before God, and all the angels and elect ; our highest wisdom, strength, might, victory, triumph over sin, death, the devil, hell, the world, and all enemies. For which praise be to God, to all eternity ! Amen.

9. The true Christian, *by faith* in Christ, is not only justified, but also made the temple and habitation of Christ and the Holy Spirit. To this end is his heart purified of God by faith, that therein Christ may live and reign. By Christ is the Holy Spirit given to him, to create in him a new heart, being endowed with a cheerful and ready principle of action ; that with willingness and freedom of spirit, he may do what is acceptable to God. Which new and holy obedience, is not of the *law*, but arises from a lively *faith*. For true and living *faith* does all things willingly and of its own accord ; it reneweth the man, purifieth his heart, joyfully loveth his neighbour, hopeth all things, prayeth, praiseth, confesseth, and feareth God. It is patient, humble, merciful, loving, meek, easy to be reconciled, compassionate, peaceful ; readily forgiveth offences, hungereth and thirsteth after righteousness, embraceth God with all his grace, and Christ with all his merit, and the full pardon of sins,

10. But on the other hand, it must still remain an unshaken truth, that Christians ought to make continual advances, and daily wax stronger in Christ; that they may not continue in a state of infancy, how difficult soever it may be to mortify the flesh. They must study “charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:” and have this in perpetual remembrance, that all outward performances are valued by God according to the inward disposition of the heart. Wherefore if the heart be good, whatever thou dost, is also good: but if evil, and perverse, then all thy works in the sight of God are hateful and extremely evil. Such as thou art in thy heart, such art thou accounted before God; and such are thy prayers, thy frequenting of public worship, thy giving alms, and thy receiving the sacrament.

11. Whosoever therefore is desirous to try himself, I would advise him to set the commandments of God, as by Christ interpreted, before his eyes, and to learn by his own heart to judge of all his actions. By this means he shall clearly perceive, if what he does, is acceptable or hateful to God, and if he brings forth the genuine fruits of that inward righteousness which is of faith. If, for example, thou dost find that thou defilest not thy conscience with *external idolatry*; in this surely thou dost well; but yet I would have thee examine thyself whether thou also abhorrest all *internal* idols; if thou art within, what outwardly thou pretendest to be; or if thy heart be not set upon the world, avarice, or pride; since if thou findest it to be so, it is plain that the outward work is of no account before God.

12. *I keep the Sabbath*, sayest thou, and therein thou dost well; but look on the disposition of thy heart: dost thou therein celebrate the true Sabbath? Dost thou rest from evil thoughts and desires? Is thy heart devoted to God, and still from the noise of the creatures, that God may operate in thee? Dost thou *frequent the church*? Well! but see thou carry not along with thee the worm

of arrogance and vanity, which secretly gnaws thy conscience. If thou shalt say, *I am baptized into Christ, I have the pure word of God, I hear it, I receive that most venerable sacrament of the Lord's Supper; I believe and confess all the Articles of the Christian faith: therefore I am a Christian.* I will not deny, that thou arguest aright, if thy heart agree with thy profession; but without this, all is mere trifling. Look therefore into this, and judge of thyself by thy inward state. See if thy heart and actions agree to that sacred name; if the Spirit is in thee, the *anointing*, and the *fruits* demonstrating a true Christian. Thou sayest, *thou art baptized;* and indeed thou art! But take a view of thy heart, and see if thou walkest in newness of life; in continual repentance, and unwearied mortification of the old man. *Thou hast the pure word of God, and hearest it.* This is right; but look into thy heart, and consider, if, as bodily food, passeth into flesh and blood, so the word is converted into thy life and spirit; if it be not, whatever thou dost is vain.

13. With a singular zeal thou defendest the purity of doctrine. And this is not inconsiderable; notwithstanding I would have thee examine, whether by the purity of doctrine, thou hast attained unto purity of heart. May we not find many rigid defenders of the pure doctrine, who are yet full of pride, bitterness, covetousness, and other vices? *The name of the Lord is a cloak to their impiety.*

14. Thou hast been often present at the holy supper. And what then? Search thine heart, I beseech thee. If thou hast been a partaker of the flesh and blood of Christ, why does the flesh and blood of Adam live and reign in thee? Should not the life of Christ shine forth in all thy conversation? Should not his charity, meekness, and humility appear in thee? Or what advantage will accrue to thee, if thou receivest Christ in the sacrament, but deniest him in thy life and manners.

15. Thou sayest, that *thou believest all the Articles of faith*. Very well ! have recourse unto the touchstone of thy heart. For that only is a true *faith*, which uniteth man with God, and God with man. If these effects are wanting, thy faith is vain, and only separates thee further from God. If thou believest in Christ, Christ must be in thee, and live in thee. If thou believest that Christ suffered death for thy sins, thou thyself must also die unto sin, and leave the world, with all its pride and covetousness. If this be not done, whatever thou affirmest of thy faith, all is but a vain imagination and a delusion.

16. If thou believest Christ *was crucified for the sins of the world*, thyself must be crucified to the world. This, if thou neglect, neither art thou a living member of Christ, united with him by faith. If thou believest that Christ *hath risen from the dead*, thou must abide united unto him thy head, by rising spiritually from sin, or assuredly thy boasting is vain. In a word ; *the nativity, death, passion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ*, must be after a spiritual manner transacted in thee, otherwise whatever thou mayest affirm of thy *faith*, it will prove no better than a vain and lifeless image of that which is true and living. So if thou believest in the Holy Spirit, he must of necessity dwell and reign in thee, illuminate and sanctify thee. “ For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

17 Therefore, O Christians ! let your Christianity be not *external*, but *internal* ; nor let it dwell only upon your lips, but in the ground and centre of your hearts, proceeding from a true, living, and operating faith, and an unfeigned, earnest, and continual repentance. If this be wanting, all your religion will be only *counterfeit Christianity* ; you shall be able to do nothing acceptable to God ; and whatever you may do here, shall avail you nothing in that day, in which God will judge all things according to your heart. But surely, O man ! if thou

didst rightly apprehend the impurity of thy own heart, thou wouldest flee, without delay, to the fountain of salvation, thence thou wouldest drink and draw, pray, knock, and cry, "Have mercy upon me!" until thy heart should be healed, thy sins covered, and thy transgressions forgiven.

18. As it would be deservedly accounted ridiculous to give unto a raven the name of a swan; so if, after considering their lives, one should call those of this age by the name of *Christians*; might he not justly be accused of egregious folly? For by the actions and performances, not words, is a Christian life to be estimated, according to that of St. Paul, "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." But such is the state of most men at this day, that those who make the strongest pretences to the Christian name, act nothing that becometh a Christian; like unto those at Rome of old, of whom Laurentius Valla, reading those words, "Blessed are the merciful, blessed are the peace-makers, &c." said, *Surely either these words are not true, or we are not Christians.*

19. Here now, O man! consider what thou art, and what thou canst do? What hast thou been able to contribute to thy restoration, and the renovation of thy depraved nature? Surely, as thou couldest not afford any help towards the generation of thy body, nor create thyself, so neither canst thou bring any assistance towards thy new birth, or regeneration by the Spirit. Thou mayest indeed lose, damn, and destroy thyself; but to renew, to restore, to heal, to justify, and to enliven thyself, is a work entirely beyond thy strength. Couldst thou at all conduce to the incarnation of God? No, verily. There is nothing therefore, that thou canst arrogate to thyself, or ascribe to thy own power. Let us then carefully remember, that we must renounce our own strength, our own wisdom, our own will; and, being resigned unto God, *suffer* his power to work all things in

us, so that nothing may in the least oppose the will and operations of the Lord.

20. For until it come to this, that thou permittest God to work all things in thee, O man, so that thou *purely sufferest* his operation and will, God is hindered by thee to unite himself with thy soul, to renew his image in thee, and to amend the pravity of corrupt nature. For our own will, ambition, opinion of our own wisdom, and whatever else we arrogantly claim unto ourselves, are so many impediments ; because of which God cannot *freely* operate in us according to his desire. And as the human will corrupts a man still more and more ; so the Divine will does still more and more perfect and restore him.

21. Indeed our *own will* is nothing else but defection from God. Defection verily is easy, smooth, ready ; but the recovery is bitter, troublesome, and of extreme difficulty, yea, beyond all the power of the creature. For man by his own strength, cannot return, nor help himself in will or in deed. It is Christ alone that can give assistance, let it be in the beginning, process, or end. And here he lays before us two *means*, the *law* and the *gospel*, or repentance and remission of sins. Through the *law*, thou must die together with Christ, and by true sorrow of heart, sacrifice thy own will, become vile in thine own eyes, and resign up thyself wholly to Christ. This being done, forgiveness of sin is bestowed through the gospel, and man that is dead, is raised up by faith. Whence it appears, that no man can by his own strength convert and quicken himself. It is of absolute necessity, that he deny and lose himself, that he die unto himself, and that his hope be placed entirely in God alone, by whose grace he must live.

22. But this *self-denial* and *mortification*, is not an effect of our own will and power ; “ It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.” It is God therefore who must operate all these things in us by his grace, and the power of his Spirit.

So that our justification is not from any creature, but from God alone, whose work and gift it only is. For as to ourselves, it is certain, the most dangerous enemy man hath, is *himself*; insomuch, that we have great reason to supplicate the Lord to deliver and rescue us from ourselves, to take from us what is ours, and to give us the things that are his. For by our own strength, we are not able to do any good, if God himself, even after conversion, do not work it in us. Who is it that can give charity and the other graces, but he only who is love itself? It is certain therefore, that these things are effected by the help of Christ only, all human endcavours being utterly vain. In Adam we are *all* naturally equal, nor is one better than another; seeing we are all, both as to body and soul, equally polluted and corrupted; insomuch, that not only the Jews and Gentiles, but even of all men in general, there is no *difference*. Hence it is most true, that in the sight of God,* no man is better than the most profligate criminal. For though the wickedness which is natural to all, does not equally in all put forth and break out into works; yet God judgeth all men by the inward state of the heart, the poisoned fountain of sin. Neither is there any sin so horrid and vile, which man by nature would not be guilty of, were he not restrained by Divine grace. For by the bent of our nature we are only inclined to pollute ourselves with all manner of wickedness; which inclination, if it be not always attended with the external effect, then it is wholly to be attributed to the grace of God, and not to any strength of ours, or human precaution whatsoever. This consideration should excite us to humility, and an unfeigned fear of God, restraining us at the same time from rashly despising our neighbour; lest, by reflecting on others, we split ourselves upon the dangerous rock of *presumption*. And

* This is too strongly expressed. What the apostle affirms is, that all have sinned, but not that all have sinned in the same degree.

since Christ “is our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption,” we, who in Adam are alike, are alike also in Christ.* For as in Adam by nature, we all are one man and one body, infected with the highest contagion of corruption and disobedience; so all the faithful are as one man in Christ, and resemble one body purified and sanctified by faith, and the blood of Christ.

23. Which doctrine is a remedy against *spiritual pride*, that none may account himself better in the sight of God than others, however haply he may be endowed with greater gifts; which are no less of pure grace bestowed on him, than even righteousness and salvation itself. Upon this principle of pure grace, be careful to fix thy meditation; which if thou dost, then this same grace shall protect thee against the dangerous snares of pride and arrogance. And as, on the one hand, it will convince thee of thy own misery; so, on the other, it will give thee a most lively discovery of Christ, and of the exceeding riches of grace through him derived on mankind.

CHAP. III.

Of Repentance.

1. THE Lord, whose mercy is infinite, will by no means seek our destruction, but our life and salvation. He best knoweth the deplorable condition we are fallen into by sin; and is at the same greatly desirous to secure the interest of our souls, by reclaiming us from so dangerous a state. It is for this reason he so earnestly invites us to a sincere and unfeigned repentance; this being the only and never-failing means of our help and safety.

2. To *repent*, is to *feel* and *acknowledge* the natural blindness, corruption, and detestable impurity festering within us, as the very source of all sin, whereby we

* Viz. the penitent and believing, or the truly regenerate.

depart from God, the supreme and eternal Good, and deserve, besides temporal punishments, his everlasting wrath in the inextinguishable flames of hell.

It is to lament, and from the bottom of our hearts to bewail, the deplorable crookedness of our nature; and this from an inward sense of the heinousness of our provocations, offered to so merciful a Father. We may then rely on the favour of God, and sure remission of sins in Christ Jesus; which will be attended with a serious amendment of life, a constant purification of our hearts by faith, a mortification of our evil desires, a conquering our rebellious and disobedient spirit, a renouncing our own will, opposite to that of God, and a *new life* acceptable unto God.

3. But seeing by nature we are so far blinded as to be utterly unable to discover our own fall and wretchedness, God hath been pleased to afford *means* for bringing us to a knowledge of ourselves, *viz.* his *Word* and *Sacraments*; which being duly used, will be accompanied always by his own grace and Spirit. By these the Father draws, allures, and calls us to himself, as so many lost and wandering sheep. “For it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

4. As soon as the Lord awakens us by the use of these means, and invites us to repentance, it is then our part *not to withstand* his grace and Spirit; (“To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts;”) but to acknowledge the sin which he begins to reprove in us, and by no means make light of the grace offered us in the gospel; and then God will assuredly have mercy upon us, as he himself declares: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”

5. And upon this account the work of *conversion*, though it be entirely a free gift of God, is yet in one respect ascribed to us, *viz.* inasmuch as we give up ourselves to the Lord and his operations, not resisting wil-

fully his Spirit; or, as the apostle expresses it, "not putting his Word from us," nor "stopping our ears" against it, as the Jews of old did. We ought therefore most fervently to implore the Lord not to withdraw from us his gracious assistance, without which we must certainly go astray. For since the old nature is so deeply woven into our flesh and blood, we have need of daily, yea, hourly, supplies of grace, for repressing sin, and nourishing the life of God. For as the life of the body, bereft of the air, must needs be extinguished; so the inward life will speedily languish, without a daily support of the grace of God. For this reason prayed Solomon, "The Lord our God be with us; let him not leave us, nor forsake us; that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways."

6. Let us now consider the *manner* of our returning to God: "With all the heart, (says the prophet,) with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." Wretched mortals can weep floods of tears for empty and perishing goods, whilst they remain unmoved at the miserable state of their souls, and the loss of eternal goods! being therein altogether unlike David, who sets a shining pattern of sincere repentance before us. "For the Lord looketh on the heart, and trieth the heart and reins."

7 If we truly repent of our sins, the Lord "repenteth him of the evil:" which is as if he should say, It is the nature of God to punish with reluctance; and when he is even constrained thereto, "it is not for our destruction, but salvation; that we may not be condemned with the world." He then doth "his strange work," [of punishment,] "that he may bring to pass his own work," [of mercy.] Thus he repented of the evil he had designed against Nineveh. And therefore "it is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. For the Lord will not cast off for ever. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies; for he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." This

boundless mercy is the same at this day, and will continue so for ever to returning sinners. Go therefore, O man, and answer this flowing mercy of God with suitable returns of love and repentance !

8. There are *four* fruits of true repentance. The first is for a man *to account himself unworthy of all the mercies of God*. A person truly humble and penitent, thinks himself unworthy of any of God's benefits ; and even of the daily food and refreshment by which he is sustained. And this after the example of Christ himself ; who, parched with thirst upon the cross, and having vinegar presented to him, only said, "It is finished." This was the reason also why those, who under the Old Testament seriously entered upon the work of reformation, did judge themselves entirely unworthy of any good ; and putting sackcloth on their skin, sat in the dust, and satisfied their hunger only with bread defiled with ashes, and their thirst with water mingled with tears, for a testimony they did not deserve any more dainty food, but merited rather to eat and to drink, together with their food, the tears plentifully trickling down upon it.

9. So doth the prodigal son, after his happy return, express his sorrowful mind to his father, "Father, I am no more worthy to be called thy son ; make me as one of thy hired servants." And the woman of Canaan was even content to be called a *dog*, if she were permitted to "eat of the crumbs falling from the Master's table." So the apostle Peter, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord ;" that is, unworthy with whom thou shouldst have any converse. And the centurion of Capernaum was of the same mind : "Lord," says he, "I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof." And if the heart of a Christian be brought to this sense of its own vileness, then it is truly contrite and humble, and fit to be made a living sacrifice to God.

10. A second fruit of true repentance is, *to grieve at nothing so much as at the offences offered to God*. It is certain that God *must needs be offended with every sin*

committed by men ; since the nature of sin is directly opposite to the nature of God. Thus, by unrighteousness, the righteousness of God is offended, he being Righteousness itself. By lying, the truth of God is offended, he being Truth itself. By hatred, the love of God is offended, he being Charity itself. In a word, since God is the perfection of all virtue and goodness, it can be no less than *diabolical* malice to offend such an infinite Goodness. Had he at any time injured us, it would be no great wonder if we did offend him again in our turn ; but now, when he gives us nothing but what is good—soul, body, and life itself—when he feeds and clothes us ;—yea, pardons our sins, when we pour out our souls to him ;—when he hath given us his only Son, with the Holy Spirit, and adopted us for his sons ;—after he has done all this for men—to offend him, to oppose, to hate him, shews an impudence, a madness, and a malice, altogether unaccountable and monstrous.

11. Would it not be highly horrid and impious, to kill him who gave thee life ; to wound him who kindly cherished thee in his bosom ; to insult and affront him who heaped honours upon thee ; and to disown him who had chosen thee for his son ? Behold all these, and far greater injuries and indignities, thou offerest to thy heavenly Father, to the supreme, the righteous, the holy God, whom angels trembling adore, and whom seraphim worship with the acclamations of “ Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts ; the whole earth is full of his glory ! ”

12. The third property of repentance is contained in these words, *My days are like a shadow that declineth ; and I am withered like grass.* A heart truly penitent, is deeply sensible of its own weakness. It entirely despairs of its own strength, knowing itself to be as destitute of life and power as the very shadow ; and as empty of spirit and moisture as the grass that fadeth away. The same is affirmed in another psalm, “ Behold thou hast made my days as an hand-breadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee ; verily every man in his best state is

altogether vanity." O how noble a step would it be towards true *wisdom*, were man but sensible of his own *nothingness*? Man is as great a *nothing* as a shadow itself. As a shadow is without substance, without life, and without motion of itself, and vanishes at the departure of the sun; so is man, whenever the Lord withdraws the light of life from him. And it is worthy of observation, that *the nigher the sun is, the lesser are the shadows*, observed to be. And, on the contrary, *The farther the sun removes from us, the larger do the shadows appear*. The same happens to a man. The more of God and of his gifts is present with a pious man, the less he esteemeth himself, the less he boasteth of himself, and of what he calls *his*. On the contrary, The farther a man is from God, the more he swells with a high conceit of himself, the more is he puffed up with his parts and abilities, the more he extends the bounds of pride and haughtiness, and the less he knows how to *keep within compass*.

13. Again, As shadows at the setting of the sun are *greatest*, yet even then just ready to disappear, their greatness being but a forerunner of their approaching end: so is it with the shadows of this world, and the whole train of vain pomps and pleasures which commonly then post away on a sudden, when we are most lifted up by them; it being generally a sign of imminent destruction, when a person comes to rely on the shadowy appearances of perishing grandeur. For as the shadows vanish upon the withdrawing of the sun; so, when empty man becometh great in his own eyes, the Divine sun setteth upon him unawares, and he returns to his *nothing*. Moreover, as the shadow hath *no life* of itself, but entirely moveth with the motion of the sun; so man, of his own nature, is destitute of life and motion; and it is God alone who is able to put life and motion in him. And the hour of death will fully declare, that a man's "days on the earth are as a shadow;" nay, "as grass which grows up," but soon withereth when it is mown down: so doth our life fade away immediately, when it is cut down by

the fatal scythe of death. Lo ! thus are our days consumed into smoke, and we are "gone like the shadow when it declineth."

14. The fourth fruit of true repentance is our *union with God*, implied in these words, *But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever ; and thy remembrance unto all generations.* As if the prophet had said, "Though I am like a perishing shadow, and wither like the grass here, yet *in thee* I shall abide for ever, as thou thyself art an eternal Good." As by sin a man is divorced from God ; so, by true conversion, he is again united to him. As the person of Christ is indivisible, notwithstanding his two natures, and as the Eternal Deity united the human nature in Christ Jesus with itself in so firm a bond, as is not to be dissolved by death itself ; the humanity of Christ remaining in perpetual union with the Divinity, and being filled with the glory residing therein ; so, in the work of a true conversion unto God, penitent and believing souls are so closely united to God, that neither life nor death can separate them from him ; for he that is joined to the Lord is "one spirit," God *betrothing* us unto himself for ever.

- 15. In a word ; Christ himself is of this a most sufficient witness to us, and in us ; and he is that Book of Life wherein we are plainly taught, that, as his human nature abideth eternally united with the Divine ; so all those that continue faithful to him, shall be eternally united with their Lord and Head. For as God is eternal, and Christ is eternal, so the promises of God in Christ are also eternal ; he having made with us a *covenant of everlasting grace*. So that, how much soever we may be forsaken of the world, how much soever vexed and tormented by sin and the devil ; nay, if even our flesh and our heart should fail, yet is God the "strength of our heart, and our portion for ever."

CHAP. IV.

That Christ is the true Book of Life.

1. ALL those that believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, are "written in the book of life." This shall be made manifest in that great day wherein the Lord will "confess their names before his Father, and before his angels." But besides, the Lord Jesus himself is a complete book and unspotted mirror of a truly Christian life, he being, as the word and wisdom of the Father, made man, to teach us by his life and death, and by his conduct and conversation, to set a pattern before us for our imitation.

2. The whole of his life, beginning with his tender infancy, and ending with his death, was made up of a continual series of crosses and afflictions; insomuch, that he took hardly any steps without the inseparable attendance either of *poverty*, *contempt*, or *pain*. He was poor in relation to outward things. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay his head." As soon as he entered into the world, he entered into want and poverty, choosing to be born at Bethlehem, the least among the cities of Judah, and from a mother too that was destitute of all wealth and worldly greatness. Nor did he ever court the favour of great men, declining it even when it was offered.

3. But he became more eminently poor by his *humiliation*, whereby, laying aside the "form of God, he humbled himself, and made himself of no reputation." He thereby entered into the depth of our misery, partaking of all our weaknesses and infirmities. He was *wearied* with the journies he undertook, to finish the work he was sent for. How many tiresome paces did he go, when he went about doing good? *Healing multi-*

tudes of sick and diseased, that continually crowded to him from all parts, and surrounded him often to that degree, that he could not so much as *eat bread*, and his very friends thought him to *be beside himself*. "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses;" never withdrawing from any hardship or calamity, never shrinking under the burden of poverty, of cruel mockings, and of other evils, let them be never so sharp and numerous. And whereas he might have been served by all the creatures of God, and waited on by legions of angels; yet dispensed he with all this glory, and did not exert that sovereign power which was lodged in him. He suffered his head to be torn by thorns, his hands to be tied, his sacred body to be scourged, his hands and feet to be nailed to the cross, his side to be pierced with a spear. All this he cheerfully submitted to, though it had been in his power to prevent it, and with one word to restrain the fury of all the creatures from thus insulting their Creator.

4. For our sakes, he made himself *subject* to all the creatures. He took upon him the form of a servant, that by his lowliness he might repair our losses, and re-instate us in that *dominion* over all the creatures, which we forfeited in Adam. He rose from the dead, and gained a perfect conquest, thereby to purchase for us an everlasting victory. He suffered himself to be tempted by the devil, hurried about by his malice, tormented by his instruments, fastened to the cross. And all this he underwent to rescue mankind from their spiritual thralldom, from the power of the devil leading them captive at his will. Thus the strongest became weak; the almighty, infirm; the most glorious was made most despicable; the most exalted most exposed himself to temptations of all kinds, to sufferings and difficulties, to pains and hardships; thereby to check our tenderness and effeminacy, things utterly misbecoming spiritual soldiers, and to inure his followers betimes to the straight, though despised way of *self-denial* and *mortification*. Alas! how

tender and delicate are now generally the minds of those that style themselves Christians! How unlike are they to the pattern from whence they take their denomination, to the *original copy* they pretend to write after! The smallest cross is complained of as an insufferable burden. A little trouble they are to undergo for God and their neighbour, seems a sufficient plea to start back into the smooth way, and to drop entirely the article of the *cross*. Not to mention here, how uneasy they are, how impatient even under those trials the Lord sends, for promoting thereby the recovery of their own souls, and the glory of his name.

5. The Lord *forsook all that is great and pompous in the eye of the world*. He was a King, yet would he be subject to kings and magistrates, nay, to his father and mother, though so mean and indigent. "He went down with his parents to Nazareth, and was subject unto them," and, as some will have it, wrought at his father's trade. He was Lord over all; and yet when he came into the world, "he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," clothing himself in all the dress of poverty and meanness. He was the great and wise prophet, nay, the substantial wisdom of God; and yet did he choose disciples of the lowest rank, a plain and simple people, not raised at all above the common level of men. When it was in his power to behave himself like a Lord and Master; yet did he divest himself of *that* right, being "among them as one that served." He chose rather to be a *master in life and doctrine*, than in any other grandeur and pre-eminence. Thus when he taught the duty of *obedience*, he shewed at the same time a pattern of obedience in his own life and conduct. When he endeavoured to instil into his disciples a sense of *humility*, of *patience*, of *subjection* to their superiors, and of other Christian virtues; he practised them first, that so his example might have a more powerful influence upon the lives of others. Thus, being Head and Master, he thought it becoming his character to be chief also in

bearing affronts, reproaches, injuries, poverty, misery, and in performing the most contemptible services, even "washing his disciples' feet." And thus he proved a master and teacher, not in doctrine only, but in *life* also, in *example*, and *practice*.

6. But, alas ! how are we fallen from so glorious a pattern ! Our Head despised worldly honour, and we pursue it. He submitted to crosses and trials, and we shrink back at the very sight thereof ; unwilling to be disturbed in the enjoyment of our ease and prosperity. He became *obedient* unto death, and we indulge ourselves, as if *self-will* was the standing rule of our actions. Alas ! this doth not agree with the example the Lord hath set before us, nor with the *spiritual maxims* contained in the book of life. Consider, therefore, O man, how near the way wherein thou walkest comes to that way wherein thy Lord and Master walked. If thou despise the *narrow* way of Jesus, and follow the way of the world ; then know for certain, that the way, though smooth for a while, will end in utter destruction.

7. After thou hast seriously considered the lesson of *poverty*, in the book of life exhibited by the Lord ; consider also the deep and *unaffected humility*, which was so eminently seen in his whole life and conduct. Never did he catch the applauses of men ; never was he acted by *ambition*, or thirst of honour : whenever men offered to bestow honours, praises and dignities upon him, he fled from them ; he declined them both with words and deeds : never did he accept of any honour from men ; not even when " they would have taken him by force, and made him a king."

8. On the other hand, with what inexpressible humility did he bear all the insolences, the reproaches, and calumnies wherewith his enemies loaded him ? He was cried down for the vilest Samaritan, and his *miracles* ascribed to the power of Beelzebub. That *doctrine*, he brought down from heaven, was most daringly exploded as a piece of blasphemy ; and he who taught it every

where insulted by foul and uncharitable censures, and the blackest lies and slanders. His life was a scene of perpetual misery and contempt. He was betrayed and sold; he was denied and buffeted; he was spit upon, and crowned with thorns; he was derided and scourged; he was smitten and sentenced to death; he was condemned to the ignominious "death of the cross." He was forsaken by God and men; and in fine, stripped of all; was executed in the midst of scandalous malefactors, hanging on the tree like a *cursed* one!

9. He was then made the common gazing-stock of all his enemies, and hissed at by priests, scribes, and elders. His *prayers* were turned into ridicule, and at the approach of the very pangs of death, he had nothing to refresh himself but "vinegar mingled with gall." At last, when all was finished, he expired on the cursed tree, full of the reproaches, hatred, and indignation of the world; insomuch that, even after his death, he had his body "pierced with a spear," and "his grave made with the wicked." Being risen from the dead, and triumphing over his enemies, they then boldly denied his *resurrection*, and left no stone unturned to blacken his Divine character, and to run down all the transactions of his life for cheat and imposture. Thus was the Lord, both in the beginning, progress, and end of his ever-blessed life, "despised and rejected, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

10. In this course of our Lord's life is not only displayed the abounding *treasure of redemption* gained by Christ; but in this scene of sufferings also he is our great Doctor and Master, our Prophet and Shepherd, our Instructor, Light, and constant Monitor; that we, by looking unto him, may learn to despise earthly pomp; and by closely adhering to him, like true members to their Head, "grow up into him in all things," being rendered conformable unto his life, "and rested and grounded in his love."

11. Every Christian ought most carefully to behold the *life of Christ under the cross*, together with that of all the saints in general. This *way of the cross* is copiously spoken of in the book of Psalms, in order to render it the more familiar unto us, and to teach us, “that we must, through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” The 109th Psalm, in particular, contains at large a prayer of Christ, expressed in the midst of his sufferings; and it mentioneth, in the latter part, *three* sorts of troubles more especially, wherewith the Lord, whose type David was, found himself oppressed.

12. In the first place, the Lord complaineth of a *vehement anxiety of heart*, declared in this manner, “I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.” Behold what complaints this sacred person is reduced to! and what is the reason thereof? Surely, to acquaint us, in the most moving terms, what he hath suffered for our sake. He says, “I am poor!” And lo! thou toilest to get estates, to hoard up riches, and yet thou art still poor and discontented in the possession of them. He says, “I am needy;” and thou, O man, art bent upon ease, prosperity, and fulness of bread! He complains, “My heart is wounded within me.” How unreasonable is it then, that thou shouldst be gratified in all thy vain desires! Nothing will go down with thee but what is seasoned with mirth; sorrow and melancholy being far banished from thy heart. But dost thou never reflect upon the life of that Master, whose servant thou pretendest to be? He complains that “his heart was wounded within him;” it was bruised, and as it were smitten with rods, and exceeding heavy. Let the consideration of this give thee ease under any grief, and make thee relish the better those untainted pleasures which will certainly succeed the cross.

13. After the Lord had spoken of *inward* sorrow that pressed upon him, he goes on to give us a view of his

bodily sufferings ; “ I am gone, (says he) like the shadow when it declineth : I am tossed up and down as the locust. My knees are weak through fasting, and my flesh faileth of fatness.” A most expressive description of the common frailty of human nature ! What is a shadow, but a mere nothing, an empty, lifeless appearance ? To this the Lord suffered himself to be reduced whilst he dwelt among us ! He who is *life* and *light* itself, and the bottomless fountain of life, is exposed to labour and infirmities. And should not men hereby learn to think themselves far more perishing *shadows* than the Lord of life himself ?

14. But he goes on ; *I am tossed up and down as the locust*. The Lord had no settled habitation upon earth as men of the world have, whose delight is in ample buildings, and stately palaces. He was in a constant *pilgrimage* towards that kingdom which cannot be moved. For this reason he is said to have only *tabernacled* among us, and is here compared to a *locust*, which, having no nest or abiding place, is fearful, and tossed to and fro, and driven away with every wind. And even in this hath our blessed Saviour left us a pattern, to walk as he walked ; and seeing we have no continuing city here, to seek one to come, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

15. What is farther added of the *weakness of his knees, and the failing of his flesh*, did abundantly appear about the time of his passion, when his *strength was dried up like a potsherd* ; and should we complain of a fit of sickness, when the Lord of life pined away into weakness, and languished in misery ? Should we pamper our bodies, when the Lord endured faintness and fastings ? And what matters it, if our bodies be weak, so our souls be in a vigorous habit ? It is this on which we ought to lay out our time and diligence ; it is this we ought to look after most carefully ; it is this which ought to “ eat that which is good, and delight itself in spiritual fatness,

that so it may grow strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

16. He next explaineth the *contempt* he underwent, to stop us in our pursuit after honour. “ I am (says he,) a reproach unto them ; when they look upon me, they shake their heads.” The enemies of Christ insulted him in the vilest and most licentious manner. All which the anointed of the Lord endured, to rescue man from eternal infamy. For man being become a scorner and *hater* of God, defying him and the offers of his grace, Christ now designed to make atonement for so heinous a sin, by the extreme *contempt* he willingly embraced. That we may the better transcribe the life of Christ in our own conduct and conversation, let us carefully observe the following particulars :

17.—1, Christ never sought upon earth his own glory in any thing that he did ; but accounted it sufficient for him, that God *alone* was *his glory*. So let us reject the glory of this world in all we do ; endeavouring only that God may be glorified, saying, “ Ah Lord God ! give us the heart of thy Son, that we may have our glory in *thee* alone, and not in *ourselves* ; that we may have our glory in heaven only, and not upon earth.” 2, It was the highest glory of Christ, that he was the *only begotten Son of God*. And for this reason did the world persecute and blaspheme him. So should a Christian look for no other honour than what he enjoys in the *paternal love of God*, by the witness of the Spirit residing in him. “ Grant us also, O God, that it may be our greatest glory and joy, that we are thy children ; that so we may obtain the eternal fruition of thy love, and possess in thee an everlasting inheritance ; and that we may remember, if the world do hate, envy, reproach and persecute us, it hath done the same to thy most holy child Jesus.” 3, It is the glory of the Lord Christ, that he wrought so many Divine works ; that he went about continually doing the most wondrous acts of beneficence ; and that out of *pure*

love, and the highest compassion to the miseries of fallen nature. However for all this, he received nothing but hatred and most heinous unthankfulness. Hence also our hearts ought to break forth in some such manner as this :

18. " Ah God ! give us such grateful, such faithful hearts, that we may be always ready to do good to all men ; and that we may be never deterred, either by the unthankfulness of a hardened world, or by the unworthiness of the objects ; ascribing not to ourselves, but to thy name only, the glory of all we do." 4, It is the highest glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he hath, out of pure love, laid down his life for us ; that he hath purchased us with his own blood ; that he hath been obedient to the Father, even unto death ; that with the greatest meekness he hath endured the vilest reproach, and with the utmost patience, the exquisite pains of the cross. " O God, our glory, help ! help us that we may overcome our enemy with love ; subdue our flesh with godly obedience ; bear the reproach of the world with the meekness of Christ ; obtain the victory through patience ; and being strong in the Lord, be made more than conquerors through him that loved us !" 5, The sovereign glory of the blessed Jesus is his exaltation to the right hand of God, and the *name* which is given him, which is " above every name, that every knee both in heaven and in earth must bow to his name, and all tongues be obliged to confess him to be their Lord."

19. " Help, O gracious God ! that we may ever esteem it our highest glory to be made conformable to our ever blessed Head ; that so, when he shall be revealed in power and majesty, we may also appear with him in glory, after we have here endured the cross, and been faithful to the end." 6, The glory of Christ is, that he is the only head of the church in general, and of every member thereof in particular ; a glorious King of his people ; and an everlasting High-Priest, making intercession for us. " Help us, O God, that we may evermore

account it our greatest glory, that we are the members of thy Son, that we are the subjects of his kingdom, and that we may enjoy all the privileges purchased by his intercession, sacrifice, and benediction."

20. The conclusion of the matter is this: It is God who is to be *our glory alone*; it is not the world, nor wealth, nor honour, nor greatness, nor the arm of flesh, nor the wit and prudence of men, that I may call *my glory*; but God, and only God, is *my glory*! Wherefore "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, not let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord." Jer. ix. 23, 24.

21. The *third* branch of the *crosses* and afflictions of Christ, consists in that *unspeakable grief* he underwent, even from his infancy. Which was also still the more aggravated, the nigher he approached to the time appointed for his passion. This himself testifies, saying, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death:" intimating thereby the unutterable anguish of spirit that forced from him that *sweat* which like drops of blood, fell *down to the ground*. And what pains he suffered in his most tender and sensible *body*, no tongue of men is able to declare. And this greatness of torment was caused *first* by the *greatness of sin*; which being an infinite and unexpressible evil, its full punishment and atonement could not but cause in the Son of God, immense and most exquisite torments too; which to a mere man had been altogether insupportable.

22. The *second* reason of this exquisite grief was, because he bore *the sins of the world*; not these only, which from the beginning of the world had been committed; but those also which men should become guilty of through all ages down to the end. And therefore such as is the number and height of all the sins of all men through all generations, such must needs have been also the pains and sorrows endured by the Lord. For which

cause he prayed upon the mount of Olives ; “ O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ! ”

23. Thirdly, the torments of Christ were not a little *heightened by that most perfect love he bore to his heavenly Father*. The greater one’s love is, the greater is also the grief occasioned by what interferes with it. Since therefore Christ loved his heavenly Father with a most *exalted* love ; his affliction must have been exceeding grievous, on account of the heinousness of sin, wherewith fallen men did insult over so beloved a father ; insomuch that the sins of the whole world, with the pains he endured for them, did not affect him in so lively a manner as the sorrow he felt on account of the indignity offered to a God, who in his very nature is love. And surely it was upon account of this love to the Father, (which deserved all the returns of love of which the creature was capable,) that Christ sustained most exquisite pains, and a most ignominious death, viz. that by a satisfaction proportionable to the offence he might regain unto wretched mortals, that love and favour of God, which they, by a heinous apostasy, had forfeited in Adam.

24. In the *fourth* place, the suffering of Christ was increased by his *great love to mankind*. For as he died for all, and bore the sins of all, so also was he exceedingly desirous to see the happy effects of his blood, which is the *salvation of all men*. Hence the *unbelief* and *wickedness* of men every where overflowing the world, and hindering this love from taking its effect upon sinners, caused him most grievous and bitter torments ; but especially for such as by their profligate lives and final impenitency, did throw away their souls for a handful of dust and vanity.

25. Fifthly, another circumstance which pierced the very heart of our Lord, was his *being forsaken of God*. For though it be true, God could not, strictly speaking, forsake him, who himself was God, and who did not cease to be God even when he hung on the cross ; yet does he complain of being *forsaken* ; and this lamentable

complaint our Saviour poured out to shew thereby that God did withdraw from him, as *man*, i. e. from his human nature, the support of his heavenly comfort, hiding himself in this dark hour of temptation. He manifests also by his exclamation, the extreme misery in which he then was.*

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* It is evident, our Lord's words here must be viewed in the same light with his prayer in the garden. For as that prayer expressed only the feelings and inclinations of his human nature, sorely pressed down with the weight of his sufferings; so his exclamation on the cross proceeded from the greatness of his sufferings then, and expressed the feelings of the same human nature, viz. an exceeding grief at God's withdrawing a comfortable sense of his presence, and a complaint that it was so. But, as his prayer in the garden was properly tempered with resignation to the will of his Father, while he said, *Not as I will, but as thou wilt*: so his complaint on the cross was doubtless tempered in the same manner, though the evangelists have not particularly mentioned it. For that in the inward disposition of his mind he was perfectly resigned while he hung on the cross is evident, beyond all doubt, from his recommending his spirit to his Father in the article of death, which he could not have done, if he had either doubted of his favour, or been discontented with his appointments. That the sufferings which caused our Lord to utter this exclamation, "were not merely those which appeared to the spectators, viz. the pains of death, which he was then undergoing, is evident from this consideration, that many of his followers have suffered sharper and more lingering bodily torture, ending in death, without thinking themselves, on that account, forsaken of God; on the contrary, they both felt and expressed raptures of joy under the bitterest torments. Why then should Jesus have complained, and been dejected under inferior sufferings, as we must acknowledge them to have been, if there were nothing in them but the pains of crucifixion? Is there any other circumstance in his history, which leads us to think him defective in courage or patience? In piety and resignation came he behind his own apostles? Were his views of God and religion more confined than theirs? Had he greater sensibility of pain than they, without a proper balance arising from the superiority of his understanding? In short, was he worse qualified for martyrdom than they? The truth is, his words on the cross cannot be accounted for, but on the supposition that he

26. And who is, in the *sixth* place, able to explain what pains the Lord suffered in his most holy and delicate *body* ? Or who can doubt, that a body most delicate, most noble, most pure, conceived by the Holy Ghost, personally united with the Divine nature, filled with the Spirit of God, must feel most grievous and bitter pains, when smitten, scourged, wounded, pierced, crucified, and put to death ? No words are expressive enough to set forth the smart and acuteness thereof. And what is all our cross and affliction, compared with this suffering of the Lord ? For we, being sinners, have most justly deserved eternal death and damnation ; and yet we find, how even this small allotment of the cross designed for us, is too heavy a burden for our tender Christians, who do what they can to shift it off, though at the same time it be appointed as healthful physic to procure the happiness of their souls. Surely a soul, who is a sincere lover of Christ, can wish no other condition of life, but such as comes up nearest to the *original* of the blessed life of Christ. Which conformity of our life to the life of Christ, we ought to account our greatest gain and dignity. In this, let the true lover of Christ rejoice, that he hath been thought worthy to suffer with Christ his Saviour.

27. What cause then can we pretend, why we should not most willingly walk in the *path of the holy cross* ?



endured in his mind distresses inexplicable, in consequence of the withdrawing of his heavenly Father's presence, and a sense of the wrath due to the sins of mankind, which he was now suffering." Indeed, as Dr. Doddridge observes, " The interruption of a joyful sense of his Father's presence, (though there was, and could not but be a rational apprehension of his constant favour, and high approbation of what he was now doing,) was as necessary as it was that Christ should suffer at all. For had God communicated to his Son on the cross, those *strong consolations* which he has given to some of the martyrs in their tortures, all sense of pain, and consequently all real pain, would have been swallowed up ; and the violence done to his body not affecting the soul, could not properly have been called *suffering*." See Macknight's and Benson's Commentaries.

Especially, since we know the Son of God himself hath travelled this way before us, and by his holy example sanctified it; not having *entered into his glory but by sufferings*? And since he hath, in spite of all the insults of the enemy, entered into glory; we may also assure ourselves that our affliction, which is but for a moment, shall be followed by an everlasting weight of glory. And as the Lord did not spare himself, but laid himself entirely out for the service of others, undergoing all this by no other impulse but that of fervent *love*; so should this love of our Redeemer raise reciprocal flames of love in our souls, and never suffer us to grow faint and weary under any affliction whatever.



CHAP. V

Of Prayer.

1. SEEING the true knowledge of God, and Christ crucified, is not to be attained, unless we keep our eye constantly fixed upon the *book of the innocent and holy life of Jesus Christ our Lord*; and since, in order to this, a devout, humble, fervent, and earnest prayer is required; it is highly necessary to make some inquiry into the *nature of prayer*, which does not so much consist in an *utterance of fine words*, as in a sweet intercourse of the *heart* with God, and in a *lifting up of the soul* and of all her faculties and powers to him. And this falls under a *threefold* denomination, being either *oral, internal, or supernatural*.

2. Oral prayer is an humble address to God, by an external exercise, using the soul gradually to the *internal* duty of prayer, and leading a man into the more interior recesses of his own heart; especially if the words outwardly uttered, by an attentive application of the mind,

be well pondered, and meditated upon. This proves often a means to bring our spirits so nigh unto God, as in filial confidence to entertain a sweet conference with our heavenly Father.

3. Internal prayer is offered without intermission, by the spirit, unto God in faith, according to that of our Saviour, "The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." And that of David, "Let the meditation of my heart be ever before thee." And again, "I commune with mine own heart, and my spirit made diligent search." Whereby, says St. Paul, speaking of the Spirit of adoption, "we cry, Abba, Father." And by this internal prayer, we are led on gradually to that which is *supernatural*, and consists in a true union with God by faith; when our created spirit dissolves, as it were, and sinks away in the uncreated Spirit of God; and when all is transacted in a moment, whatever in words or deeds hath been done and declared by all the saints from the beginning of the world: and for that reason is this supernatural prayer unspeakably more excellent than that which is external; for therein the soul is by true faith so replenished with Divine love, that it can think of nothing else but God. Or if, perhaps, another thought should slide unawares into the heart, it proves an occasion of great grief and trouble of the mind, and the soul cannot be at ease till the intruding thought be turned out again.

4. A soul once arrived at this happy state, gives but little employment to the tongue: "it is silent to the Lord: it panteth after, and thirsteth for God; it longeth, yea, even fainteth for him:" it loves him only, rests in him alone, not minding the world, nor any worldly affairs. Whence it is still more and more filled and possessed with an experimental, savoury knowledge of God, with love and joy, to such a degree as no tongue is able to express. For whatever the soul then perceiveth, is beyond all possibility of being explained by words. Insomuch, that if one should ask a soul wrapped up in these sublime contemplations, What she thinks on, or what she per-

ceives ? she would certainly answer, A Good that is above all good ! What seest thou ? A Perfection of Beauty, transcending all created forms. What feelest thou ? A joy surpassing all joys. What dost thou taste ? The inexpressible delights of love. Nay, such a one would tell you, that all the words that can be framed come infinitely short of the comprehensiveness of what was inwardly felt, and sweetly *suffered* ; nothing but the actual sense and perception itself being capable to give a sound impression of it. This is the voice of the Eternal Word, and its discourse with a loving soul ; according to that of the Lord, “ He that loveth me, I will manifest myself unto him.” Whatever here is felt, whatever here is seen, is above nature. Here voices are heard, and words that are unspeakable ; nor is it possible for a man to utter them.

5. This is the *school* wherein the soul learneth to *know* God aright, and, as it were, to *taste* him. Whilst she knoweth him, she loveth him ; and whilst she loveth him, she affectionately longeth for a *total* enjoyment of him. For this is a most certain property of love, to desire wholly to possess the object beloved ; to be intimately united with, and altogether transformed into it. From this affectionate desire springeth up both *mental* and *oral* prayer ; the soul being fully convinced that these Divine visitations are not to be attained but by fervent prayer. And in all this, a wonderful wisdom of God appeareth, whereby every thing is managed in order and harmony, and the soul, by a gradual ascent, led up to the enjoyment of the greatest Good. Thus none is permitted to attain *mental* prayer, but he who begins with that which is *vocal*, and endeavours to blow up the coals of secret and internal prayer, by some external act and exercise. Again, none must have an access to the *supernatural* prayer, or to an union with the sublimest and most delightful Good, but by *mental* prayer. But these things can only be known by *experimental* perception, not expressed by words. And this is the true *cause*, why God so strictly, so frequently,

and earnestly enjoins prayer; because it is a sacred pledge and bond by which God draws us up to himself; and by elevating us into his immediate presence, detaineth us there awhile, and unites us, as it were, to our first Original. If this prayer begin to languish at any time, then we lose, by little and little, the sweet remembrance of God, and deprive ourselves of all the unspeakable benefits that result from his most comfortable presence.

6. If therefore thou wouldst *rightly pray*, see thou do it not with a *divided*, but with thy *whole* heart. But this is not to be attained but by frequent exercise, and a continual and unwearied diligence. Without this, thou art never like to reap the fruits of prayer. On the contrary, as often as thou givest attendance to any *external* work, take care thou set not thy heart upon it. If thou *eat, drink*, or attend any other outward affair incident to human life, see that thou bestow not *thyself*, that is, thy *whole* heart, upon it. Do it as if thou didst it not: for thy heart is to rest entirely in God alone, and closely to adhere to him by mental and *internal* prayer; which cannot be done, except it be set free from the encumbrances of the world. The more thou offerest thyself up to the Lord by prayer, the greater will be thy illumination. And again, the more the knowledge of God is enlarged in thy mind, the more endearing will be thy sense and perception of the highest Good; the more ardent also, the more tender and affectionate will be thy love to the Lord; and, in fine, the more capable wilt thou be of enjoying him. Thy soul being thus disposed, shall, in a supernatural manner, taste of a happiness so high and transcendent, as infinitely exceeds all the words and expressions of men.

7. Of this prayer, Jesus Christ hath set us a pattern, from whom we may learn the *nature* and *method* of it. For we find that he often "continued whole nights in prayer to God," praying with all fervency, from the very bottom of his soul; and in prayer triumphing and rejoicing in spirit. He hath therefore, both by words and

action, or example, taught us how to pray ; leaving us a pattern to follow after, and commanding us to “ watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation.” He commendeth also, most frequently, the duty of prayer, thereby to testify, that nothing was more pleasing to him than our prayer ; having enjoined it for no other reason than to let us see how entirely he loved us, and how desirous he was that by prayer we should be made partakers of the greatest and most precious Good that ever was, or can be.

8. But lest we should pretend that so noble an effect, as results from a due performance of prayer, was not attainable by us, the Lord doth not think it enough to have said, “ Ask,” but encourages us also with a promise annexed ; “ and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full ;” exciting us moreover to pray by his own example, seeing the most exquisite sufferings did not extinguish in him, but rather blew up the ardour of his devotion : for “ being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground.” Set therefore this mirror of prayer before thine eyes, and learn to persevere therein. Whenever thou beginnest to grow faint and weak in praying, turn seriously the eyes of thy mind upon thy Lord, who prayed not for himself, or upon his own account, but for thee, and upon thy account, and so sanctified thy prayer, blessed it, and added life and efficacy thereto. Him therefore behold, who, though he was true God, and consequently in actual possession of all things ; yet, as he was man, he obtained for thee of his heavenly Father, all things by prayer. And hence was his whole life a continual and uninterrupted prayer, and a perpetual longing to do the will of God ; which he finished, praying on the cross.

9. If therefore thy Lord prayed so fervently upon thy account, and was heard, then surely he will not suffer thy prayers to be poured forth in vain. Did he procure all things for thee by prayer, and thinkest thou that without

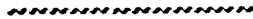
it thou canst obtain any blessing? As it is plain that, without Divine grace, without light, without faith, not one can be saved; it is not less plain, that these and all other heavenly graces, can no otherwise be attained than by prayer. It is the Lord thou must entreat, by fervent prayer, to obtain from him only faith, love, hope, humility, patience, the Holy Spirit, together with the whole train of gospel virtues, which he alone is able to bestow and strengthen in thy soul. It is he alone that infuseth them into the heart. But as he that hath them not cannot give them; so the Lord, whose gift they are, will not give them without being asked.

10. Now if thou art truly desirous to pour out thy soul before the Lord in fervency of spirit, there is not a more ready and effectual means thereto than with the eyes of thy mind to behold the mirror of the most meek and most humble *life of Christ*: to keep, I say, thy eyes attentively fixed upon the poverty, the reproach and contempt, the griefs and sorrows, and the most ignominious death of thy blessed Saviour. Into this book of prayer, if thou diligently look, thou shalt perceive thy heart become inflamed with ardent desires. And though the devil and the flesh may not cease to assault thee with temptations on all hands, whilst thou continuest faithful in these holy exercises; yet, by means of prayer, shall they be subdued at last. For after a sincere application to the Lord by prayer, the Spirit of God visits the heart with his gracious presenee, as he descended upon the apostles, when they were with one accord praying at Pentecost.

11. As to *temptations*, that are wont to attend the duty of prayer, thou must behave thyself under them as the Lord himself did; who, in the midst of his agony on mount Olivet, “prayed the more earnestly.” Thus shall thy prayer prove at last the means of victory over all thy enemies. By prayer doth the Lord manifest himself unto his children: by prayer we learn to practise true humility: for it is by prayer the Highest is united to the

lowest; the most high God to the most humble heart. And this *humility* is the inlet whereby plenty of Divine grace is infused into the soul. Now the more it humbleth a man, the more grace itself gets root in the soul. And again, the more a soul is enriched with grace, the more doth she improve in humility.

12. The most considerable obstruction in prayer seems to be when God *withdraws the grace of a fervent and lively devotion**. And yet in this case it is, that we ought to stir up ourselves the more carefully to prayer and supplication. For though indeed a prayer poured forth with a spirit of fervency be acceptable to God; yet is that which climbs up the throne of grace in affliction, spiritual dryness, and brokenness of soul, still more pleasing in his sight†. For as the heart of a father is sooner softened by the broken sighs and trembling words of a sick and languishing child, than by the strong voice and more ready utterance of one in perfect health; so is the secret affliction, and earnest, though weak effort of a soul truly affected with the sense of her weakness, and of her want of spiritual life, more acceptable to our infinitely merciful Father, than the more vigorous petitions of a soul raised by a sense of faith, and abounding in consolation. Hold out but patiently in these spiritual straits, and depend upon it, the Lord, in his own time, will certainly “restore unto thee the joy of his salvation.”



* Does God ever withdraw this unless we have, by some means, previously grieved his Holy Spirit?

† This is very questionable: it is no where taught us in the Scriptures.

A PRAYER.

Most merciful Father, it is in great weakness I lift up my heart unto thee, and return unto thee humble thanks for thy heavenly convictions, wherewith thou hast been pleased to visit my soul, and to make me sensible both of my degenerate state of sin, and of my glorious descent and high pedigree. By this thy Divine visitation, I begin to see, that I am the lost sheep, so far gone astray from thy flock, and quite benighted in the howling wilderness of the world. I begin to perceive that I am that prodigal son who hath wasted his substance with riotous living, and, after having left his own home, hath taken his journey into a far country. I am that unfaithful steward, that hath spent his Lord's goods, and have never thought on the account I must give of my stewardship. I am one of those that have been standing idle in the market-place of a vain and unruly world, and never minded the call to go and to work in the vineyard.

Look down, most gracious God, with an eye of pity, and let the great Restorer of our breaches, under the dispensation of thy gospel, continue the work which thou hast begun under the operation of thy law. I hear, though at a great distance, the call of my Shepherd, who hath followed me wherever I have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day of my sin and apostasy. O let me not only hear his voice, but follow it also ; never minding again the voice of strangers. I begin to feel, with the prodigal son, the spiritual famine which overspreads all the faculties of my soul. I am entirely stripped of that garment of original righteousness, wherewith I was adorned at first. I have neglected the light of thy countenance, the guidance of thy counsel, the still voice of thy Spirit, whereby I might have been led into the path of life, and back to my heavenly home. I have

hardened myself against the sweet precepts of thy love, and submitted to the commands of sin, which, like an Egyptian task-master, lays unmerciful burdens upon me. I have forfeited the true freedom of mind, and am brought by sin into straitness, bondage, and slavery.

All this, most merciful Father, I am now sensible of! But though I find some weak efforts and desires to regain my liberty, yet, in the midst of my efforts, I sink down again into mire and misery, where there is no standing. I feel a ray of thy light shining forth upon my darkness, and a dawning of the day of salvation in the night of my corruption: yet since I have all along loved darkness rather than light, I cannot now cast off the works of darkness, nor put on the armour of light. I feel the healing power the Sun of Righteousness carrieth in his wings; but the diseases of my soul are so deep and infectious, that I do not know where to begin the cure. Let thy grace, O Lord, appear for my deliverance, and draw me to thy Son, the true Redeemer of those that groan under their bondage; the Light of those that are sensible of their darkness; and the Physician of all such as, feeling their disease, labour after a remedy. Let his blood cleanse and heal me; let his Spirit renew and comfort me; let his love constrain and chasten me; let his grace support and establish me; let his promises purify and perfect me! Let my faith victoriously triumph over sin, and over all the powers of hell and darkness, through him that loved me. Amen!



ASPIRATIONS.

1. LET, O Lord, that powerful word, whereby thou didst create the first world, "create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me."

2. Let me overcome, by the power of thy nature, the

bent of my sinful nature ; and find that my restoration by grace in Christ, is far more pōwerful than the abasement by sin in Adam.

3. O how sweet, how happy is the perfect law of thy liberty! Sin hath brought me under a shameful bondage; but thy Son restoreth unto me, the true freedom of spirit, and then I am free indeed ! Free with the noblest and most excellent freedom ; free from all the ties to lust and corruption ; free from the hurry of self-will ; free from the vain pursuit after worldly honour and greatness ; free from the thirst of carnal pleasures ; free from covetousness ; free from wrath and bitterness. This freedom, verily, is freedom indeed, and the character of an heaven-born spirit !

4. Teach me, O Lord, this great truth, that no man can do any good, except he be first made good within : no corrupt tree being able to bring forth any fruit that is accounted good in thy sight. This will lay me low, and make mē look with a holy disdain on all such works as I have done with an unregenerate heart !

5. How wearisome are the steps, whereby the soul, under the rigour of thy law, returns out of the snares of the love of the world into the path of the love of God. Support me, O Lord, by thy grace, and uphold me by thy Spirit, till my faith prove the “victory that overcometh the world !”

TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

THE SECOND BOOK.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

Of Humility.

1. WITHOUT true humility all religion is nothing. All prayer without it is in vain. Our Lord Jesus Christ is that book, out of which this is best learnt; as who is indeed a most perfect mirror unto us of all virtues and graces. Look on his life, and thou shalt find it made up of nothing but *love* and *humility*. Look on his doctrine, and thou shalt see it to be *mere wisdom and truth*; a doctrine consisting not in words, but in power; not in shadows, but in the *substance* of the things that we are taught of him.

2. If we have therefore a mind to study this virtue, which is the root of the rest, it behoves us to learn the same, not only by words; but by the holy example which our Lord hath set us. For this very end, "He humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross." Behold then, O Christian, how this virtue hath its foundation, and its

highest and most excellent ground, not in any angel, not in any apostle, but in Christ Jesus alone. And, therefore, saith he, "Learn of me," Matt. xi. 29: as if he had said, "Look ye upon me, how I abase myself *under* all, who yet am *above* all. Behold, as much *higher* as my majesty is, so much *lower* is my humility: and so much dearer and more lovely should this virtue be to you, as I your Lord and your God have delineated it in my whole life." Mark it; he saith, "Learn of me." But what? Not to do mighty things and wonders, not to work signs and miracles, or to shew any great work of the creation; but to be *meek and lowly*.

3. As he was just drawing to a period of his life upon the earth, the *humble Jesus* chose to exemplify this; when after his last supper, he took a towel and girded himself, and "washed his disciples' feet." Wherefore he also saith, "Know ye what I have done to you?" Do ye indeed consider what it is that I have done? And will ye humble yourselves every one to the other, and submit gladly even to the meanest offices of charity? O learn of me, by what you have now seen me do. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Learn of me, if I then be your Lord and Master, "for I am meek and humble in heart." Let this my example be a rule for your whole lives, and let my life evermore stand before your eyes as an image or picture of that lowliness wherewith I humbled myself for your sakes. For,

4. Humility is the basis and foundation of all virtue, and of all happiness; and must at all times, and in all estates, be exercised by us, according to the example of our meek and lowly Master, if we aim either at being virtuous or happy. For as pride is of all other things most odious to God, so is humility of all others the most acceptable to him. For he that exalts himself must needs be humbled; because *self-exaltation* is a mere fancy, and hath nothing to bottom itself upon. And he that *humbles* himself must needs be exalted; because

self-humiliation is full of truth and reality ; and hath such a bottom to subsist upon, as uniteth heaven and earth together.

5. Pride aims at the utmost pitch of honour ; yet undermines what it would advance. Humility, on the contrary, leads us to the bottom of our condition, and gives us the true sight of our own vilness ; yet raises here-upon a most magnificent structure, like to the creation of the world, out of emptiness and darkness. Humility is solid and real ; is just and reasonable ; is wise and holy ; is beautiful and amiable ; is peaceable and righteous ; is good and profitable ; and there is no end of counting its excellencies. Humility is suitable to all objects ; is agreeable to all the ends and causes of human life ; is fitted to all the circumstances of our present state and condition. Humility is full of grace and truth ; it is the ground of all the Divine works ; it is the footstool of God's throne ; it is the mirror of his greatness ; it is the magnet of all his glories and beauties. In a word, it is the most agreeable to all the principles of nature and grace ; to all the desires of angels and men ; and to all the designs of God himself. So that nothing is more true, than that, "before honour is humility."

6. For humility is a bright light in the heart, wherein at once is discovered to us our own *nothingness*, and the high majesty and overflowing goodness of God. When a man sees his own emptiness, and how he is *without form*, and perfectly *void*, being naked and destitute of every thing that is good ; the *darkness* which *was upon the face* of his mind, begins instantly to break away ; and he betakes himself earnestly to *pray* for the grace and mercy of God to fill his vacuity, and to make him what he would please to have him in the order of the *new* creation. So he pants after, and betakes himself to God, as to the original and fountain of all good things ; desiring to know him aright, to praise him, and to honour him as he should. This desire being thus begotten in him, he pours out his heart by himself, and says,

“When shall I come to appear before the presence of God?” And then finding an utter inability in himself, and beholding God as at an infinite distance, his soul is sore vexed within him, and tears are his meat both day and night. Now when he thinks hereupon continually, and pours out himself after this manner, acknowledging from the ground of his heart his own vileness; then one deep calls to another deep, even the deep of his misery, to the deep of God’s mercy. For in his humility he looks at God’s majesty and greatness, as also at his superabundant love and grace. And hereupon do the streams of grace sweetly flow down into such a soul. And Divine grace thus being communicated to this thirsty soul, there is hereby conceived in her a spirit of prayer, which ceases not to ascend up in holy aspirations, and to bring down the blessings of peace and righteousness. This spirit of prayer is of God, most beloved; and he is able to deny nothing that it asks for. Whosoever would attain it, and would have all his prayers and desires answered by God, must therefore be sure to keep close to humility.

7. Moreover, by humility there is an illapsc of the Holy Spirit into the soul, whose influences grow continually thereby stronger and stronger; and the *love of God* is by this means “shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which is given us.” For when a soul, that is conscious of her own vileness, reflects upon the humiliation of the Son of God, it is not only humbled, but hence also in this humility, there springeth up a most noble flame of Divine charity, which burneth more and more day by day. And in this Divine love, she, being attracted by faith unto God, is made to love all men in God, and in Christ; as calling to mind the exceeding great love of the Godhead towards mankind; and particularly how her heavenly Father hath in Christ loved her, and called her to the participation of his goodness, though most unworthy. And when the soul is thus drawn into God, and is swallowed up in his love, the

consequence hereof is this, that all those things or persons which are beloved by God, the soul also cannot but love, in like manner as God loveth them.

8. It follows, that if any good befall our neighbour, charity will rejoice; but if any evil happen to him, it will make us sorrowful. For the humble and charitable person, behaving himself courteously and lovingly towards his neighbour on all occasions, doth not rashly judge him, if he behold his misery; much less carry himself haughtily and superciliously towards him, or treat him with contempt. For such a soul can never so put off the sense of her own misery and vileness, as to despise another, or to esteem herself better than any, as remembering the mire out of which she herself hath been delivered. And if she falleth at any time into any sin, she judgeth herself, but her neighbour she judgeth not. Humble charity judgeth herself before all, and maketh us condemn ourselves rather than others. And the observation of a neighbour's calamity is the cause of the soul's descending into herself, and deploring herself before God. Because in another's fall, the lowly soul reads her own defaults, her own sins, and transgressions.

9. Humility causes us meekly to acknowledge, that in us, of our own selves, there is no good thing; and that whatsoever good may be found in us, it is wholly to be ascribed to the grace and favour of God; according to that of the apostle, "Not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Now whosoever doth not this, falls into two great sins. The first is *apostasy from God*, by his turning himself from God towards himself; that is, from the true and supreme Being, towards that which is in itself *nothing*. The second is *sacrilege*, by his taking to himself that honour which is due to none but God; whose, and not man's, is every thing that may be called good. He, therefore, that worketh not all things in humility, doth steal from God the glory that is due to him.

10. If any man applaud himself, either for knowing

any thing, for doing any thing, or for being able to do this, or that, verily that man takes to himself the honour and glory which are due to God only. For this reason ambition is an abominable idolatry. And self-love and self-esteem are no less than having another God before him, whose name is Jehovah. For this very reason doth the devil seek to be honoured by his devotees in the world. And truly such a vain-glorious devil, covetous of honour from the world, doth every proud person cherish in his breast. If thou wilt be wise, see then that thou break down this idol, which is set up in the sanctuary of thy heart. There are many who, out of an abhorrence of idols, are cautious, not even to look upon any *outward images*; not observing all the while that huge idol which they carry about with them in their very hearts, and whence they are so dreadfully defiled, as to become an abomination before God. For all that which is highly esteemed by men, through self-love and ambition, is an *abomination before God*. Whence all the men that flatter themselves, complimenting their own honour, or power, or ability in any thing, or ascribing ought to themselves as their own, are idolaters. Thus the whole world liveth in idolatry; and every house hath its domestic gods and idols; and the very "abomination of desolation" cometh at last to be set up in the holy place, which by solemn covenant, was in baptism dedicated to God and his Spirit.

11. The idolatry which defileth thee, proceedeth from within, even from the heart. For in whatsoever thy heart doth acquiesce and rest, and unto whatsoever it doth cleave, whether it be wealth, or honour, or power, or long life, that passeth immediately into an idol. Forasmuch as idolatry is not barely an outward pollution; but that which is internal and spiritual. God considers all things by the heart, "trying the hearts and reins," and thence judging of all things. Whence Christ hath also plainly told thee, "Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also;" that is, thy God, thy rest, thy peace,

thy trust, will be there ; and there will be thy paradise ; yea, there will heaven and all things be to thee. In what thing soever, therefore, thy mind doth take up its repose, that thou art to esteem for thy god. Now if thy heart cleave fast to God only, then is he *thy* God ; and blessed art thou, according as it is written, “Blessed are the people that have the Lord for their God.” And again, “Delight thou in the Lord, and he shall give thee thy heart’s desire.” But if thy mind cleave to the world, then is the world thy god.

12. Wooden idols are easily avoided ; but take heed of the idols of *gold*. It is no hard matter to keep from *dead* idols ; but take heed thou worship not the living ones, and especially *thyself*. For as soon as thou chal- lengest to thyself either honour or praise, or knowledge, or power, or might, thou settest up thyself in the place of God. Which most pestilent idolatry is struck at by God, when he denies that he will give his glory to another. His honour and glory is due to none but him- self. He is the Most High, and the Most Holy One, and is the Sovereign and the everlasting God.

13. Wherefore, whosoever forgets himself, so as not to depend on God, (who alone is *all things*,) as doth a shadow on its body, “thinking himself to be *something*, when he is *nothing*, he deceiveth himself,” Gal. vi. 3. For he falls from the unchangeable *good* into *vanity*, and from *truth* itself into a *lie*. And this is not only the greatest of sins, but of punishments also. For man, the more he turns from God, approaches so much the nearer to misery, and punishes the very sin which he commits. And he then turns himself away from God, and forsakes the “Rock of his salvation,” whensoever he doth arrogate to himself I know not what of power, or strength, or art, or skill, or wisdom, or honour, or merit, so as to be willing to be thought *somebody*, and to be *something* accounted of ; when in very deed, *all* these do in no wise belong to man, or to any crea- ture, but to God only. For every creature, as was said,

is a mere shadow, and of itself is merely nothing ; even so as the life, substance, faculty, wisdom, powers, and strength, which it seems to have, are not properly its own, but God's only.

CHAP. II.

Of Love.

1. LOVE is the greatest of all virtues, and without it all gifts are unprofitable. But a man may sin or mistake therein as easily as in any thing else. Therefore nothing ought to be looked upon with a more suspicious eye than love ; for there is nothing which can so powerfully incline, force, or restrain, and so thoroughly penetrate the mind, as love. Therefore, if love be not ruled by the true Light, or the Holy Ghost, it may precipitate the soul into a thousand calamities.

2. Therefore it is highly necessary that our love be guided and ruled by considering and copying after the whole life of Christ and his holy sufferings, out of which nothing but all *pure* love shineth forth. He loved God purely above all things. He loved man with a pure, undefiled love. He did and spake nothing for his own sake, but all for ours. Whatsoever he did and spake was for our benefit ; not he was profited by it, but we.

3. This is a *pure*, undefiled love, for which nothing is too difficult ; which complains of nothing ; which spares not itself, but gives itself for the Beloved, even unto death. Whatsoever crosses and sufferings God sends, this love takes all for good, and is very well contented with every thing that God willeth ; for it knows that God orders all things well.

4. And seeing that love unites itself to the Beloved, it learns also his manners, follows him for his love's sake,

and does what is well-pleasing unto him. So he that loves Christ, learns his manner of life, conforms himself to his image, and remains all the days of his life under the cross of Christ. Christ, during his whole life, bore the cross of poverty, contempt, and pain. And every Christian is to endeavour that his love be not false, but pure as his.

5. This pure love, derived from Christ and the Holy Ghost, works in man every good thing. It is joy unto it to do good, for it can do nothing else; like as the Lord God says, "I will rejoice over them to do them good." Why? Because God is love; which can do nothing else but what is *in his being*. And this is a character of *pure* and *true* love. For this love doth not say, I am not obliged to do this, or that; but where it hath *no law*, there it is a *law* unto itself, only that it may do much good; for otherwise, love would not continue to be love.

The properties of true love are these: 1. Love submits itself to the will of the beloved. 2. True love abandons all other friendship which is contrary to its beloved. 3. One friend discovers his heart unto the other. 4. A true lover endeavours to be made conformable unto his beloved, in his manners, and in all his life. Is the beloved poor? the lover will be poor with him. Is the beloved despised? the lover also bears his contempt. Is he sick? the lover is sick no less. Thus love makes between them an equality, that they have the same prosperities and adversities: for there must be such a communion between the lover and the beloved, as that each of them may be made partaker of the other's good as well as evil.

6. After this manner our Lord is become our friend. For, 1. His love hath submitted itself to the will of man, and was obedient unto the cross; nay, for the sake of man, he hath submitted his will to every one, even to his enemies. 2. He hath neglected all other friendship; nay, he hath forgot himself, and spared not his own body and

life for our sake. 3. He hath in his gospel discovered unto us his heart; therefore he says, "Henceforth I call you not servants, but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you." 4. He is made "like unto us in all things, only sin excepted," Phil. ii. 7. He is become *poor*, as we are, and *mortal*, as we.

7. The *first* mark of the love of Christ in us, is avoiding the love of the world. For when thou considerest Christ in his holy poverty, entirely empty of love to temporal things, his love will also move thee to put off the love of the world, and to despise the same; so that thou wilt desire nothing in the world but thy Lord Christ; and wilt not put thy confidence in any creature, or any earthly assistance.

Secondly, thou wilt willingly bear for Christ, reproach and contempt from the world, for the sake of his holy reproach; nay, with St. Paul, thou wilt account it thy glory, and rejoice in it, Eph. iii. 13. Thou wilt not be troubled, when the world makes no account of thee; for this was thy Redcemer's life in this world. This shall be thy satisfaction, that Christ is thy glory, light, strength, power, victory, and wisdom. For to follow Christ is the highest wisdom.

Thirdly, thou wilt esteem the cross of Christ beyond all the treasures of the world. For if it were not so, Christ would not have taught thee so, and put it so before thine eyes with his own life and example. But thou seest himself is gone this narrow path. Yet there are few that follow him. For it is not an easy thing to conquer oneself, and to renounce the world, and all that one hath. This is the "narrow way, and few there be that find it."

The fourth mark of the love of Christ is, to have never out of our thoughts the beloved Jesus; but to set him always before us by faith, and to consider the works of his love.

8. There are chiefly five arguments of the love of God.

1. Christ's *incarnation*. 2. His *sufferings*. 3. God's *indwelling* in us. 4. God's love shining forth *out of the creatures*. 5. His amiableness in his own *Being*, surpassing all created things.

This is one of the greatest demonstrations of the love of God, that God is made man, and hath taken upon him what is human, that he might give us what is Divine. He is become a Son of man, that he may make us children of God. He came down to us upon earth, that he might lift us up to heaven. O what a noble change ! All for this end, that we in him might be loved of God. It is like as if God did eall down from heaven, saying, "O ye men, behold my beloved Son ! Him I have suffered to become man, that he might be a living example and witness of my love to you ; that he might bring you all with himself unto me, and ye all might be made my children and heirs !" Therefore the Lord calls himself always in the gospel, the Son of Man, out of an intimate love to us.

9. But although his holy incarnation is a great argument of his love, yet his *suffering* and *dying* for our sins, are still greater. "For greater love hath no man than this,] that a man lay down his life for his friend. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, (saith St. John,) that God sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." This is the highest and completest love. If God could have found out another means to redeem us, it would not have been the *highest love* shewn to us. That he might bestow upon us the highest love, and that we might not be able to say, God hath something which he loves so dearly, that he would not give it us ; he hath given us his dearest Son ; and not only given him, but "given him also to be the propitiation for our sins." He could not have shewed us any greater love. Therein "God commendeth his love towards us," Rom. v. 8. And "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?" Rom. viii. 32. Hath he given us that which is

the greatest? he will surely give us that which is less. In eternal life, all that is God's shall be ours. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things," Rev. xxi. 7

10. In the mean time, God sheweth his love towards us, by his comfortable *dwelling* among us, and *in us*. O what a comfort is this, that God hath sanctified our heart, and dedicated it to be his dwelling-place! Formerly, in the Old Testament, when the tabernacle and sanctuary were finished, Moses was to sprinkle it with the blood of the sacrifice; "for almost all things were by the law purged with blood," Heb. ix. 22: and thereupon the "glory of God came from heaven, and filled the tabernacle," Exod. xl. 34. So also, after Christ had died for our sins, and we were sanctified through his blood, God comes to us, and makes his abode with us. Whom we love, with him we delight to be. God loveth mankind, therefore he delighteth to be with them, and to have his "habitation among them." "I the Lord dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones," Isai. lvii. 15. And this, now that God loves us, and is with us, ought to comfort us in all our calamities; in poverty, in sickness, in persecution, and in contempt. The greater *afflictions on earth*, the greater *joy and glory in heaven*, 2 Cor. iv. 17. And this is the reason why God makes many people sorrowful, that he may dwell in their hearts; for he delights no where more to dwell than in a poor and *contrite spirit*, Psalm xxxiv. 18, Isai. lxvi. 2. God fills us here with his grace, that he may fill us hereafter with his glory.

11. The love of God shineth also forth *out of the creatures*. When St. Paul would wish to his Ephesians the best thing, he wishes that they might "know the love of God, and be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height" of the same. As if he had said, the love of God is higher than heaven, deeper than the sea, broader than the earth,

longer than it is from *east* to *west*. Yea, heaven and earth are full of the love of God. For all that God hath created, be it visible or invisible, he hath created for this end, that his inexpressible goodness and love might therein be manifested, And therefore he hath given to man both inward and outward senses, that thereby he might perceive the love of God. For all that man can apprehend by his understanding, as well as what he apprehends with his outward senses, bears witness to the love of God. All that man hath, is a testimony of the love of God; nay, all creatures, visible and invisible, are as it were, so many messengers of God, denouncing unto us his love; and he speaketh to us through them, as if he did say, "Behold, heaven and earth, and all the creatures! all this I have created out of love to man." And whenever we perceive the pleasantness of the creatures, we perceive the goodness of God; so that both with inward and outward senses we may taste and see that the Lord is good. The sun speaks to us by its light and warmth, as if he did say, "Look upon me, I am the greatest and brightest among all visible creatures; he must be a great Lord that made me." But not only through the fair and glorious creatures God speaketh thus to us, but also through the most despicable worms, as if he did say, "Lo, to me thy creator, thou art beholden, that I made thee a man, and not a *worm*. That God, who could have made thee a *worm*, hath out of merey, made thee a *man*." Thus God speaks unto man through *all* the creatures; declares unto him his love; and invites, allures, leads, and draws us unto himself. This is the wisdom of God, which uttereth *her voice in the streets, which rejoiceth in the habitable part of the earth, and whose delights are with the sons of men*.

12. Nay, we are *inclosed* in the love of God, as we are all inclosed under heaven: *seeing that* in God we live, and move, and have our being, Acts xvii. 28. For, as a man can retire himself no where, but he will always have heaven round about him, above him, and beneath him,

and on every side ; so a man can go no where but the love of God follows after him, and calls him through all the creatures, saying, " Whither wilt thou go, my child ? Whither wilt thou flee from my presence ? ' If thou ascend up into heaven, I am there. If thou make thy bed in hell, I am there also. If thou take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall my hand lead thee, and my right hand shall hold thee.' Therefore come unto me, and acknowledge my love and grace, by which I meet thee in all creatures. Hast thou sinned ? Grace abounds with me. Hast thou left me ? My mercy hath not left thee, but is continually running after thee, hath been calling to thee, and as a wandering sheep, hath sought after thee. And if thou believest not those vast testimonies of all the creatures, believe yet the testimony of my dear Son. Thou canst no where else find rest for thy soul. Turn which way thou wilt, thou must and canst only rest in my love and grace." O blessed is that heart, which understandeth that heaven and earth are full of the love of God, and that he hath as many witnesses of his love, as he hath made creatures. But the greatest and highest witness of all, is the Son of God.

13. We know also the love of God, *from his own lovely being*. For from the *visions* of the prophets, and the Revelation of St. John, we can observe, that God is so lovely and beautiful, as to transcend infinitely all beauty and loveliness of the world.' He is the *beauty* of all beautiful things ; the *loveliness* of all lovely things ; the *life* of all the living. He is ALL. An ancient father hath said, " God is so lovely and beautiful, that if a man were in a fiery furnace, and did see the beauty and glory of him but for one moment, the greatest torment would be changed into the greatest joy ; as it happened unto St. Stephen, when he said, ' Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.' " God is so lovely and beautiful, that if a man did see him for a thousand years together, it would seem

unto him but one hour. For in beholding the loveliness and glory of God, all time is swallowed up into eternity ; so that the more any one sees God, the more he is willing to see of him ; the more one loves him, the more he will love him ; and the more one praises him, the more will he praise him. Holy souls can never be satiated with the love and praise of God. Hence, although the holy angels have seen God from the beginning of their creation, they have not yet seen him enough ; and though they have praised him from the beginning, they have not yet praised him enough. For God is infinite in his beauty, loveliness, and glory ; therefore no creature can love him enough. God is so amiable that the more one loves him, the more he desires to love him. He is so praise-worthy, that the end of his praises cannot be attained ; so lovely to be looked upon, that looking upon him never makes weary ; so comfortable to be heard, that he never can be heard enough. If one might taste but a little drop of the perfect love of God, all joys and pleasures of this world would be changed into bitterness. The saints have endured the greatest torments for the love of God, and have given up their lives and bodies ; and if one had a thousand bodies, he should hazard them all, only that he might keep the love of God ; as the Psalmist says, " Lord, thy loving-kindness is better than life ; my lips shall praise thee." God is so high, so noble, and so pure a good, that the more one knows him, the more he loves him. He is such a desirable sweetness, that the more one tastes of him, the sweeter he becomes ; and the more one loves him, the more his loveliness increaseth. Blessed is that soul which is filled with the love of God. It will feel such a sweetness and delight, as cannot be found among creatures.

14. If thou duly consider Christ crucified, thou wilt see nothing in him, but all pure, perfect, and unutterable love ; and he will shew thee his heart, and say, " Behold, in this heart there is no deceit, but the highest faithfulness and truth. Incline thine head

unto me, and rest upon my heart ; open thy mouth, and drink out of my wounds the sweetest love, which out of the heart of my Father springs up and flows through me.”

15. When thou shalt taste this love, thou wilt forget and despise for it, all the world, and be desirous of nothing else, but of this love, and wilt say to thy Lord, “ O Lord, give me nothing more than the sweetness of thy love ; nay, if thou wouldst give me the whole world, I desire it not : I desire nothing else but thee and thy love.”



CHAP. III.

Of the knowledge of God.

1. GOD is an eternal, perfect, infinite, substantial good, full of love and joy, and therefore he will be known by a living faith, in spirit and in truth. But this cannot be, except a man do really *taste* and feel in his heart, his goodness, sweetness, loving-kindness, and comfort.

2. Now, seeing man hath lost this excellent good by sin, and the devil hath got an habitation in, and possession of him ; who works in him all his own works ; man therefore, through faith of the operation of God, must be turned again from the *world* unto God, from the *devil* unto *Jesus Christ*, and satan with his works must be driven out, and utterly dispossessed. For as long as satan's works are in man, God's works are not in him, but his works are hindered, that the soul cannot *taste* that God is *good*. This is the reason, why there are so few that know God aright, seeing in the greatest part of men, the works of satan have the dominion. The most part stick to the world, to the creatures, and to themselves.

3. But they who will rightly know and feel the Lord, must be joined unto him, and be *one spirit* with him. And the more this is done, the more God manifests himself in the believing, loving soul; the more the heart is turned from the world unto God, the more God is united to the soul. For all love to the world must be turned out, if the love of God shall enter in. “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” And where God finds a soul empty of the world, he fills it with himself, and with all his goodness. The more the heart is empty of love to the world, the more God filleth it with his light and comfort. Therefore, an ancient father says, *In an empty, still, and quiet soul, it can be better felt, than expressed what God is.*

4. Thou canst not understand better that God is kind and loving, than when thou feelest his comfort. None can teach thee better that God is a being full of joy, than God himself, when he rejoices in thee. And so it is with all the other things of God. If he do not himself work all in thee, thou shalt never come to a living knowledge of him. For, *to know God, is impossible to man*, saith St. Austin. Therefore none shall ever be able to know what God is, unless God makes known and *manifests* himself. But when a heart feels the living word of God, then it knows and understands, that God is all; the true, perfect, eternal Good, and better than all that any heart can wish or think. For beyond this eternal, highest Good, no creature can think, or wish for any thing.

5. Upon this ground David says, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee?” This is a soul which hath tasted the perfect good, in which all love to the world is vanished away, and which hath no pleasure nor delight in earthly things, but in God alone. And this is the true, sensible, and experimental knowledge of God, which is *felt* and *tasted* in the heart. That we may know him the more, let us consider first, the *outward* and temporal benefits; then the *spiritual* and eternal ones, which God doth unto us.

6. God hath created nothing, either visible or invisible, which may not be serviceable to man. The *invisible* creatures, which are ministring unto us, are the holy *angels*, whose wisdom, strength, diligence, and watchfulness over us, is declared in many places of Scripture ; so that even many angels are to wait upon one man ; witness the history of the patriarch Jacob, and of the prophet Elisha. Because many evil spirits lie in wait for one man to destroy him ; therefore many holy watchmen are ordered by God for his defence. Seeing then God makes his own ministers and princes to defend and to watch over us, it is plain this is an exceeding great benefit ; as it is when a prince appoints his own ministers to conduct and defend one that is to travel through a wilderness, or a country of his enemies.

7 Look upon the *firmament*, and consider how God hath appointed it for thy service. Behold the wonderful course of the *sun* and *moon* ; why do they run so unwearied, day and night, and rest not one moment ? Are they not industrious servants of man ? For God hath no need of their service. He wants none of their operations, nor their light ; but man is in want thereof. The *sun* serves thee like an unwearied servant, which every morning rises early, and carries before thee the light, and puts thee in remembrance of the eternal light, which is Christ, and his Divine word. “ The night covers thee with her shadow, and teaches thee to abide under the shadow of the Most High,” Psal. xci. 1. The *moon* is like an unwearied hand-maid, fetching in water, and watering the earth. Nay, there is not so much as one little star which hath not received one or other blessing for the benefit of man.

8. Behold the *air* and the *winds*, how fair and clear make they the firmament, dispelling the clouds, driving them together as great water-tuns, and pouring them forth upon the earth. And it is very marvellous, that God bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the “ cloud is not rent under them,” Job xxvi. 8. But the

air must bear and hold them up ; the clouds being nothing else but a moist vapour, which is afterwards resolved into “small drops of water,” Job xxxvi. 27. Thunder, lightnings, and hail, serve us to acknowledge thereby the power of God, to pray to him, and to thank him when he hath preserved us in a terrible tempest.

9. Behold the *earth*, that great store-house of victuals, and treasury of God. It brings forth meat and drink, physie and elothing, houses and tents, and all the various metals, gold and silver. Each month produces its flowers, which present themselves to our sight, as if they would say, “Here we are, and bring our gifts, and present you with them, as good as we received them from our Creator.” Nay, behold a forest, which is the habitation of wild beasts ; God hath put them under man, and made him have dominion over them.

10. But if one would enumerate all the *temporal benefits* of God, he would find it impossible to number only them that are in one particular country. For there is not the least apple, or any other fruit, but it is a benefit of God. Should not we learn therefore to know our good and bountiful God ? If a great potentate did make subject unto thee his whole kingdom, and all his dominions, nobles, and strong, powerful men ; nay, all his subjects, and did command them to guard, defend, preserve, to clothe, cure, and feed thee, and to take care that thou shouldst want nothing at all ; wouldst thou not love him, and account him to be a loving, bountiful Lord ? How then oughtest thou to love the Lord thy God, who hath kept nothing back for himself, but appointed to thy service all that is in heaven, and from heaven, and all that is upon earth, or any where ? For he wants no creatures for himself, and hath excepted nothing from thy service, neither in all the hosts of holy angels, nor in any of his creatnres under the stars. If we will, they are ready to serve us ; nay, hell itself must serve us, by bringing upon us fear and terror, that we may not sin.

11. Let us now, from the outward creatures, ascend unto God our Creator, and consider his *Spiritual benefits*. Hath not the Holy Trinity, and each person in particular, bestowed upon man great grace and beneficence? The Father hath given us his own Son; "And shall he not with him, freely give us all things?" Hath not God the Son given us himself, and all that he is, and that he hath? "God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," Rom. v. 8. Is not the Holy Ghost within us, illuminating, purifying, teaching, comforting, beautifying, and adorning us with his gifts? "He beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," Rom. viii. 16.

12. God's mercy pours forth itself entirely upon us, and omits nothing whereby men could be moved to the love of God. As many benefits God bestows upon us, so many messengers he sends for us to come and to enjoy his love. If thou shouldst ask the Scriptures, the angels, all the prophets, and all the saints of God, nay, all creatures besides, from whence came you? they would answer, "We are the messengers of the mercy of God; we carry fire and flames, that the heart of man, all frozen, might be warmed and kindled again into the love of God." Yet all those numbers of flaming messengers are not able to warm the dead, cold and frozen heart. This is the greatest wonder the devil can effect, that he makes a human heart so cold, that warmth cannot be raised therein, by so many flames of the love of God.

13. Yet hearken, O man, and consider where thy Creator hath placed thee; namely, in the middle among so many benefits, where the glorious angels surround thee with their flaming love, and where there are so many creatures and messengers of God, all proclaiming unto thee his love. Wherein now hath God Almighty transgressed against thee? Whereby hath he deserved that thou shouldst not love and serve him? If it be too little what he hath done for thee; behold! he offers to do still more. He will create for thee a new heaven and a new

earth, and will build up a new, glorious, heavenly city ; which his glory will lighten ; nay, he will illuminate thee with his own light and glory.

14. And seeing God hath implanted love in all human hearts ; tell me, if thy love could be bought of thee, unto whom wouldst thou sell it rather than unto the Lord thy God ? But thinkest thou, God hath not bought of thee thy love dear enough, and hath not paid for it a price sufficient ? Hath not he given thee his dearest Son for it, and heaven and earth besides ? All thou expectest to get for thy love from the world, is nothing, in comparison to what God hath given thee, and what he further hath prepared for them that *love him*. The world giveth thee, perhaps, a handful of honour and riches, accompanied with many troubles ; and yet thou lovest it. Why dost thou not rather love God, the everlasting good ?

15. But if thy love will not be bought nor sold, but rather bestow itself freely upon what thou likest best, what can love find to be liked better than the supreme, eternal, and *most beautiful good* ? For every thing we love, is our beauty and ornament. And if thou lovest God, thou shalt make him thereby thy beauty, and thy ornament. And nothing can ever make thee more lovely, than the love of God in thy soul.

16. Lastly, it is but just and reasonable, that we should love him “who hath loved us first,” 1 John iv. 19. Take an account of all the benefits of God, and sum them up, so shalt thou find that all the creatures are full of the love of God. This love follows and surrounds thee every where, so that thou canst not hide thyself from it. Thou must enjoy it almost whether thou wilt or not, unless thou wouldst live no more. Now we know that all the brutes love them of whom they are loved. Wouldst thou be worse than a brute, hating thy benefactor, in whose love thou livest and movest, standest and walkest, sleepest and wakest ? But like as a thing that is to be kindled, must be held to the fire till it takes flame ; so also art thou to expose thy heart to the fire of the love of God,

till it be kindled and inflamed therein. So let the eternal high-priest, Jesus Christ, kindle the sacrifice of thine heart by the fire of his Holy Spirit. This holy fire of his love was burning towards us from eternity ; for he loved us before the foundation of the world. But afterwards it hath gloriously shewn forth itself in the Lord's incarnation and birth ; and chiefly in his holy sufferings and death ; whereby he hath bestowed upon us the highest love. And this fire of his flaming love to us will not be extinguished to all eternity. Unto this fire keep thou with thy cold heart, that thou mayest be kindled with, and united to, the love of Christ.

17. The love of God willeth that a loving soul do good unto all men, and be profitable both to foes and friends ; not for the sake of her own profit and honour, but only for the love of God, which causeth or moveth his omnipotence to descend and to draw nigh unto us. Which also out of its immense treasure, gives us all we have, to the end that we should give again out of love, what his love hath given us, out of the treasure of his omnipotence. Therefore, O man, have a care that thou appropriate nothing to thyself, but restore all to the omnipotence of God, who himself is all that thou hast, and all that thou art. No creature can ever give, or take away from thee, any thing ; it is only the omnipotence of God which does it. No creature also can comfort thee, but the love of God alone.

18. In this love, the loving soul sees the fulness of God's incomprehensible omnipotence, which comprehends heaven and earth, the sea and the dry land, but cannot be comprehended by any thing. For the whole world is, to the omnipotence of God, as a drop of a bucket, and as the small dust of the balance, Isa. xl. 15.

19. And out of the fulness of God's omnipotence, all powers of all the angels, men, and all the creatures come forth. Therein stands the firmament of heaven. From the same proceeds the motion of the sea, and the virtues of the earth. So that heaven and earth are full of God ;

full of Divine power and operation ; full of the Spirit of the Lord, Wisd. i. 7 The power of God, which is the might of his love, comprehends, incloses, and replenishes all things, but is comprehended by none.

20. But as great and high as God is in his omnipotence, so little and low is he made by his love. Behold our Lord Jesus Christ, the living Son, and powerful arm of God, by whom were all things created, and by whom all things consist, Col. i. 16, 17 How deeply is he brought down by his love, and how low hath he made himself unto all creatures !

21. Therefore as we cannot fathom, much less in words express, the omnipotence of God ; so we cannot reach with our thoughts the humility of Christ. Nevertheless, as deep as he has descended, so high has he also ascended up far above all heavens, Eph. iv. 10. And unto him be honour and praise to all eternity. Amen.

The aspirations of a loving soul to Omnipotent Love.

O God ! O Jesu ! O blessed Spirit !—Thou unchangeable mind !—Thou unextinguishable Light !—Thou Peace never to be disturbed !—Thou indivisible Unity !—Thou infallible Truth !—Thou ineffable Bounty !—Thou immeasurable Might !—Thou infinite Wisdom !—Thou incomprehensible Goodness !—Thou omnipotent Eternity !—Thou all-filling Simplicity !—Thou all-governing Beginning !—Thou all-moving Stability !—Thou Life of all the living !—Thou Intellect of all intellectual beings !—Thou Operation of all operating things !—Do thou enlighten me, do thou enliven me, and do thou sanctify me.

22. All those souls that love God, acknowledge him as the highest and most holy righteousness, which goes through all, and over all. This is in God, his most holy will ; in angels and men, holy obedience ; in all creatures, it is the order of nature, whereby God hath ordered all things in number, weight, and measure. All that is done against it is contrary to God and nature. All sins therefore in the world are committed against God's righteousness ; and the sinner offends thereby all

creatures ; even all the angels in heaven, and his own conscience, and sets them in a contrariety against himself. For when God is offended, all creatures are also offended. Likewise when God is reconciled, all creatures are reconciled also. Out of this ground, St. Paul says, that “all things are reconciled by Christ, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven :” and this by reason that God is reconciled through him.



CHAP IV

Of Prayer.

1. If we would, even in this life, have a foretaste of the great and glorious promises, it must be obtained by prayer, diligent searching, and continual knocking. For no man can have admission into the kingdom of God, unless he beg it earnestly of God. No man can be delivered from the power of sin and the devil, unless he offer up his prayers in the name of Christ. For though Christ has purchased for us all manner of good things ; yet without faith shall no man be partaker of them. And the properties of faith are, *to pray, to seek, and to knock*. By prayer only we are entitled to those “good and perfect gifts, which come down from above, from the Father of lights,” Jam. i. 17

O Eternal God and Father, teach me, I pray thee, by thy Holy Spirit, that as I have lost all by dying in Adam, so I may recover all by rising again in Christ. Grant that I may daily die unto myself, by continual mortification and repentance, and devote and give up myself entirely to thee : that so all the good things I have lost may be restored to me, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

2. The neglect of prayer is a violation of the com-

mandments of God and Christ, who commands us to "pray without ceasing," Luke xviii. 1, &c. not for his sake, for he well knows what things we stand in need of, (Matt. vi. 32;) but for our own, that we may have a portion of the treasures and kingdom of God. He therefore that lives in the neglect of prayer, is a breaker of the first and third commandment, and a despiser of God; bringing voluntary destruction upon himself. He that neglects prayer, is a despiser of the promises annexed to the performance of that duty. "Call upon me, and I will deliver thee. Ask, and ye shall receive." Thereby representing God as unmindful of his promises, or not able to fulfil them. By the neglect of prayer, our faith, which is the great foundation of holiness, does by degrees perish and decay. For prayer is the nourishment of faith.

3. Prayer is the life of faith, making it flourish and prosper like a tree by the river side; and faith is the root of all that is good in us. Faith is our power, our spiritual consolation, our strength against all our enemies and temptations. By prayer we "receive the Holy Spirit," Luke xi. 13, Zech. xii. 10; *i. e.* by prayer, we make room for, and (as it were) give leave to the Holy Spirit to exert his power in us; to come and "make his abode with us," John xiv. 23. By prayer, we obtain the true light and knowledge of God, so as perfectly to understand his will. Lastly, by this we abide in his kingdom, and are partakers of the blessings of heaven.

4. And yet, if I resolve not to pray till I know myself worthy, I shall never do it at all. And if I should not desire God to bestow upon me his grace and favour, till, by my own strength, I became just and holy, I should never obtain any thing. Alas! poor man, what canst thou bestow upon him? Or, what canst thou obtain by the workings of thy corrupt nature; which, however specious in thine own eyes, are of no value in the sight of God? Verily, nothing at all. As then thine own worthiness will here avail thee nothing, so thine unwor-

thiness shall do thee no harm ; for the Lord Jesus Christ is he that “forgiveth thine unrighteousness, and covereth all thy sin.” Therefore conclude with thyself, *that as a drop of water* is swallowed up in the sea, so are all thy transgressions in the boundless mercies of Jesus Christ.

O merciful and compassionate Father ! who teachest me in thy holy word, how I ought to live the life of thy Son Jesus Christ, and walk in the straight path, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left ; that I may neither fall through a vain presumption of my own piety, nor be cast into despair by the gloomy prospect of my guilt, and so die in my sins ; grant that I may seriously consider, that neither my good works can merit, nor my sins hinder, the grace of Christ my Redeemer ; that so I may continue firm and resolute amidst all the temptations of mine enemy, that I may neither be misled by the devil of presumption and spiritual pride that walketh at noon-day, nor be afraid of the destroying angel of despair that walketh in darkness ; but that, having conquered the weakness of my nature, I may continue steadfast in the faith, filled with spiritual joy and consolation. Let thy grace, blessed Lord Jesus, begin, improve, and perfect this good work in me ! Amen.

5. “Am I a God at hand, (saith the Lord,) and not a God afar off ?” Where then shall we find him ? Must we look for him only in consecrated temples ? Must we seek him in the ends of the earth ? Must we search for him in the regions of darkness, or upon the top of mount Tabor ? We are indeed frequently forced to the fatigue of long journies, to beg the protection of the princes of this world ; but God is every where. “He filleth heaven and earth,” and is nearer to all creatures, than they are to themselves. “He is above all, and through all, and in us all.” The utmost dimension of space, and even the boundless extent of eternity, appear to him but as a single point. As a man that walks at noon-day in an open field is environed with light, whether he discern it or not ; so are all creatures surrounded with the presence

of God, "in whom they live, and move, and have their being." And these are properly the waters upon which the Spirit of God moves, penetrating through all beings and all spirits. God is, therefore, always near to us, though many of us are not so to him; having no more perception of his presence, than a blind man has of the light which surrounds him. God never turns away himself from us; but we turn away from him. He therefore that hath faith, though with Jonah, he were in the depths of the sea, yet he would be in the kingdom of God. And he that hath it not, though he have the uppermost seat in the synagogue, and join in all the visible acts of communion; yet, in the sight of God, he is without, and has no part in the kingdom of God.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who art the very way, the true light, and only gate of heaven, I praise thee from my heart, that thou teachest me how I am in thee, and thou in me, in whatsoever place I am; how thou, my true and only High-priest, art with me, and deliverest me from my sins, whensoever I lift up my heart to thee. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." Teach me, O Lord, always to acknowledge this, and not to undervalue thy hidden treasure; but that I may in the true faith seek it, find it, taste it, and enjoy it for ever! Amen.

6. What we have observed of place, may be applied to time also, to which the eternal and unchangeable God is by no means confined, so as not to be always at liberty to hear our prayers. The princes of this world are not always to be spoken with, being engaged in the necessities or diversions of life. But our God cannot be thus separated from his creatures. At one view, he sees, and hears, and considers all things that are done upon the earth, and "understandeth our secret thoughts." God is confined to no time, but always ready to hear and to help us; yea, is continually *standing at the door and knocking, that we may open unto him*. So that he is always ready, but we are not. Whereas if we would constantly,

and without ceasing, wait for him, we should never fail of an answer to all our prayers.

7 Every Christian is anointed and baptized with the Holy Spirit, 1 John ii. 20; which Spirit, when it is not resisted nor grieved, but obeyed, is continually praying in the heart of man, raising and exalting the devout soul from earth to heaven. Whosoever will faithfully attend to the workings of the Holy Spirit, and not stifle his operations, will easily be convinced of the truth of this. He will every now and then perceive a devout sigh springing up from his heart, and breaking forth into these, or the like words, *Good God, holy Father, have mercy upon me!* As myrrh, frankincense, or other sweet perfumes, by being thrown upon burning coals, send forth a smoke and delicious fragrancy, which they would not do without the help of fire; so, whenever the fire of the Holy Spirit toucheth our hearts, there arises a perfume of affectionate sighs and prayers. And these are "the golden vials of the holy angels," Rev. v. 8. These are the holy incense with which they perfume even heaven itself.

8. But we complain that God does not give us what we ask for, and therefore think our prayers are not heard. I answer, 1, God, in hearing our prayers, regards more our happiness than our desires, and reserves to himself the liberty of bestowing the blessings we ask, either upon our bodies or our souls. Thus, perhaps, I ask of God some temporal blessings, which he seeing not to be fit for me, instead of them, gives me spiritual ones; by which means I not only receive what I prayed for, but so much more, as the good of the soul is to be preferred before that of the body. If it should please God to visit you with some bodily distemper, and you pray for health, doubt not but your prayers are heard; and you shall certainly enjoy, if not the health of your body, yet the health of your soul, which is far better; and every man in his senses must think so. For what advantage would it be to have a sound and healthful body, and a sinful, distem-

pered soul ! But when it is well with the soul, a man may say with David, "My flesh and my heart faileth ; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

9. Wherefore, if thou dost not receive the blessings thou prayest for, consider that it is not convenient for thee to enjoy them here, but that the answer of thy prayers is reserved for the other life, which is more noble and durable. There the Lord will bestow on thee a thousand-fold ; all that he seems to deny thee here. For as he cannot forget our prayers ; so he cannot choose but answer them graciously ; if not in this life, yet in that which is to come. As many prayers as thou offerest up here, so many blessings shalt thou receive hereafter. There "we shall reap, if we faint not." Then shall the Lord say to every soul, "Behold thy prayer which thou offeredst to me. See, here is what thou prayedst for, and a thousand times more than thou desiredst."

He would be a foolish husbandman, that should expect to reap as soon as he had sown ; and should cry out, that he had sown a great deal of seed, but could see no sign of harvest ! Thou fool ! wait till the season of harvest, and then thou shall receive the fruits of thy labour.

10. The first help to prayer is our only *Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ, the Son of God*, 1 John ii. 2. He is pleading our cause before God, when we are hardly able to express what we want ; who is therefore called the Word of the Father, because God, by him, has discovered his will to us ; as he is also called "the Mediator," because he solicits our cause before God. When Moses complained that he was of a slow speech, and a slow tongue, that so he might avoid carrying the commanded message to Pharaoh, God tells him, "Aaron thy brother can speak well, he shall be to thee instead of a mouth." So we also, when we shall pray, are dull, and slow of speech, and therefore must fly to Christ, our heavenly Aaron, who is to us instead of a mouth. Therefore Christ commands us to pray in his name, who is our eternal

High-priest, "having an everlasting priesthood," (Heb. vii. 24,) "interceding for us," (Rom. viii. 34,) "in whom we have boldness, and access with confidence by the faith of him," Eph. iii. 12.

11. The second help is the *Holy Spirit*. "I will pour out upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplication," Zech. xii. 10. This Spirit is given us as a testimony of the Divine grace, and our adoption. Hence St. John says, "By this we know that we are in God, because he hath given us of his Spirit." And St. Paul, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. For the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God." He was typified by the anointing of the priests under the law, in imitation of whom, God hath anointed us with the Spirit of Christ, that we should offer to him daily the calves of our lips.

12. The third help to strengthen us in prayer, are *the promises of God*. "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee. He shall call upon me, and I will hear him. Before they call, I will hear. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Ask, seek, knock. The Lord is rich in mercy, (Eph. ii. 4,) to all that call upon him."

13. The fourth help in prayer is, *the remembrance of those saints whose prayers God hath heard*. Look at the examples of the ancients, and be strengthened. And we must needs be so, when we reasonably call to mind examples of God's former providence and assistance. Upon this foundation, all the prophets of old built their prayers. When God was angry with Israel for the golden calf, and said to Moses, "Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and I may consume them;" then "Moses his chosen, stood before him in the gap, [putting God in mind of his former mercies,] saying, Lord, why

doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do against this people."

14. The fifth comfort in prayer is, *The tender love of God to mankind*, and his promises to help the afflicted. God does not, like proud, insolent men, despise the miseries of the distressed. For God judgeth not as corrupt men judge. He hath not eyes of flesh, "nor doth he see as man seeth." It generally happens among us, that the more need a man has of friends, the fewer he finds. On the other hand, God has a more tender regard for him that is destitute and afflicted. "The Lord is nigh to them that are of a contrite heart, and will save such as be of an humble spirit. That thou mayest take the matter into thine hand, the poor committeth himself unto thee, for thou art the helper of the friendless." And indeed such as they are the proper objects of Divine mercy. And to shew the certainty of these promises, the holy Psalmist, Ps. cxvi. 7, 8, 9, recites the several kinds of affliction to which God more particularly engageth his mercy:—"The Lord helpeth them to right that suffer wrong. The Lord feedeth the hungry. The Lord looseth men out of prison. The Lord giveth sight to the blind. The Lord helpeth them that are fallen. The Lord careth for the righteous. The Lord careth for the stranger. He defendeth the fatherless and widow."

15. What we have said upon this head is elegantly comprized in the prayer of Daniel, ch. ix. 4, &c. "O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty arm; [here is the putting God in mind of his former mercies;] hear, O God, the prayer of thy servant, and cause thy face to shine

upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. [This is pleading the name and merits of Jesus the Messiah.] O Lord, hear, O Lord, forgive, O Lord, hearken and do. [These are the groans of the Holy Spirit.] O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations; [in regard of his promise;] because for our sins, and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are round about us. [Here is a confession of sin, and an acknowledgment of their misery.] For we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies." [This is an acknowledgment of man's unworthiness, and God's mercy.]



CHAP. V

Of Patience.

1. TRUE Christian *patience* is that virtue by which, in all afflictions, that cannot with a safe conscience be avoided, we resign ourselves to the Divine will, and submit entirely to it, choosing rather to suffer the greatest evils, than murmur against God, or let go our dependence on him.

2. The first ground of this virtue is, *The counsel and will of God*; by which we are fore-ordained to sufferings and affliction. As God appointed his own Son for the sufferings of the cross, that thereby he might bring him to glory; so has he appointed to all the true members of Christ, every one his cross; without which they cannot be partakers with their Head. To each of these he has marked, measured, and as it were weighed out, his exact portion of affliction, which they cannot escape, much less shake off by impatience; but may make it easy by humble submission.

3. The *expectation of everlasting happiness* is another argument to support our patience. "For as the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, till he receive the early and the latter rain," comforting himself under all his toils with the hopes of a plentiful harvest; so should Christians learn to "possess their souls in patience," since the great harvest is at hand that shall repair all our losses, and give to every one of us the fruit of our labours. For as the husbandman does by no means reckon his seed lost, though it be for a while buried in the earth; so when Providence is pleased to take from us our lives, our friends, or estates, we must not look upon them as lost, but as sown in hope of the great day of harvest, where we shall reap to eternity, "if we faint not."

4. The third support of patience is, *The truth and faithfulness of God*. By the consideration of which "we ought to strengthen our hearts." For as we use to tie a tender tree to some other tree, that it may not be broken by the winds, and to cast anchor in a storm, to fix the ship, that it may not be driven by the tempest; so ought we to join and apply our faint and weak hearts to the firm pillar of God's Word, and fix the ship of our souls by the "anchor of hope," that it sink not. How many promises of Divine assistance have we in the holy Scriptures! And how many instances of strange deliverances have we daily before our eyes! And what variety of methods has God to deliver us! How many has he preserved in pestilence, and famine! How many hath he delivered from the peril of the sword! Yes, he can turn the hearts of our enemies to peace, or disappoint the designs of our most malicious adversary.

5. Fourthly, we may set before our eyes the examples of holy men, as Abel, Noah, Lot, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, David, Job, and Moses: the sufferings and trials of the apostles, and all the noble army of martyrs. Should you ask all these, By what way they entered heaven? They will all answer, *By the way of the cross*. Neither

did Christ himself enter any other way. So says St. Peter, "Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow his steps: who, when he was reviled reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." So great was the patience of our blessed Redeemer, that though the sun hid its head at the time of his passion; though the earth trembled, and the rocks rent, yet he, still hanging upon the cross, murmured not against his enemies, but prayed for them, begging that they might be saved by that blood which they so unjustly shed.

6. And if this be the lot of the children of God, that he correcteth every one whom he loveth and receiveth, it follows, that we must either suffer, or quit our title to be the sons of God. And if our heavenly Father spared not his own Son, though without sin, but chastised him with the rod of affliction; canst thou, who art but an adopted son, and polluted with innumerable sins, expect to escape it? Moreover, if God bear so patiently with our provocations, how much more patient ought we to be, when we are punished for our good? "Let us rather rejoice, (as St. Peter advises,) insomuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy." Forasmuch then as in this valley of tears no man can be perfectly free from afflictions, let us consider how we may find help and comfort in the hour of temptation.

7. The *first* comfort is, the consideration of the "Divine providence, which lays the burthen upon us. The Lord killeth, and the Lord maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up," 1 Sam. ii. 6. "Prosperity and adversity, life and death, poverty and riches, come of the Lord," Eccles. xi. 14. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away," Job i. 22. "Are not two sparrows sold for one farthing, and not one of them falleth to the ground without your heavenly Father," Matt. x. 22. "I form the light, and create darkness;

I make peace, and create evil," Isa. xlv. 7. "Happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty. For he maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole," Job v. 17, 18. It is therefore a foolish thing to be angry with those whom God makes the instruments of our correction. "Wherefore doth a living man complain?" Lam. iii. 39. "A man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord." For this is the design of God, that we should repent, and not murmur against him that afflicts us.

8. A second spring of comfort is, *the presence of God with us under the cross*. God has nowhere declared that he dwells with the jovial and the merry, but with the afflicted and sorrowful. "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." Isa. lvii. 15. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. When 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,"

9. The blessed apostle St. Paul, meditating on these things, and on the tender mercies and compassions of our heavenly Father to all afflicted sinners, breaks out into words full of joy and thanksgiving; "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those that are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ,—knowing that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation," 2 Cor. i. 3, &c.

10. In these words the holy apostle gives thanks to God, for that no adversity does befall us; but God supports us under it by his Divine comfort, which is generally more abundant than our sufferings. And this he confirms by several arguments.

11. The *first* is, because *God is the Father of mercies*, which is the most comfortable appellation that can be conceived. For he shews himself a Father, not only in name, but in sincerity and truth, to all afflicted souls. Do but consider what are the *properties* of a father, and that they all belong to God, our heavenly Father. It is the part of a father, 1, To love his children : 2, To take care of them : 3, To feed them : 4, To defend them : 5, To correct and instruct them : 6, To pity their infirmities : 7, To be tender to them : 8, To give them portions. To illustrate this yet more perfectly, St. Paul, by a most significant epithet, calls him, *the Father of mercies*, i. e. the eternal fountain of all that tenderness and affection that is diffused through the hearts of so many thousands of fathers. Hence it follows, that no cross can befall the children of God so great, as is the comfort that arises from the *Father of mercies*.

12. The *second* argument is contained in this expression, *the God of all comfort*. Because, he overflows with eternal and infinite comforts. For as God is the eternal and infinite good, and our crosses are finite and temporal, what can proceed from that eternal good, but a perpetual spring of comfort ; not only equal, but superior to our greatest affliction ?

13. The *third* argument is, *the example of St. Paul*, and all the saints. God (saith he) “ comforteth us in all our tribulation.” The holy martyrs are examples, which our heavenly Father hath set before our eyes, to teach us, 1, That the cross is the sanctuary and mystery of the true Christian : 2, His heavenly and spiritual glory : 3, His victory over the world and the devil : 4, His preparation for the kingdom of heaven : 5, That without the cross,

no man can enter into the kingdom of God : 6, That the cross is the image of Christ : 7, That it is an exalted and sublime mystery, in which lies hid the highest wisdom and providence of God. But as flesh and blood cannot comprehend this, so neither can it taste the heavenly manna, hidden in the word of God, but by the cross. Hence also it follows, that the Divine comforts are greater than any human sufferings.

14. The *fourth* is expressed in these words, "That we may be able to comfort those that are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." Now, how did God comfort the apostles? And how do they comfort us again? Certainly, by the gracious promises in his holy Word. Hence it is said, "Whatsoever things were written, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope," Rom. xv. 4. Now, who-soever reads the word of God as he ought, must needs observe how familiarly God vouchsafes to treat with us : what abundance of grace ; how many spiritual and eternal blessings he promises to bestow upon us. So that we must needs confess, that this one comfort is enough to outweigh all the sufferings of human life. Indeed, the word of God does so overflow with heavenly consolations, that the heart of man is too narrow to receive them. It is like the cruse of oil, which, by the blessing of Elisha, produced more oil than they had vessels to receive. Yea, it often happens, that one single word of Holy Scripture, can comfort a man more than the whole world, or the devil himself can distress him. "The river of God is full of water," saith David, Psal. lxxv. 9. So full, that no man can draw it dry. It is not without cause, that God calls himself, "The fountain of living waters," Jer. ii. 13. And so, Psal. xxxvi. 10, "With thee is the well of life, and in thy light shall we see light." And who can be so foolish as to think, that the fountain of sin and death doth more abound with afflictions, than the fountain of life doth with comforts?

15. The *fifth* ground of comfort is, that the apostle calls the cross of the faithful, the cross of Christ. And that, 1, because all the faithful are spiritual members of the Lord Jesus Christ. And as the head feels all the pains of every member of the body, by a sympathy arising from its union with them ; so Christ, who is our spiritual head, feels all the crosses and sufferings of every member. 2, Because Christ dwells in his faithful servants, and is vitally united to them ; therefore also he suffers in his members, sharing in all their sufferings and persecutions ; as he witnessed by a voice from heaven ; “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ?”

It now remains that we speak of the *means*, by which we may be partakers of these comforts.

16. The *first* is, *true repentance and confession of sin*. For without this, the soul is not capable of comfort ; according to that saying of Christ, “They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.” On the other hand, a person that is under a true sense of sin, has a real sight of the many miseries into which it has cast him, and therefore murmurs not against God, but abhors himself and his own iniquities, and confesses that God is just in all that he has brought upon him. And whoever confesses his sin, shall find a stream of consolation descending upon him from heaven.

17. The *second* means is *faith*, which hangs upon Jesus Christ, as the infant doth upon the mother’s breasts. It rests entirely on the paternal affection of the God of all consolation. It holds fast by Jesus Christ, as Jacob did by the angel, saying, “I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.” This is that which, through Christ Jesus, overcometh sin, death, the world, the devil, and all its enemies. “For all things are possible to him that believeth. And he that believeth shall see the glory of God,” John xi. 40.

18. The *third* means is *prayer* ; which is a Divine converse with God. For as it is a great ease to an afflicted soul to communicate its sorrows to a faithful

friend ; so are our hearts refreshed and comforted by pouring them out before God in prayer. “ When I called upon thee, thou heardest me, and renewedst my soul with much strength.” Prayer offered up in the name of Jesus Christ, is like Jacob’s ladder, on which the soul ascends from earth to heaven. And as soon as the prayer ascends, the angel of Divine consolation descends back with it. Thus it was in the agony of our blessed Lord, when he *prayed more earnestly*, lo ! an angel descended from heaven to strengthen him. And we may assure ourselves, that whensoever we pray according to his will, we shall be strengthened according to his promise.

19. The *fourth* means of obtaining Divine consolation, is the *praising God*. He that is daily employed in the praises of God, lives the life of an angel ; for they continually “ behold the face of their heavenly Father,” and sing his praises. This is the highest joy ; this is the bread of angels, Whence it appears, that praising and glorifying God must afford joy to a devout soul. Hence, says David, Psal. xxxiv. 1, 2, “ I will always give thanks unto the Lord. His praise shall ever be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord ; the humble shall hear thereof and be glad.” In which place the prophet joins the *praise of God* and spiritual *joy* together ; teaching us thereby, that the one is the fruit of the other.

20. The last certain means of receiving Divine consolation, is a diligent “ reading, hearing, and meditating on the Word of God.” For from the Word of God, as the true fountain of consolation, are to be drawn all arguments and grounds of comfort ; all joy and quiet of mind, under all kinds of crosses and afflictions. Hence also we learn how these comforts are to be obtained, viz. by true repentance, solid faith, ardent prayer, and continual praising God.

CHAP. VI.

Of Hope.

1. As *faith* is nothing but a steady assurance, by which the Christian depends perfectly and entirely on the favour and mercy of God, promised in Christ Jesus ; (Heb. xi. 1,) so *hope* is a constant and patient waiting for the accomplishment of that promise.

2. And this is that hope which *maketh not ashamed*; being, as well as faith, founded upon a firm, immovable basis. This is no other than God himself, who never faileth those that wait for him. And for the same reason, his peace, his joy, his rest, his glory, and his confidence, are eternal. On this foundation he stands fixt and secure, amidst all the crosses and calamities of life ; and though the rains descend, the floods come, and the boisterous winds blow upon him, he is fearless and unmoved, knowing that his "house is built upon a rock," Matt. vii. 25.

3. And as *hope* is built upon an immovable foundation, and the things of this world are fleeting and uncertain ; therefore its rest, its entire dependance is on God alone, despising the pleasures and glories of the world. "They that trust in the Lord shall be even as the Mount Sion ; that shall not be removed, but standeth fast for ever. As the hills stand about Jerusalem, even so standeth the Lord round about his people." On the other hand, they, whose hopes are founded on the riches, honours, or pleasures of this world, are perpetually exposed to fears, cares, and calamities ; lie at the mercy of every blast of unconstant fortune, by which they are tossed to and fro, and depend upon the world for every quiet moment they enjoy.

4. True hope is best learnt under the discipline of the cross. This discovers the inmost recesses of the soul,

and shews us whether the hope that is in us be true or false. By this touchstone, we often find, that our hopes have not been so much fixt upon God as upon the favours and blessings he bestows ; that we have built upon the sand, and idolized the creature. For so great is the blindness of our nature, that we often rest in the creatures, instead of raising our minds from them to the Creator, as he designed. For to this intent only, doth God bestow on man so many and great blessings ; that by the gifts he may be drawn to the Giver, and learn to know, love, fear, and trust in God alone. But, so great is our corruption ! We are not for serving God for nought ; not for his own sake, but for what he bestows.

5. Nay, we sometimes proceed so far as to trust in ourselves, and depend on our own power, strength, and abilities. Then it is that God in mere mercy interposes, and breaks us in pieces ; humbles, and confounds us, and so empties us of ourselves, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God. Which we cannot be, without being first emptied of that arrogance and self-conceit which stand in perfect opposition to the grace of God. Hence it appears that hope is a *militant virtue*, fighting against all that confidence in ourselves ; all that self-exaltation upon the score of our own gifts, merits, righteousness, prosperity, honours, and riches, in which the natural man réposes all his confidence. The business of hope is to oppose and conquer all these delusions of the devil, and to seek its rest in the sanctuary of God.

6. It follows, that *hope*, as well as faith and charity, has only God for its object. And whosoever aims at any other mark, or places his hope in any other being, is destitute of the hope of a Christian. So then, these three virtues, *faith*, *hope*, and *charity*, are in the highest sense *spiritual* ; admitting no earthly mixtures, but fixed entirely on God, who is their author and finisher ; their eternal and invisible basis. To this refers that passage of St. Paul, " Hope that is seen, is not hope ; for what a man sees, why does he yet hope for ? " Rom. viii. 24.

Whosoever, therefore, places his hope upon any thing that is visible, has not the invisible God for his foundation or support ; but rests upon a shadow. And when the visible world shall sink into nothing, by consequence his hope must perish.

7. Consider this, O man, and suffer thyself to be led into a firm and lasting peace. Eternity is unchangeable, ever constant, always the same ; but time is nothing but change and revolution. The brightest day declines, and sets in darkness. Weeks are swallowed up in months, and months in years ; and the most delicious springs, the most fruitful summers, languish and sink, by degrees, into desolate and uncomfortable winters. And not only this, but even all the elementary bodies, are in a state of change and uncertainty ; always shifting forms, and revolving from one appearance to another ; not to mention the continual, never-ceasing motion of the heavens : so that this world cannot be the region of rest. For whatsoever is subject to time, is continually passing, wearing, and vanishing. In a word, "All is vanity," Eccles. i. And we shall never rest but in eternity. And though all men, both good and bad, are eagerly engaged in the pursuit of peace and tranquillity, yet they, and they only, shall find it, who have learned to lose and resign themselves in Christ, the eternal rest of souls.

8. When affliction has taken every thing else from us, God alone cannot be taken from us. Yea, affliction is so far from separating us from God, that it rather brings us to God, and him to us. It is hope therefore that preserves us in calamities, that we are not consumed. But as the soul came naked out from God, so must she return thither again naked, and void of all love of the creatures. And when a man passes out of himself, and all the creatures, whither can he go, or where can he rest, but in the hands of his God, who comprehendeth and upholdeth the world, and all that is therein ? Isa. xl. 12. Whosoever therefore bids farewell to the world, and is void of all love of the creatures, having his heart fixed on no earthly

thing, but is perfectly free and at liberty ; resigning himself and all his concerns into the hands of God, and being content under every dispensation of providence, he may be truly said to rest in God. But as many as are entangled in the love of the creatures, being slaves to their own wills, and resting in them, they are doubtless in the high road to destruction ; and in the end shall lie down in sorrow.



CHAP. VII.

Comfort for those that are weak in faith, and strongly tempted.

1. BECAUSE this weakness of faith is a very grievous temptation, therefore has the Holy Spirit furnished us with strong consolations against it ; which ought deeply to be rooted in our minds, that we may apply them in the hour of temptation.

And *first*, God doth not despise, or reject our weak faith ; but cherishes, strengthens, and at last crowns it with a blessed conclusion. In this sense we are to understand those golden passages, “Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat,” Isa. xxv. 4. “Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not ; behold your God will come and save you,” Isa. xxxv. 3, 4. “He giveth power to the faint ; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength,” Isa. xl. 29, 31. “The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary,” Isa. l. 4. “I revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones,” Isa. lvii. 15, 16. “The Lord hath sent

me to preach good things to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, and to comfort all that mourn," Isa. lxi. 1.

2. Secondly, let us be assured, that whensoever, in our greatest infirmities, we can but think upon Jesus Christ, he will be with us. Thus it is said, "In all places where I record my name, (or, as it may be better read, where there is a remembrance of my name,) I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee," Exod. xx. 24. For we cannot so much as think upon God, without his special assistance. Moreover, being engrafted into Christ, as branches into the living vine, we truly live in him, and draw life and nourishment from him. Our life, and the strength of our faith, is hid *with Christ in God*. And "the Holy Spirit witnesseth the same in our hearts," by the joy, peace, and comfort, which he produceth there. As therefore in the Old Testament, there was no prophet, but heard God speaking in him; so under the gospel, there is no true Christian but hears Christ speaking in him, and tastes the unction of the Holy Spirit. And though thou hast not always so lively a perception of this in thy heart, "Yet greater is he that is in thee, than he that is in the world," 1 John iv. 4.

3. Thirdly, when we are weak in faith, let us look up unto Christ Jesus, our Redeemer, and merciful high-priest, who offered up himself for us on the cross, and is still praying that our faith may be strengthened; as he did for St. Peter, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not," Luke xxii. 32. To whom also he stretched out his Almighty hand, when he thought himself sinking into the sea. And he saith, "Sanctify them in thy truth: neither pray I for them alone, (viz. the apostles,) but for those who shall believe on my name through their word," John xvii. 11, 20. "For we have not an high-priest that cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but that was in all points tempted, like as we are, but without sin; who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us,"

4. Call then to mind that noble saying of Jeremiah, "The Lord will not cast off for ever ; but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men," Lam. iii. 32. Whence thou mayest learn, that though the Lord suffer thee to be afflicted for a season, yet he will not cast thee off for ever. But perhaps thou wilt say, *that the thoughts wherewith thou art troubled, are not from God, but from the devil.* Now though it cannot be denied, that they are suggested to us by the devil ; yet it is also true, that the devil can do nothing but by God's permission. In this case, look unto Jesus, whom our heavenly Father suffered to be tempted by the same adversary. The fiery darts, which the evil one cast at our blessed Saviour, came from himself, and not from God ; but it was God, that gave him permission to assault him as he did. And though our blessed Lord bore all this, yet did he still continue the dearly beloved Son of God ; nor could the tempter, with all his art and power, do him the least harm. Hear this, O afflicted soul, and believe that thou also shalt be safe and unhurt, among all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

5. But why does God suffer thee to be afflicted ? It is certain that the true, inward taste of the Word of God is accompanied with joy, peace, and comfort, vastly exceeding any comforts or enjoyments of this life. This is a foretaste of eternal life, arising from the true and living knowledge of Christ Jesus ; by which we discover the heart of God flowing with the most tender compassion ; inflamed with an ardent, sweet, and eternal love towards lost mankind. But so corrupt is human nature, that it is too apt to be exalted above measure, by the abundance of these Divine manifestations. This perverseness of soul, as it is directly contrary to the method of our salvation, so it is very hateful to God. This makes him withdraw his consolations from us, and hide himself for a time in thick darkness. Hence we learn, how

great a *good* there is in God ; that no true, solid, or constant peace can be found but in him. And this cannot be learnt any where but in this experimental *school of temptation*. And whosoever is unacquainted with this, knoweth not God and Christ, as they ought to be known.

6. And would to God, that for his glory, and our own advantage, we would readily submit to this visitation, which is designed for the trial of our faith, even as gold in the furnace is tried ! I doubt not but we should quickly reap the amazing benefits of such a purgation. The faithful soul that can hold out, and not faint under it, comes forth glorious, like gold out of the fire, cleansed from all its dross ; so that neither fire, nor water, nor the cross, nor death, nor even hell itself, can hurt it. Such a one will learn how to behave himself even afterwards with patience and humility ; to look up steadfastly unto God, the everlasting fountain and giver of all goodness ; and to embrace every dispensation of Providence, (whether sweet or bitter) as his only happiness ; and in every condition of soul and body, to rejoice in God alone.

7. Thou then, after the example of thy Saviour, be content to drink the wine mingled with gall, that thou mayest hereafter sit down with him in the kingdom of heaven. Learn to *bear his shame*, and thou shalt be a partaker of his glory. Learn to be conformed to Christ crucified, that thou mayest be conformed to Christ glorified.

And see that thou expect not deliverance from any other than God himself, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who "hath overcome the world and the devil." Fly unto Jesus Christ ; from him alone expect help, comfort, and peace. Support thyself under the conflict, with the comfortable promises of Jesus Christ, that in due time thou shalt conquer, if thou faint not. Thus he tells us, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And as all the host of Israel triumphed in the person of David, when he slew Goliath, and routed the Philistines ; so the victory of our Lord is the victory of all true believers. Hence we are told, "Now is come salvation and strength,

and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ. For the accuser of the brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony," Rev. xii. 11. Whenever, therefore, thou findest thyself assaulted by the fiery darts of the evil one, and thy soul afflicted with such suggestions as these, *thou art damned; thou art undone; thou art mine; God hath forsaken thee; it is in vain for thee to hope, believe, or pray any longer;* when thou findest thyself assaulted with these kinds of thoughts, take courage, and answer him boldly; "O thou enemy of mankind, what hast thou to do to condemn me? God hath not appointed thee to be my judge; but the faithful shall judge the world, and thee, at the last great day," 1 Cor. vi. 2.

8. And because such is the nature of this spirit of blasphemy, that a Christian is forced to *undergo* it against his will; hence let him comfort himself, when he is tempted, that God *will never lay it to his charge*, since it is not he that acts, but the devil; and may therefore be assured, that such thoughts should never be imputed to him for sin. For as people in a besieged town cannot hinder the enemy from throwing fire into the town, though they may do what they can to quench it, and hinder its spreading; or, as Hezekiah, (Isa. xxxvi. 12,) could not hinder the blasphemy of Rabshakeh: so we cannot hinder the devil from shooting his envenomed arrows at us. All that we have to do is, to take care, not to suffer our thoughts to vent themselves in blasphemous words; but, on the other hand, having set a guard upon our tongues, so to stifle their hellish sparks, that they break not out into a flame.

9. Nor is there so much as one instance to be produced of any man, that was forsaken of God under this conflict. But, on the other hand, it is certain, that he has always restored his servants, "whom he has thus chosen in the furnace of affliction," to the same and

higher degrees of grace than those from whence they thought they had fallen. This ought to be great matter of comfort to us, that when the hour of temptation is ended, the season of joy and redemption will quickly follow. Let no man therefore faint under tribulation, but bear the indignation of the Lord for a little while, till the Sun of Righteousness arise upon him again with healing and consolation on his wings. For "there springeth up a light for the righteous, and joyful gladness for such as are true of heart."



A PRAYER.

SPREAD out thy wings over me, O Lord, that I may flee under them from the face of the enemy that pursueth me. And break thou the heads of the great dragon, whose continual endeavour is to deceive and devour the souls which thou hast created. Therefore we cry unto thee, our God, deliver us from our daily adversary, who, whether we sleep or wake, eat or drink, or whatsoever else we do, presseth in upon us ; assaulting us day and night, and shooting his venomous arrows at thy servants ; sometimes openly, and sometimes privily, to slay our souls. Help me now, O Lord, the least and unworthiest of all thy servants ; yea, make haste, O my God, to deliver me. For behold how he watcheth continually against me, and never sleepeth, that he may pluck me from thy hands. O behold what infinite snares he hath pitched before my feet, and how he hath filled all my ways with sundry traps, to catch my soul ! But thou art the God in whom I have trusted, my rock, and my strength ; and under the shadow of thy wings I shall be safe, though even thousands should fall on one hand or the other. Unto thee my soul therefore fleeth, that I may be pre-

served in this evil day: O that thy grace and mercy may always prevent me, delivering me from the evil one, and all his temptations; saving me from what is past; lifting me up from that which is present, and guarding me from that which is to come; and unravelling all his snares before me, that, being escaped, I may give glory to thee for ever. Amen!

A PRAYER for true Rest and Tranquillity of Soul.

O LORD JESU CHRIST! thou *Prince of Peace!* thou most blessed rest of faithful souls! thou hast said, "Come unto me, all ye that travel, and are heavy laden, and ye shall find rest to your souls. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace."

Alas! how often have I sought for rest in the things of the world, but have not found it! For my soul, being immortal, cannot be satisfied with any thing but thee alone. O immortal God, thou, and thou alone, art the rest of our souls. The world, and all that is in it, is hastening to decay; they "all wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture, shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." How then shall my soul find rest in such fleeting things? Even as thou, my almighty Creator, couldst rest in no creature but in man; (for when thou hadst made him, thou didst rest from thy works;) so the soul of man can find no rest but in thee.

O God, my soul cannot be satisfied but in thee. "My soul hungereth and thirsteth after thee," and cannot rest till it possess thee. And thou hast invited us, saying, "Whosoever thirsteth, let him come unto me." O say unto me, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places," in the wounds of Jesus Christ.

O thou Rock of my salvation, in which my soul trusteth

and is at rest ! Thomas, thy beloved apostle, could not rest till he had thrust his hands into the place of the nails, and into thy wounded side. From these wounds flow fountains of salvation, streams of peace, and rivers of Divine love.

O Lord Jesu, how ardent is thy charity ! how pure, how free from deceit ! how perfect ! how spotless ! how great ! *how exalted ! how profound !* how sincere, how hearty is thy love ! Suffer, I beseech thee, my soul to rest in this thy love, in thy heart, which is burning with the purest flames of love. Here let my poor soul rest free from fear of danger or disquiet. In thee let all my senses rest, that I may hear thee sweetly speaking, O thou highest love ! Let my eyes behold thee, O thou celestial beauty ! Let my ears hear thee, thou most harmonious musick ! Let my mouth taste thee, thou incomparable sweetness ! Let the refreshing odours of life breathe upon me from thee, thou most noble flower of Paradise ! Let my arms hold thee fast in the embraces of love ! Let my heart rejoice in thee ! Let my will desire thee alone, thou only joy of my heart ! Let my understanding know thee alone, O Eternal Wisdom ! Let all my desires, all my affections rest in thee, O blessed Jesu, my Love, my Peace, and my Joy !

Take out of my heart every thing that is not thyself. Thou art my riches in poverty ; my praise and glory against reproaches ; my strength in infirmity, and my life in death. And how then shall I not rest in thee, who art my “ all in all ? ” My *Righteousness* against sin ; My *Wisdom* against folly ; *Redemption* from condemnation ; *Sanctification* from my uncleanness ? Come unto me, and let my soul rest in thee. Keep thy sabbath in me, that I may hear what thou wilt say in me ! that I may perceive thee living in me, O my life ! and be comforted, refreshed, and enlightened by thy presence, O thou, who art my comfort, my delight, my joy, and my everlasting Light !

Let me, I beseech thee, surrender my whole heart to thee, since thou hast given me all thine. Let me go out of myself, that I may enter into thee. Cleanse my heart, and empty it of the world, that thou mayest fill it with thy celestial gifts! O Jesu, the rest of my heart! the Sabbath of my soul! lead me into the rest of a blessed eternity, "where there are pleasures at thy right hand for evermore." Amen.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

THE THIRD BOOK.

THE INTRODUCTION.

1. AS there are different stages and degrees of age and maturity in the natural life ; so there are also in the spiritual. It has its first foundation in *sincere repentance*, by which a man sets himself heartily to amend his life. This is succeeded by a *greater illumination*, which is a kind of middle stage. Here, by contemplation, prayer, and bearing the cross, a man is daily improving in grace, and growing up to perfection. The last and most perfect state, is that which consists in a most *firm union*, which is founded in, and cemented by, *pure love*. This is that state which St. Paul calls, "The perfect man," and "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. iv. 13,

2. To explain these three different states, is the design of these three books ; so that the whole body of Christianity is explained in them, as far as is necessary. As for the fourth book, I thought fit to add it to the rest, to shew how harmoniously the holy Scripture, the person of Jesus Christ, the human nature, and the whole creation, conspire and agree together ; and how all things centre in the one eternal, and living Original, which is God.

3. The design of this third book is, to instruct us how *to seek and find the kingdom of heaven within us.*

4. To know Christ with our understanding, and not to love him, is nothing worth. On the other hand, *it is infinitely better to love Him, than to be able to dispute and discourse about him.* Let us learn therefore so to seek Christ with our understanding, that we may love him with the whole strength and power of our will. By this we may be assured that we know him truly, if our knowledge be productive of love. Otherwise, we may be said indeed to find and know him, but it will be to our condemnation. So our blessed Lord tells us, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," Matt. vii. 21. Moreover, there are two ways of obtaining wisdom and knowledge. The one consists in *reading* and *disputing*; the other in *prayer* and *charity*. The one makes us *learned*, the other *holy*: and between these there is a great difference. If thou take the first method, thou wilt never find thy internal treasure; if thou take the latter, thou canst not be disappointed.

5. And how glorious, how happy a thing is it, that our chief treasure, viz. *the kingdom of God*, is not to be sought without, but to be found within us; that we continually carry it about with us; and that neither men nor devils can rob us of it; and that this is not to be obtained by profound learning, skill in languages, or variety of books, but by a devout and humble spirit. Here then let us exercise our greatest care and diligence, and turn our thoughts inward to that hidden, celestial, and eternal Good; that Divine, that incomparable treasure. Why do we spend our time and pains in the pursuit of external comfort, whilst so great a treasure as the kingdom of God, with all its blessings, lies neglected within us? For in our heart and soul is the true school of the Holy Spirit; the true habitation of the Blessed Trinity; the very temple of God, where he desires to be worshipped in "Spirit and in truth."

6. For though God, by his universal presence, is in all things, (though not included in them, but after an incomprehensible manner filling heaven and earth,) yet in a particular and proper sense, he dwells in the soul of the enlightened Christian; taking up his seat and habitation there, as it were, in his own image and similitude. Here he operates in a way suitable to himself, answering and assisting every groan and sigh of the devout soul. For how is it possible he should deny any thing to him with whom and in whom he lives? There is nothing more pleasant to Divine love than to communicate itself to all that unfeignedly seek it.

7. But in order to this the soul must be at rest; which it can never be till it be disengaged from the world. This the heathens themselves were sensible of; and accordingly one of them tells us, "That the soul is incapable of wisdom, till it is composed, and at rest." There is a fine passage in St. Cyprian, to this purpose. "This," says he, "is the true rest and security of the soul, when a man, being delivered from the storms and tempests of the world, raises his heart and eyes unto God, and endeavours to be like him. By this he comes to understand, that all which the world calls beautiful and valuable, is truly hidden in his own soul; so that he neither expecteth nor desireth any thing from without. O celestial treasure, to be delivered from the chains and fetters of this world! O chief and boundless Good, not to be obtained by any labour of ours, nor by our interest with the great men of this world; not to be gained by our industry and study; but solely and entirely by the grace and favour of God! For as the light of the sun proceeds from itself—the day breaks from itself—the fountain springs from itself—the rain falls from itself, and waters the earth—so the Holy Spirit descends freely into that soul which has raised itself from the world unto God.

8. This self-reflection often gives us a view of the inward treasure of our souls, though but for a moment. And one such moment vastly exceeds all the happiness of

heaven and earth, and all the creatures. Hence St. Bernard truly observed, "That the soul which has once learned to descend into itself, to seek the face of God, and taste the sweetness of his presence in the inmost recesses of the heart, will think it more tolerable to suffer even the pains of hell for a season, than, after having tasted the experimental sweetness of this Divine exercise, to return again to the pleasures, or rather to the wearisome gratifications of the world and the flesh, arising from the insatiable cravings of the inferior appetites." In short, such a soul not only finds the highest happiness, by finding in itself the presence of God, but also the deepest misery, in being deprived of it. By this the true Christian is fully instructed, that by dying to the world, he lives in God; and, on the other hand, that the more he lives to the world, so much the more he dies unto God: that the soul that is dead to the world, truly lives unto God, and is his darling and joy; or, as the Song of Solomon expresses it, "better than the taste of wine, or the smell of all spices," Cant. iv. 10. On the other hand, the hearts of worldly men are but sour grapes, "as the grapes of Sodom, which are as gall, and their clusters bitter," Deut. xxxii. 32.

9. Now the soul that is dead to the world may be discovered by these tokens: "It resigns its own will to the will of God in all things; it suppresses self-love; it mortifies the desires of the flesh; it avoids worldly pleasures; it esteems itself the vilest and meanest of all; and is not apt to judge or censure its neighbour. Such an one refers all his injuries and wrongs to the God of Righteousness, to whom vengeance belongeth. He is not puffed up with the applauses of men, nor dejected with their revilings. In a word, he bears every thing with patience, without repining or complaining."

10. Behold, *in this mortification consists the true perfection of the Christian life.* Perfection is the denying of our own will; the contempt of the pleasures and profits of this life; the acknowledging our own vileness; con-

stant resignation to the will of God, and unwearied love for our neighbour. In a word, it is that love which thinks of nothing, seeks nothing, desires nothing, but God. I beg the Divine grace, both upon thee and me, that it may please him to begin, strengthen, and perfect his good work in us, to the praise and glory of God. Amen!



CHAP. I.

Of the treasure of the enlightened Christian.

1. THAT the hearts of the faithful are *the habitation of the ever-blessed Trinity*, is largely attested in Scripture. But, alas! who is there that understands, values, or inquires after this immense and hidden treasure? Wherefore, I thought it worth my while to explain at large the spiritual and heavenly dignity of the true Christian, and to instruct every one how to seek and find this sublime treasure in themselves. The foundation of this doctrine has been already laid down and demonstrated in the first book; proving how *the Word of God, through faith, does exert its power in the heart of man*. And in the second book it has been shewn how God discovers himself to the devout soul, as the highest love, goodness, beauty, holiness, and wisdom.

2. But as this high treasure cannot be perceived or understood, but in *the quiet of the soul*, in which the Holy Spirit teaches us inwardly by the meditation of the Word, in which he enlivens and enlightens us; in which "he searcheth all things, even the deep things of God;" we must first of all learn how to bring the soul to the quiet state of internal rest; how this hidden treasure, this pearl in the field of our hearts, is to be sought for by *introversion* into ourselves, or rather, into God. And

this is the inward sabbath of an heart *cleansed and purified by faith*, and enlightened by the Holy Ghost. From this treasure of the Spirit and kingdom of God, hidden in the faithful soul, sprang the wisdom of all the enlightened souls, patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, that have ever been since the foundation of the world. This pearl then is worth looking after; this field is worth tilling; and this *gift* of the Spirit *must be stirred up* in us, as a spark of fire which, by continual application of breath, is blown up into a bright flame.

3. But that thou mayest more fully and distinctly apprehend how the children of God are to be drawn from the exterior to the interior man, or the ground of the heart, that they may search, know, purify, and change it, and keep their spiritual eyes fixed upon God, and his kingdom in the inmost recesses of the soul; I shall first of all more generally in this chapter, and afterwards, more particularly, touch upon and explain the several heads of this doctrine. God, and the kingdom of God, are purely to be joined, sought for, and found in the ground of the heart; *i. e.* whatsoever the holy Scripture, and its true interpretation, discovers outwardly; all that ought to be really, spiritually, and truly felt and experienced in the ground of the soul.

4. But forasmuch as a general account of this will not be sufficient for the simple and unlearned, to bring them to this fundamental knowledge of themselves, and a true relish of the solid principles of theology; I shall descend to a more particular explication, and desire them to observe the *five** chief heads of the Catechism; and to

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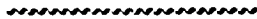
\* The *five* great catechetical *points*, as they regard both the *exterior* and the *interior* of a Christian man, are these following:

I. The baptism *by water*, and the baptism *by the Spirit*: or, the outward and visible *signs* of the covenant in baptism, and the inward spiritual grace of it, according to the *name* and *nature* of a Christian, expressed by one or the other of these.

II. The faith of *human assent*, and the faith of *Divine operation*; or, an historical and *opinionative* faith, and a living and *experimental* faith

remember that they are not only to be learned externally, but to be applied and experienced internally. So, for instance, if you should say, you believed that God delivered *his law* upon mount Sinai, written upon two tables of stone; that this law is the will of God, which every good man is obliged to obey; you do well to believe this. But this faith profiteth little, unless God himself be pleased to “write his law in your hearts,” (Jer. xxxi. 33,) and accomplish his will in you; but this cannot be done, unless, according to your baptismal obligation, *you dedicate your whole heart to God*, and offer up your own will to him, that his will may be fulfilled in you. The holy Psalmist, who well knew the dignity and necessity of this Divine operation, spends his whole 119th Psalm in earnest prayers to God, that he would vouchsafe to guide, direct, and govern him according to his law and testimony, that this sublime and heavenly work might not by any means be stopped or hindered in him.

5. So in like manner, if you believe “that Christ is our righteousners,” your life and blessedness, you certainly do well. “For other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we may be saved.” Yet remember withall, that this will avail but little, unless you have Christ within you; that is, unless you lay hold on him inwardly by faith, and make him,



III. The law of *external obedience*, and the law of *internal liberty*, which is the perfect law of love: or, the commandments written on tables of *stone*, and those written on tables of *flesh*, or of the heart, by the finger of God.

IV. Prayer of the *lips*, and prayer of the *Spirit*: or, the *body* of the sacrifice, and the *soul* of it.

V. The outward and visible *communion of the church*, and the inward and spiritual *union with Christ*: or, the *sensible* feeding upon the *sacramental elements*, and the *mystical* feeding upon the very *body and blood* of our Lord, and so drawing in by faith his very *life and Spirit*.

both as to his person and offices, your own. For if Christ be yours, it follows that all things which are God's are also yours ; and that if he had ten thousand worlds and kingdoms, full of righteousness and blessing, yet, by faith, you are entitled to them all ; for the righteousness of Christ is greater than all these. So in like manner, though the guilt of ten thousand worlds lay upon you, yet should it not be able to hurt you. This then is the treasure which you have within you ; as our Lord tells us, "The kingdom of God is within you ; that is, righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," Luke xvii. 21.

6. Moreover, if thou say, thou believest Christ is the *eternal word of the Father* ; that he is the true life and light of man ; thou dost well. But then thou must take care, that this word speak *in thee*, that this light shine in *thee*, that this life live in *thee*. For unless thou hast this inward treasure in thy soul, and be united to Christ by a living faith, every thing else shall avail thee nothing. Again, thou thinkest thyself obliged in duty and interest, "to pray to God, to give him thanks, and to praise his name ;" and in this thou judgest right. But take care with all, that Christ himself pray *within thee*, and the Holy Spirit groan *within thee*. For as he is the *Spirit of grace and supplication*, so in order to make thy prayers effectual, it is necessary, that he also pray in the closet of thy heart, *The temple of Spirit and truth*. And if this be not done, thy prayers are all but vain. Thou believest that in baptism, "Thou art made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." But remember, unless thou find in thyself the fruits of baptism ; such as newness of life, the unction of the Spirit, and Divine illumination, thy baptism shall avail thee nothing. So if thou believest, that in the external sacrament of the *Lord's supper*, thou receivest the sign of the true and real body and blood of Christ, thou dost well. But if thou dost not also eat it inwardly and spiritually, thou wilt not only

lose all the benefits of that institution, but dost also "eat and drink condemnation to thyself." Lastly, if thou sayest, that Christ was the true Lamb of God, offered up for us upon the cross, and that thou believest this, (John i. 20,) yet consider, what good can this faith do thee, unless the same Lamb of God become the daily food and nourishment of thy soul? From all this it appears, that thy treasure ought to be *within thee*, and that unless thou seek it in *thine heart*, thou shalt never find it.

7 The true way of attaining to this inward treasure is, *by a true and living faith*. The property of a true and living faith is, to cleave unto God with our whole heart; to put our whole trust in him; to depend on him; to dedicate and resign ourselves entirely to his mercy; to be united to God; and to enjoy him in the internal rest of the soul. True faith prefers nothing before God; it makes him the true object of all its desires; it places its infinite, and perfect good, in him alone, who is the true fountain of all good, whether in heaven or earth, in time or eternity; and all for Jesus Christ's sake, "who is the author and finisher of our faith."

8. Faith brings the soul into a state of heavenly rest, in which God delights to manifest himself. This was the occasion of those words of our Lord to Martha: "Martha, Martha, thou art troubled about many things; but one thing is needful. And Mary hath chosen that better part, which shall not be taken from her." But what is that better part, but only God in Jesus Christ? Now by this faith, which opens the heart, and makes it fit to receive the Spirit of God, is that better part chosen. By this faith it is, that the whole ever-blessed Trinity enters into the heart, and takes possession of it. Ephes. iii, 17. John xiv. 23. In this one article is contained the whole sum of Christian religion. This is the fountain and original of charity, and of all virtues. For faith produceth love; love produceth hope; and hope patience; patience worketh meekness; and meekness humility; humility produceth the fear of God: and the fear of God

teaches us to pray to him ; to crucify the flesh ; to deny ourselves ; to hate our own life ; and to despise the world. Upon which account St. John calls faith, “ The victory that overcometh the world.”

9. And this was that one thing which our Lord recommended to the rich young man in the gospel, when he asked him, saying, “ Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life ?” Luke xviii. 18. When he had first commanded him to keep the laws of God, he answered, “ All these have I kept from my youth up. Jesus hearing him, said, one thing lackest thou yet. Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow me, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven.” In which words, God directs him to choose that *one thing*, that better part by faith ; and by this forsaking himself and his worldly possessions, to return to God the true fountain of happiness. From this *one thing* proceeds the whole Christian life, and all the commandments, like a stream from its fountain ; not by compulsion or violence, but from love and freedom of spirit. “ For it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do, according to his good pleasure.” Neither will he own any thing in us as his, which himself has not wrought. So that there is no need of laws, no need of commands or prohibitions. For faith by its free motion and spirit, does every thing in us that is necessary to be done ; that is, it surrenders itself freely and entirely to God, and to the operations of his grace. And this is what the prophet Isaiah means, when he invites us, “ to come unto God, to buy wine and milk, without money, and without price,” chap. lv. 1.

10. All that God requires, in order to accomplish his work in us, is a humble and quiet spirit. And whenever he finds such an habitation, there he dwells with an high manifestation of his wisdom and power. The eternal wisdom of God cannot unite with the wisdom of man ; but when the human soul is entirely submitted unto God, then does God entirely rest in her. But if thou wilt

engage thy will, thy understanding, memory, and affections, in the service of thy own fleshly mind, then are they no longer proper instruments for the work of God. For in every union of two beings, it is supposed, that one must of necessity be active, and the other passive. But God is an eternally active mind, an essential, pure act; perpetually operating in thee, unless hindered by thee. This may be illustrated by the following similitude; as the eye cannot fix upon any object, nor receive any impressions from it, unless it be free from all other images; (for otherwise one will hinder the other) so the soul, with all her powers, understanding, will, memory, and appetite, can receive no impressions or influences from God, if it be not empty and disengaged from the world. The ear cannot receive or enjoy the sweetest musick, whilst it is employed and filled with other sounds; so neither can the soul receive the Divine sweetness, whilst it is clogged with created comforts. So then the more a soul withdraws from the world, the nearer it approaches unto God; the more it renounces the pleasures of the flesh, the nearer it comes to the participation of the Divine nature. A soul thus pure and unspotted is, "as the king's daughter, all glorious within," enriched with hidden treasure. But how can the soul be married to Christ, that is betrothed to the world? "I am come (saith our blessed Lord, Luke xii. 49,) to send fire upon the earth." This is the Divine fire of love; and oh! that it would so burn in us as to consume all our dross of worldly passions and affections, that nothing might live and move in us, but the pure and holy love of God! he adds, verse 51, "I am come not to send peace, but a sword." Would to God the sword of the Holy Spirit might so mortify and destroy all our carnal concupiscence, that God alone might move and operate in us!

## A PRAYER.

MY heart saith unto thee, O God, I seek thy face; yea, it is thy face, and the light thereof that I seek. Now then teach my heart, I beseech thee, my Lord God, how it may seek thee, and how it may find thee. Lord, if thou be not here, where shall I seek thee when thou art gone? Or, if thou be every where, why see I not thee here? Certainly, thou dwellest in unapproachable light. And how shall I approach thee then? Or, who shall lead me, or bring me thither, that I may see thee there?

For when I seek thee, my God, I seek a light above all lights, which no eye can comprehend; a light which shineth in the darkness of my nature, and is the light of life both to men and angels. O lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me, my Lord and my God, that I may live! Too late, indeed, have I sought thee, the light of my mind, the treasure of my soul, the life of my life, the spirit of my spirit; yet will I not give over seeking thee, till I find thee. Thou wast within me, and yet I was not with thee. These things held me far from thee, which could not be without thee. For I went all about seeking thee. Then came I again to myself, and entered into myself, and said to myself, what art thou? And what is the fountain of thy being? And what manner of treasure is that which is hidden in thee? Verily, I am nothing without thee, the light and life of the world, and the fountain of every being. Thou only art my fountain, and thou art the hidden treasure in my soul to be revealed. O reveal thyself unto my heart, that I may know thee to be my God and my Lord, through thy Son, Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, and who saith unto my soul, I am thy salvation. Amen!



## CHAP. II.

*That our whole inward treasure consists in faith.*

1. A CHRISTIAN ought to employ his greatest care and diligence, *in learning the true nature and use of faith.* It is faith that unites us to Christ, and admits us into all the felicities of the kingdom of God. Upon which account it is called *a substance*; “the substance of things hoped for,” Heb. xi. 1. For our whole Christian life consists in a living and operative faith; not in outside shews, nor painted images of virtue. It is *faith alone* that can deliver us from the bondage of corruption and misery, and bring us into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Whence at our first admission into the Christian church, by baptism, through which, as through a gate, we enter into the fold of Christ’s sheep, faith seems to be the first step, or ground-work, to the whole. “He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved,” Mark xvi. 16. And so St. Paul, “This is the word of faith which we preach, that if thou believe in thine heart, thou shalt be saved,” &c. Rom. x. 9, 10. But as the nature of faith may be better known by its fruits, I shall briefly speak to them in this chapter.

2. The first of these is a *spiritual release* from sin and death, from the devil, from hell, and the curse of the law. For by this faith we are entitled to Jesus Christ, and all the treasures of his grace; particularly, reconciliation with God; remission of sins; the Holy Spirit, and eternal life.

3. He that has this faith, cannot be hurt by sin, the world, death, the devil, or hell itself. He hath Christ dwelling in him, who is his righteousness against sin; his life against death; his help against the devil; his heaven against hell; his victory over the world; his blessing against the curses of wicked men; his happiness against all the miseries of this world: which our blessed

Lord has briefly summed up in this one sentence, "If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed," John viii. 36. Whence it appears, that Christ is the whole of faith, and the sum and completion of all our hopes, and all our blessedness. So that faith gives quietness to the soul; peace and liberty to the conscience; freeing it from all fear and terrors, and making it rest joyfully and quietly upon God.

4. Secondly. By faith the soul is united to Christ, as a bride to her bridegroom: "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, Hos. ii. 13. The consequence of this espousal is, a communication of all good things; yea, and of the cross itself: so that all Christ has belongs to the soul; and all that the soul has, belongs to Christ. As Christ then has all celestial and eternal gifts, such as "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, blessedness, and eternal life," 1 Cor. i. 30; yea, is himself all these; the soul is entitled to them all. And on the other hand, as our soul has nothing but sin, uncleanness, calamity, misery, sin, and death, Christ has taken on him all these; bestowing his good things upon us, and taking our sins and miseries upon himself.

5. But as the good things of Christ are eternal and omnipotent; so they root out and destroy all that sin, death, and misery that is in us. For the eternal and invincible righteousness of Christ is so much superior to the power of sin in us, that it utterly destroys and breaks it in pieces; and by this means the soul is delivered from its own sins, and clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And surely this is a blessed exchange, when a man changes sin for righteousness, death for life, a curse for a blessing, and eternal misery for eternal blessedness. So then "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;" seeing that their sins are swallowed up in his righteousness. For if, as St. Paul says, "Death is swallowed up in victory," it will follow, that sin also must be swallowed up.

6. Hence also arises, thirdly, *the glory of faith*, which is two-fold. The one *present*, but *spiritual* and *invisible*; the other *future*, visible and glorious. Now faith makes us partakers of both these kinds of glory. So then as the majesty of Christ consists in a *kingdom* and *high-priesthood*; so also he makes us "kings and priests unto God." An honour, which St. Peter speaking of, can hardly find words to express. "But ye," says he, "are a-chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." Moreover, the glory of Christ's kingdom consists in this, that it is *eternal*, and all the blessings and benefits of it are eternal; eternal grace, everlasting righteousness, unfading consolation, endless life, joy, peace, and blessedness, that endureth for evermore. What good could we expect from a temporal prince? All the world itself, and all its blessings decay and perish; and there is no trust in princes, nor in any child of man. But Christ is our *eternal King*; and all his favours and blessings endure to eternity. The *spiritual kingdom* then of a Christian consists in this, that by faith he is spiritually exalted above all things; that nothing can hurt or hinder him, in the great affair of his salvation. Yea, all things are subject unto him, and work together for his good: as we are told, "All things work together for good, to them that love God," Rom. viii. 28: even life, and death; the world, hell, and the devil himself.

7. Hence it appears how glorious, how *illustrious*, how extensive this *spiritual dominion* of a Christian is; that all things, whether good or evil, are forced to contribute to his spiritual good, so soon as he is possessed of Christ, and Christ of him. For the whole treasure and hope of a Christian is, Christ apprehended by faith. O the precious liberty of a Christian! O the mighty power of the inward man! For as the liberty, righteousness, and blessedness of a Christian; as also his slavery, sin, and misery, are not external things; so it follows, that no external thing, nothing but the mere grace and power of God can justify, sanctify, or glorify a man. What

though the body enjoy liberty, health, and strength, and eat and drink well, will the soul be one jot the better for this? If the body be imprisoned, sick, weak, hungry, and thirsty, will the soul be the worse? Not at all. In a word, nothing that is external can make the soul either happy or miserable, whilst she preserves her inward treasure, and is true to her spiritual liberty.

8. So also in respect of her *spiritual priesthood*, the soul is out of danger from any thing that may happen from without. For its sacrifices, prayers, and devotions are spiritually performed by faith, without any necessary dependence upon external things, as time, place, garments, or temples. Again, the soul is no way the better for all the pomp of ceremonial circumstances. These are not efficacious enough to lead the soul into the paths of righteousness and liberty. For all these an hypocrite may do, without any benefit to his soul. For there is nothing either in heaven or earth, in which the soul can live; nothing that can bestow upon her evangelical righteousness and liberty; nothing in which she can rest with comfort, but Christ alone, on whom by faith she comfortably and joyfully depends. This is what our Lord himself tells us, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," John xiv. 6. And "Come unto me, and ye shall find rest unto your souls," Matt. xi. 28. So that the soul that is by faith united unto Christ, standeth in need of nothing: for in Christ she possesseth all things, food, joy, peace, light, knowledge, righteousness, truth, wisdom, liberty, comfort, blessedness, life, and what not? So that Christ is "all in all," as the apostle tells us, Col. iii. 11. And whatsoever external rites and ceremonies we may use for the sake of *peace*, *order*, and *uniformity*, we may be satisfied, that, "to the pure all things are pure," Tit. i. 15. And our Lord tells us, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you," John xv. 3. So that nothing can pollute and defile the soul, but infidelity, and the fruits and consequences of it.

9. The fourth property of faith is, *the renovation of the whole man*. It kindles in him the fire of Divine love ; furnishes him with all Christian graces, and works of mercy. Not as if it *merited* any thing from God, but only as it renders the soul acceptable to him. "Offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay thy vows to the Most High," Psal. l. 14. So that faith immediately begins a new life in man, and quickens the word of God within him. For all the Holy Scripture is contained in faith. As therefore the word of God is holy, true, just, living, spiritual, free, and full of all good ; so also doth it make all those who receive it in faith, holy, just, true, the "children of God, thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

10. Though the true and saving faith triumphs over the world and the devil ; yet is it of such a nature, that in pure love, it makes itself servant unto all ; submitting itself to all for God's sake. It considers seriously with itself, that Jesus Christ and all the heavenly graces are freely given us by God ; so that we stand in need of no worldly thing in the concern of salvation ; and with all, "that nothing can separate us from the love of God," Rom. viii. 38 ; and that nothing in this world can hurt us. When a man, I say, endued with a lively faith, considers all this, he cannot but acknowledge, that in mere gratitude to God, he is obliged to do for his neighbour, as Christ hath done for him. As if he should say, "All my gifts and graces, my wisdom, my riches, my comfort, are all my neighbour's, as freely as Jesus Christ, by his infinite mercy, has bestowed them upon me."

11. The fifth property of faith is, *that it conquers and triumphs over every cross, making it supportable to human nature*. For we find more comforts in Christ by faith, than we leave in forsaking the world for his sake ; more honour than the united malice of the world, can take from us. In him we meet with so much love, that we shall not regard the hatred and enmities of men ; so much blessing, that all the curses in the world cannot in-

jure us ; so much joy that all the world cannot make us sad. In a word, if it were possible for us to be slain and murdered ten thousand times over, yet Christ remains, and will for ever continue to be our Lord, and our everlasting life ; infinitely to be preferred before this short and perishing life.

12. If a man could with his bodily eyes take a view of such a soul as this, he would see the most beautiful creature in the world, shining forth in all the transcendent beauties of holiness. Such a soul is united to God, and by consequence a partaker of his glory. It desires nothing either in time or eternity but God alone ; seeking nothing for its own sake, either spiritually or naturally. On the other hand, could we but see with our bodily eyes a soul sunk in the love of itself and the creatures ; polluted all over with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, and all its corrupt thoughts and imaginations externally figured by visible characters, neither earth nor hell could furnish a more dreadful monster ; a more diabolical spectacle than this. But in the last great day, when the hearts and consciences of all men shall be laid open, and the inward eye opened, so that every one shall have a full view of himself, then shall the impure soul see his secret abominations, and find in himself an eternal spring of sorrow, misery, and torment.

13. On the other hand, the pure and Divine soul shall for ever contemplate in itself the presence and kingdom of God, whom she shall see as he is ; and by virtue of her union with him, enjoy him as her own for ever. And he that rightly understands this union of the soul with God, shall experimentally understand that expression of St. Paul, "That neither height nor depth can separate us from the love of God," Rom. viii. 39. For if it were possible, that such a soul could be thrust down into the regions of the damned, yet could it not be excluded from the presence and kingdom of God, to which it is most intimately united. On the contrary, should a damned spirit be admitted into the regions of the blessed, yet could he not be exempt from the torments of hell, which he continually carries about him.

14. The dignity of a believing soul consists in this, that it is the habitation and temple of God, in which he takes more delight than in the whole compass of heaven and earth. So the faithful soul has more of the Divine presence than all the temples made with hands; yea, than all the creatures in this world. God communicates his whole treasures of love to such a soul. He rejoices and delights in her; yea, he created all other beings only in order to make her happy and glorious. Wherefore, as God shews so much love, and takes so much pleasure in the soul of man, he may be more properly said to dwell in it, than in any material buildings; any temples made with hands. Here he displays all the wonders of his providence and love; yea, and for this very end has he created it with nobler faculties and powers than the rest of the creatures here below; that it may be capable of these exalted communications of the Divine grace. And if God should bestow upon the soul any thing less than himself, she would reject and despise it. As the soul is the spouse of the Son of God, it follows, that it is beloved by God above other creatures. It was this love that brought the blessed Jesus down from heaven to be united to the beloved soul, and to bring her back to her great original.

15. Now as God has discovered this transcendent love to the soul, it naturally follows, that the soul ought to rest in God alone; and not to prostitute its love to any creature, at which she knows God will be offended. So great is the loveliness, so great is the beauty that is in God, that if the soul could take never so remote, never so obscure a view of it, she would not be separated from him to gain the whole world. The soul then that is so beloved of God, should be ashamed to fix its love upon any creature. She ought to be heartily ashamed and afflicted, if she has not preferred God before all creatures; proposed his glory in all things; and loved him above all things. This is the true *contrition* which is acceptable to God.

## CHAP. III.

*Of true and living Faith.*

1. THE property of true faith is, *to cleanse the heart*. But from what? From the world, and all earthly, vain, perishing desires; in a word, from all things in which corrupt nature delights, whether riches, honours, or pleasures. For faith fixes its eye upon those things only, that are invisible and eternal. And when all impediments are removed, an union quickly follows. For God, wheresoever he finds a soul empty of the world, there he delights to operate, and manifest himself, as the spring of life and comfort. The usual speech of Christ, in the gospel, to the sick whom he cured, was, “Thy faith hath made thee whole.” His meaning was not, that this was the effect of the mere act of faith; but that faith had so cleansed, purified, and humbled the soul, that it was now fit for the more exalted manifestations of the Divine power and presenee.

2. When God has once taken possession of such an habitation, he quickly operates in it all the wonders of his grace; in which he rejoices, as once he did in our Lord Jesus Christ. Because in him he accomplished his own will, without any let or impediment. For no work or action can please him, which does not begin and end in him. And as God delights thus to operate in man, so he continually waits to see when we are fit to receive him; being more ready to give, than we are either to ask or to receive. Take heed, therefore, that thou neglect not the present opportunity. When the day of grace is over, we shall all receive according to our works, and according to the principle of love that ruled in our hearts, whether it be good or bad, to God or the creature. And this is so certain, that should all the



saints of God intercede with tears of blood for any one man, it would be all lost labour. For that which has engrossed thy affections here, shall be thy portion to eternity.

3. And as true faith doth purify the heart from worldly love, so does it also from inordinate affections; as anger and impatience; planting meekness and patience in their stead. For God worketh nothing in the souls of the faithful, but that which is agreeable to his own nature. Now what is he but merc love, very patience, and meekness itself, as he has manifested himself in our blessed Lord? As then the love of God overflows towards all men, having mercy upon all; so it produces the same love in every Christian soul; a love free and universal, making no difference either of friend or foe; but being equally united to God, and to the whole race of mankind. Moreover this love rejoices in all the good things that God bestows upon man, and is pleased with the variety of gifts, which are bestowed upon the several members of Christ's body; to each of which he pays a proper and proportionable respect. For as there is a mutual agreement between the several members of the natural body, in which the more ignoble parts, as the hands and feet, serve the more noble, as the head, the eyes, and the heart; so ought there to be the same agreement between the members of the mystical body of Christ.

4. Wherefore, if we meet with any member of Christ, who is more worthy and honourable than ourselves, we ought proportionably to esteem him more than ourselves. And the greater portion of Divine grace and favour he has received from Jesus Christ, our supreme head, the greater respect and love we ought to pay to him. For this good is common to all, as being derived from our universal head, Christ Jesus. Charity makes all our neighbour's blessings our own. And whatsoever we love in God, and for his sake, considered as an universal good,

is properly ours. And as by charity, all our neighbour's blessings are made our own; so how many, or how great favours soever God bestows upon a good man, they are no less mine than his; if I love them as the gifts of God, and for his sake. Yea, if any man receive the blessings of God with fear and humility, not with pride and arrogance; and if I can behold them in him, and love them for God's sake, and as proceeding from him, they are as properly mine as his.

5. This is the way, by which we are *spiritually* rich in God, and are made partakers of all the blessings of heaven and earth; yea, and of all the happiness that is laid up in store for the children of God, by the mediation of our spiritual head, Christ Jesus. So deep, so close is this union, that I am actually and properly possessed of all the blessings, which our head, Christ Jesus, has diffused through all his members, whether men or angels, in heaven or earth.

6. The soul of man, flowing out into worldly things, and cleaving to the creatures, is like a wandering sheep, whom the great Shepherd of souls tries, by all the methods of his mercy and wisdom, to bring back to the fold. Thus the royal Psalmist concludes his beautiful cixth Psalm, "I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost; O seek thy servant." Which expression does, to the spiritual man, discover the whole work of *illumination* and Divine wisdom. For as the soul of man is placed between time and eternity, so soon as ever she turns herself to time, she forgets eternity, and retires every day further and further from Divine things. But if she turn herself to eternity, then she forgets the creatures, recovers her liberty, draws nearer to God, and is thoroughly drawn unto him. For there is nothing dearer to God than a soul abstracted from the creatures, and resigned to him. Then, and not till then, the soul enjoys true peace; tastes the food of life; and feels in herself the true fruits of that Divine unc-

tion, that spiritual chrism, which denominates us truly Christians.

7 And if these things are so, who can doubt, that it is the duty of every true Christian, if not oftner, yet once a day at least, to taste this Divine food of the soul, which is God himself; that thereby he may be refreshed with true peace, and replenished with the fulness of Divine grace? Wouldest thou, O man, but thoroughly consider this, I doubt not but thou wouldest be much more in love with heaven, than with earth! Wert thou but thus disposed, though the burden of a whole kingdom lay upon thy shoulders, as it did upon David's, yet should it be no hindrance to thy pious exercises. For the creatures are not in themselves hurtful; but are only so to him; whose soul is in captivity to them; or as it is said, "Who setteth his heart upon them," Psal. lxii. 10, which ought to be entirely consecrated, dedicated, and devoted to God. Upon this foundation stood the royal Psalmist, when he cried out, "Lord, whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee," Psal. lxxiii. 25. For so great is the sweetness of Divine love, that the soul which has once tasted it, does immediately despise sufferings; and looks upon the love or hatred of this world, with indifference and contempt. They that are admitted to these hidden joys, have perpetual peace in God with all the creatures, whether friends or enemies. To these the yoke of Christ is sweet; for they are in Christ, and Christ in them; and his presence makes their burden light, whilst he bears it in them, and they in him. This is what St. Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me."

8. From what has been said, it appears, how profitable an exercise it is for every Christian, *once a day at least, to retire into his own heart, into God, and into Christ; to draw thence true peace of soul; and to learn there the true use of temporal blessings.* Our misery requires this of us, which in such a soul God will not suffer to last

long ; and so does our daily cross, which Christ, by this means, makes light and easy to us. Not to say, that thou, O Christian, art continually admonished by the Spirit of God within thee, to sigh and pray for the love of God, and of God alone ; and to grieve within thyself, when any worldly impediments draw thee from it. This, this is the true calling of the Holy Ghost ; this is the *well-beloved, knocking at the door of thy heart*, for a living testimony, that our heart ought to be the *bed-chamber* of our heavenly bridegroom.



#### CHAP. IV.

##### *Of the love of God.*

1. HE that desires to become the temple and habitation of God, must first divest himself of *the love of the world*, and then exercise himself in the *love of God*. For no man can receive the one, without quitting the other ; or be filled with the Spirit of God, before he be evacuated of the spirit of the world. Now as the loadstone, by a touch, draweth iron to it ; so God first touches, with his Divine love, the soul which he draws and unites to himself.

2. And this Divine love is so extensive, that, like the sun, it shines upon all ; yea, it shines more universally than the sun itself ; displaying itself equally upon all men. So that it is not the fault of God, (who is *pure light* and *pure love*) but of men, if they do not perceive or enjoy it. For when the Spirit of God approaches men with the highest love, and most ardent affection, he generally finds their hearts full of the love of the world, and all uncleanness ; being crowded with covetousness, pride, lust, hatred, and evil thoughts ; which force him to retire, and withdraw his graces from them. For the soul

is indeed touched and drawn down by the magnetism of earth ; or rather of hell. Whence it appears, that seeing God is ready, like the sun in the firmament, to communicate the rays of his light freely to every soul, it is not his fault, but theirs, if they are not enlightened by it. Seeing therefore we know these things, let us keep ourselves from the love of the world, and turn to the living God ; watching diligently unto prayer. Let us labour earnestly for the love of God in Christ, by which we are united to him. Let us knock at the door of his holy wounds, and from thence expect salvation. And if we do this, no doubt God will open to us, and give us admission into that high state of love, in which we shall be refreshed with all the treasures of God. And who can doubt, but that the God of mercy, the fountain of happiness, will fill the heart of man with more substantial joys, than any which this perishing world can afford.

3. And whosoever loveth God shall be loved by all the saints and holy angels. If I love God, I am thereby entitled to the love of all the inhabitants of the city of God ; a love that far surpasses the highest degree of affection. And as all the heavenly host have the highest love for God, and rejoice more in his honour than in their own happiness, (if we could consider them abstracted from each other,) so is their joy proportionably great, at every step of our conversion ; and their happiness enhanced by every advance we make in the love of God. Now one sign of Divine love is this, *that we use the creatures with fear and humility*. For he that is endued with a habit of Divine love, whether he eat or drink, or whatever he doth else, like a dutiful son, he doth every thing with reverence and fear ; having his eye constantly fixed upon the glory of his heavenly Father. From this fear of God flow the many deep sighs and passionate groans of the devout soul ; which by gentle degrees mount him from earth to heaven. For he discovers so many corruptions in himself, obstructing the light, and quenching the flames of the Holy Spirit

that he is forced to cry out, *When shall I be redeemed from the earth, to follow my beloved whithersoever he goeth!*

4. And truly these sighs and groans must be frequently mounting up to the mercy seat of God; that by the assistance of the Divine grace, we may bear up, and not faint under the manifold miseries of this wretched state. This did all the holy men of old time, when they laboured under the sense of spiritual infirmities. They raised their broken spirits unto God, by devout sighs, penitential tears, and humble acknowledgments of their misery; which turned back into their own bosoms, with a large increase of grace and spiritual strength. He that seeks him alone, in the integrity of his heart, shall surely find him, and be admitted to all the blessings and happiness that are to be found in the presence of God. He that seeks God in truth, finds God, and all things that are God's. And whosoever seeks for nothing else, and looks for nothing else but God only, unto him doth God manifest himself, and confer upon him all that is laid up in him; that the same may, in a sense, as properly be said to belong to man as to God.

5. By this means the essence, the flame, the root, and spring of love are preserved pure and unshaken. And by love we rest in God, and rejoice in all his dispensations. So that if it should please God to sink such a man to the lowest hell, he would not open his mouth, but rest satisfied with the will of God, in which only he finds happiness. In this love, true peace is to be found, when in God, and for God's sake, we love every thing; crosses and tribulations not excepted. True love unites us to God, and to all the world. And the happiness of such a state is inexpressibly great.

6. "If any man love me," saith Christ, "he will keep my sayings," John xiv. 23. Not only those which he hears in the outward and visible temple, but those also which are heard in the true temple of the soul; without which, the outward hearing availeth little. And this in-

ward voice of God thou canst not hear, unless the *love of God be in thee*.

7 "The most certain token of the love of God," saith St. Gregory the Great, "is, that we receive all the adversities that God shall think fit to lay upon us, without any impatience in thought, word, or actions. If we do this, without doubt we truly love God; if not, it is certain that we love him not sincerely, but prefer ourselves and our own things before him; though nothing can be properly said to be a man's own, but sin; every thing else is God's." Take heed therefore that thou prefer not even the *gifts* of God before himself, whom if thou love purely and above all things, then thou shalt hear him speak peace to thy soul; according to that saying of our Lord, "He that loveth me, to him will I manifest myself," John xiv. 21. And this manifestation is made by the opening of the understanding, the illumination of the heart by *the Spirit of knowledge, of understanding, of fortitude, and of fear*; and especially by the purifying and enlightening of the inward eyes to see and know Jesus Christ.



## CHAP V

*What makes our works acceptable to God. How we may find grace, and be justified before him.*

1. As man in his natural state is obnoxious to the wrath of God, so all his natural works, how great and good soever they may appear in the eye of the world, are subject to the same wrath. For without the grace of God we can do nothing that is acceptable in his sight. But if a man be in a *state of grace*, then all his works are acceptable to God; because it is the *grace of God* which worketh them in him.

2. Whence it appears, that all manner of gifts whatsoever (as St. Paul assures us,) are to be ascribed to the *grace of God*, not to ourselves, (1 Cor. xv. 10;) and that by our own works we can never be justified or saved. For though a man should suffer all the pains of martyrdom; though he should perform all the good actions that were ever done by all the saints from the beginning of the world, or that ever shall be done by any; though he should feed upon nought but stones and thorns, and suffer death, not once, but every day; yet could he not hereby of himself be able to procure the least grace. Depend not then upon thine own works, but upon the infinite mercies of God in Jesus Christ, with a resigned and humble spirit. And then be confident that the same Jesus will, of his free love and merey, give thee whatever he shall see expedient for thee. This is the meaning of that oracle of our Lord, "When ye have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants," Luke xvii. 10.

3. O merciful God! how poor, how wretched, how worthless in thy sight is our righteousness! It is no better "than filthy rags:" for all the works of *good* men, that have ever been wrought from the beginning of the world, or shall be to the end of it, would be of no value for our justification. Enter then into thy purchased inheritance by the safe gate, even the meritorious wounds of thy blessed Saviour. Offer up to God his passion for the punishments which thou hast deserved; his holy thoughts for thy polluted imaginations; his many Divine words for thy vain speeches; all his works, his poverty, his patience, his meekness and charity, for all thy defects and omissions. Keep thine eyes fixed on the blessed Jesus, and thou shalt obtain grace and favour with God. With the prodigal son, return to thy offended father, and he will receive and embrace thee. His mercies are unchangeably the same, ready to be communicated to every sincere penitent. These he freely offers to all: and nothing is more easy to him than to shew mercy to him



that asks it in faith ; “ for his hand is not shortened, that he cannot save.”

4. The more wretched thou appearest in his sight, the more welcome shalt thou be to him, who is desirous to enrich thee out of his own treasures. And the sins of the whole world bear no more *proportion* to his infinite mercies, than a single drop of water to the vast ocean. But so soon as ever thou art in a state of grace, all thy works wrought in thee shall be acceptable to God through his only begotten Son, by whom alone we have access to his mercies. In this faith, in this *union* with the Son of God, thou shalt live. He is that living *Fountain* that purifieth all our uncleanness, and maketh all our works acceptable in his sight. But still take heed to thyself, and remember that thou rest not, even in thy spiritual gifts and privileges, which, as a child of grace, are bestowed upon thee ; but in God alone, the author and giver of them. Hence we are commanded “ to delight ourselves in the Lord,” Psal. xxxvii. 4 ; not in his gifts, but in his glory ; that his will may be perfected in us, and in all creatures.

5. As rivers return back to their respective fountain heads, so must we refer all our gifts and graces to God ; in order to which, let this rule be deeply fixed in our minds : “ If thou hadst all the gifts and graces which God has bestowed, either in heaven or on earth, with the good works of all the saints that have been since the foundation of the world—so soon as ever thou beginnest to take an inordinate pleasure in them, and delight in them as a property of thine own, they are immediately polluted and defiled with the stain and guilt of idolatry.” For there is nothing, either in heaven or earth, in which we ought to rest, but God alone. And when we are come to this, then God himself is our joy, our delight, our rest, our fulness, our treasure, our riches, and our refuge, both within and without : and in this consists the perfection and fulness of blessing. We then become proper vessels of Divine grace. For in proud spirits, which are the

organs and instruments of the devil, God cannot operate; "but he giveth grace to the humble," and filleth their souls with his "hid treasures." Inward pride is the fruitful root of all vices. By this the devil keepeth his strong hold in the *soul*, where God alone has a right to inhabit.

6. The vine, as to its outward form, seems, to those that know it not, to be but a vile and useless plant, fit for nothing but the fire; and yet, under that mean outside, it conceals generous veins and springs of most noble juice. Such are all those Divine persons, through whom the Spirit of God operates. They appear in the sight of men, vile, mean, and contemptible. Their appearance is humble, void of pomp and grandeur; but within they are full of invaluable treasure—even living streams of blessing, flowing incessantly from the throne and presence of God. But they that are puffed up with their gifts, or that make a show of their alms—these, by displaying so industriously their *good* deeds to the world, *have indeed received their reward*.

7. If then thou wouldst have thy works acceptable before God, observe carefully these four rules:—1. *Think humbly* of all thy actions; not respecting thyself, but God alone. 2. Let this humility be deeply rooted and grounded in thy soul, *humbling thyself not only under the hand of God, but every man, whether small or great*, out of an hearty sense of thine own unworthiness. 3. Look upon all that thou dost *as vile and worthless*; so far from valuing thyself upon any performances. 4. Have a profound dread of the secret judgments of God, not proceeding from any doubtful or scrupulous notions about the mercies of God; but regarding him as thy best friend, be careful to avoid every thing that may be likely to offend him. He that despises these four rules, renders even his best actions unclean in the sight of God. But he that carefully attends to them, shall be like a green olive-tree in the house of his God, bearing fruit abundantly to everlasting life.

8. And here we must observe, that even the most inconsiderable thing that thou doest, if it serve the *good* of thy neighbour, is acceptable to God; whilst he that employeth not his talent to that end, shall have a dreadful account to give at the last day. This is the end of God's gifts, that we should readily and industriously employ them for the benefit of others. Every action, every art, employment, and profession, were given by God for this end. And these are the works which, our Lord tells us, "are wrought in God," (John iii. 21;) that is, in faith and charity, directed solely *to the glory of God*, and the *benefit of our neighbour*; without any respect of honour or advantage to ourselves; of which every man's own conscience is the judge. Consider then carefully with thyself the ground and springs of all thy actions; remembering, that if thou neglect or refuse to employ the blessings of God for thy neighbour's benefit, thou mayest have the same punishment with *the slothful servant*, who was deprived of his talent which he had hid in the ground.

9. The sum of all is this, That all our works, how specious soever they may appear, if they be directed to any other end but God, are nothing but vanity and idolatry. For he is truly an idolater, who proposes any other *end* or *aim* but God. Wherefore, if thou hast any gifts, use them; but take heed that thy heart rest not in them; if it do, thou art guilty of idolatry.

10. Let all that desire to be the true lovers of Jesus Christ, bear their cross in this world, be it what it will. If thou flee from one, another will meet thee: and do what thou wilt, thou must bear it. But under every cross the hand of God is with us to lighten it, and make it easy to us.

11. But perhaps thou art in doubt with thyself whether the cross which thou sufferest comes from God. If so, let this be the test: Whatsoever thou sufferest *for thine own sake* will be grievous and tedious. But if thou suffer *for God's sake*, it is his cross. And then, what matters it, whether thy load be a hundred or a thousand pound

weight? He will lend a helping hand, "and make thy yoke easy, and thy burden light." Good Lord, lay upon me what burden thou pleasest, only assist my weakness with the everlasting arm of thy omnipotence! Next observe, "That the choicest blessings of God are bestowed upon us whilst we are under the cross. And though they are sometimes bestowed before-hand, yet it is the cross that confirms and roots them in the soul." And being so necessary to the *soul*, God has given the larger share of it to his faithful friends and servants, and particularly to his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Every affliction is a token of Divine love, commissioned to visit us for our good. And the united malice of earth and hell cannot do the least hurt to a devout soul trained up in sufferings, and obedient to the discipline of the cross. The more his enemies assault him, the higher is he exalted by God. And though he should be thrust down into hell, yet there should he meet his God, and hell itself should be an heaven to him.

12. As salt preserves flesh from putrefaction, so do afflictions and temptations keep the soul from sin and misery. And the deeper a man sinks into humility by the cross, the deeper does he penetrate into the heart of God, which is always open to receive and embrace the mortified and humble soul. This is the great end proposed by God in all his various methods of humbling us, that, being sensible of our own corruption, we may die to ourselves, and live entirely unto him. The saints of old, when under heavy tribulations, could no otherwise possess their souls in patience than by a total abandoning and denial of themselves; being ready to submit to every cross which God should lay upon them, even though it should last their whole life long. By this humility, obedience, and self-denial, they were at last delivered. For having answered the end designed by God in sending crosses upon them, he was pleased immediately to release them.

13. Thou canst not be hurt by any cross, unless by

being fretful and impatient under it. Thou dost wrong, if thou thinkest thyself injured by this or that man. They cannot hurt thee, if thy mind is steady and even under its burden. Be assured, that, as long as thou art master of thyself, the whole world can do thee no harm. If then thou wouldst be safe against the assaults of thine enemy, be silent; answer not again; even as a deaf man, "in whose mouth are no reproofs." Every calumny and reproach which the world shall cast upon thee, shall be as so many rays of light encircling thy head with a crown of glory. I will conclude this doctrine of the *cross* with just mentioning those three degrees of patience, in which true victory consists. The first is, To suffer without murmuring. The second is, Not only to suffer patiently, but even to wish for suffering for Christ's sake, from a pure love of him.\* The third is, To rejoice in suffering; and this is the greatest *victory* of all.



## A PRAYER

*For lively faith in Christ.*

LORD Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith! Let thy word so powerfully operate in my soul, that I may perfectly understand that mystery of iniquity, which has infected all my faculties; yea, and feel the mystery of godliness, by Christ truly formed in me. Let faith, as a flame kindled from above, burn in me, and purify all my dross and uncleanness; and let thy Divine light so break forth in my soul, that I may not only see the wonders of



\* This the Scriptures nowhere enjoins or recommends.

thy love, and the secrets of thy kingdom, but may also arrive at an intimate union with thee.

2. Take away the deformities my nature has contracted by sin, and clothe me with the fine linen of thy righteousness, that I may appear all beautiful in thy sight. Grant that my faith, being firmly rooted in a contrite and humble heart, may bring forth plentifully the fruits of the Spirit; truly and vigorously working by love. Deliver me from all false notions about faith, by which many have been led to destruction.

3. Teach me, O Lord, that the true faith in thee, is the work of thy Almighty power; ; so that after I have been stricken with a lively sense of my own corruption, and of the vengeance due to my sins, I may, by the Father, at length be drawn to the Son; and being quickened by his enlivening grace and righteousness, and sealed with his Spirit, as the earnest and pledge of my future inheritance, I may again return to the Father, and be eternally happy in the fruition of his love.

4. Grant me, merciful Jesus! a deep sense of the power of true faith upon my soul! Let my faith be the victory that overcometh the world, treading down the very seed of sin. Do thou so purify my polluted heart by faith, that it may be a proper habitation for thee; and that thou mayest graciously vouchsafe to dwell in me.

5. And when I feel the power of this faith moving and operating in me, then, I beseech thee, assist me with thy gracious presence, to water this tender plant with plentiful showers of thy grace, that it may take deep root downwards, and bear plentifully the fruits of life upwards. Let this faith be an heavenly light in me, by which I may fully understand the deplorable corruption of my nature, and the promised redemption by Jesus Christ.

6. Grant that this spark of faith, once kindled in me, may be blown into a flame by daily aspirations of devout love. Let every cross and tribulation, whether within or without, contribute to strengthen this life of faith which

thy word hath planted in me. Above all, give me the sincere milk of thy word, to quench the longing thirst of my poor soul; and let it penetrate into all my powers and faculties, till I grow up into a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. And having at last passed through all the temptations and trials of true faith, may I pass into the full possession of those joys, of which I have had a foretaste here; and for ever drink of those rivers of pleasure, which are at thy right hand; to whom be ascribed all praise, honour, and glory, for ever. Amen!



### ASPIRATIONS.

O JESUS, enlighten me with the brightness of thine eternal light; and chase all darkness from my soul.

Send forth thy light and thy truth, to shine over the earth; for I am a black and fruitless soil, till I am warmed and made pregnant with thy beams.

Shower down thy grace from above, and sink thy heavenly dew into my heart.

Let the flood-gates of piety and devotion overflow the face of the whole earth.

O unite my soul to thee, for thou only, O Lord, art sufficient for the soul that loveth thee.

# TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

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## THE FOURTH BOOK.

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### THE INTRODUCTION.

*That the creatures are our guides and instructors, to lead us to the knowledge of God.*

1. MOSES, the prince of prophets, in his book of Genesis, produces two strong proofs of the being of a God. The first is taken from the great world. The second from the lesser world, which is man. And because by these, the Maker and Preserver of all things is manifested, and in lively characters engraven upon our hearts : therefore the Holy Scriptures frequently appeal to them both. I intend in this book, to follow the same method ; and by various reflections upon both the greater and lesser world, endeavour to shew, that the creatures are, as it were, the hands and messengers of God, in a sound and Christian sense ; leading us to the knowledge of God and Christ.

2. Observe now the method by which the creatures lead us unto God. He invites us by all the engaging invitations and promises of the gospel ; and not content with that, he offers us many great and noble gifts ;



“Doing us good from heaven ; sending us fruitful seasons ; and filling our hearts with food and gladness.” All which blessings are as so many messengers sent from God to draw us to himself, and to instruct us how to taste the goodness of the Creator in that of the creature.

3. For this reason it was, that God made man so weak, needy, and helpless, that by the variety of his blessings, and multitude of his benefits, he might draw him to himself, and teach him by these various instances of his love and goodness, that all the comfort and sweetness which he tastes in the creatures, really proceed from the Creator ; and that he alone is able to comfort, relieve, and support us, when those perishing comforts forsake us.

4. But the greatest of all God’s messengers, the most excellent of all his gifts, is the Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. In him is all the fulness and perfection of Divine love and goodness. His mercy is over all his works, and by him all things were made. “By him all things consist. He upholdeth all things by word of his power.” This premised, I begin treating of “the six days creation,” to promote the knowledge, glory, and praise of God.



## CHAP. I.

### *Of the light, the work of the first day.*

1. IN those words of Job, ch. xxxviii. 19, “Where is the way, where light dwelleth ? And as for darkness, where is the place thereof ?” The holy writer intimates, that the nature of light is very difficult to be explained, and scarce to be comprehended by finite understandings. For though we know something of it by our sight, yet it is

but little. However, let us employ that little, to promote the glory of God.

2. First then, light is a most subtile, and pure brightness; separated from darkness in the morning of the creation, when God commanded the light to shine out of darkness. By this, the world is enlightened and comforted, and all its beautiful variety distinctly known. By this, as some think, the light of life was conveyed into the great world, incorporating itself with every creature. From this pure brightness, light and beauty flowed into the globe of the sun, constituting it the great luminary of the day, by which it is governed and directed.

3. But as it is the duty of a Christian to contemplate the works of God with spiritual eyes, so as therein to see the Creator, let us take a nearer view of this subject, and see how the light and the sun bear witness of God and Christ.

4. And the first conclusion that naturally presents itself is this; if God created so lovely, so refreshing a light, how much more lovely, comfortable, and refreshing a light is he himself? Therefore to the question, Why God first of all created light? One answers, "Because from his own essential light, the visible light does more naturally proceed, as that which bears the nearest resemblance to his own nature;" and therefore he calls light a little after, "The image of the goodness of God."

5. And whereas God made the light, that thereby the true external form, shape, and beauty of the creatures might be distinctly seen, it follows, that there is another secret and mysterious light, whereby the internal form and signatures of the creatures may be likewise known; from which nothing can be hidden or concealed. And this light is the *eternal wisdom of God*, which being compared with the natural and created light, is called, "The brightness of the everlasting light," Wisd. vii. 26.

6. From the light of the sun also shines forth the most pure, deep, and ardent love of God. For whom did he

create the sun? Certainly not for himself, for he needeth not the sun, nor any other created light, being himself a light infinite and eternal. For our sakes therefore he created it. So that every ray of light proceeding from the sun, is a ray of Divine love towards mankind. And as the eternal wisdom of God is a bright sun, clearly discovering his mercy and beneficence; so according to the nature and properties of the visible sun and light, it may also be called "an image of the Divine goodness."

7. The created light also determines the order, seasons, bounds, figures, and distinctions of all created things. For without it, the whole world would be nothing but darkness and confusion. So that upon this account also, the light is an image of the Divine wisdom.

8. The created light, by its brightness and splendor, makes every thing turn to it; so the goodness of God draws all things to itself, as the first root, centre, and principle of all things.

9. The light of the sun is pure and spotless; so is the love of God towards mankind. Hence also the Divine wisdom being a spotless light, is, according to the property of the sun, "The spotless mirror of the Divine majesty."

10. As the light flows plentifully and freely from the sun, so does the love of God descend plentifully upon us. As the sun shines freely upon all, without respect of persons, so does the Divine love overflow all mankind. As the light proceeds from the nature and essence of the sun, so does the love of God flow from the very nature and essence of the Divine mind.

11. Moreover as God created the external light for the greater world, visible bodies; so he did at the same time provide an inward and spiritual light for the soul. And this light of the soul, is God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost; the ever-blessed and undivided Trinity, by whom our understandings are enlightened through faith.

12. As the sun enlightens the world, so does Christ

the soul. "He is the true light that enlightens every man that cometh into the world," and is therefore called by the prophet Malachi, "The sun of righteousness," ch. iv. 2. And St. James calls God, "The Father of lights," ch. i. 17. And the Holy Ghost appeared upon the apostles in the form of fiery tongues, Acts ii. 3. And from this eternal light proceeds the light of grace, the light of wisdom and Divine knowledge; the light of truth and life; the light of joy and consolation; the light of God's countenance; the light of faith and all Christian virtues.

13. The light is comfortable and refreshing. And who can doubt that, in the bright day of eternity, the blessed saints shall be refreshed with joy unspeakable? Without all question, the light of the everlasting Sun of Righteousness shall give us infinitely more delight and joy than this created sun can do, which only gives light to a world of misery and sorrow.

14. The light awakens those that sleep, and puts them in mind of rising. So Christ, our Light, rouses us from the sleep of sin. "Awake thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light," Eph. v. 14. The light directs the traveller in his way. So saith Christ, "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life," John viii. 12. Moreover, as the corporeal light has a secret *vital power* in it—so, as "Christ is our Light, in him also was life, and the life was the light of men," John i. 4: "The Lord is my light and my salvation, he is the strength of my life," Ps. xxvii. 1.

15. As the light cannot be seen any other ways than by itself; so God cannot be known but by himself. "In thy light we shall see light," Psal. xxxvi. 9. And as the external light drives away the darkness, and the spirits of darkness, so Christ, who is the light of God in us, chases away all the works of darkness, and satan. And God must speak the word in us, as he did at the first creation, "Let there be light!" or we shall for ever re-

main in darkness. This made the Psalmist say, "Thou, Lord, shalt light my candle: the Lord shall make my darkness to be light," Psal. xviii. 29.

16. As the light makes all things *clear* and *plain*, so there is nothing in heaven or in earth, no spirit, no being, nor the very thoughts of the heart, can be hidden from the light of Divine Wisdom, Heb. iv. 12, 13. Hence the Psalmist says, "Thou hast set our misdeeds before thee, and our secret sins in the light of thy countenance," Psal. xc. 8. And "Thou understandest my thoughts long before," Psal. cxxxix. 2. "Wisdom goeth through all understanding, a pure and most subtle spirit." Wisd. vii. 23.

17. Lastly, the light and sun are an argument and type of the glorification of our souls and bodies at the resurrection. For though the glorification of our souls be, in some degree, accomplished in this life, by the power of the Holy Spirit, according to that of the Corinthians, "We all with an open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord;" yet these are but the imperfect beginnings, and first glimpses of eternal happiness. But hereafter, both soul and body shall be clothed with everlasting light and glory. Hence St. Paul, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; so is also the resurrection of the dead," 1 Cor. xv. 41. And Daniel, "They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."



## CHAP. II.

### *Of heaven, the work of the second day.*

1. **THOUGH** there be a great dispute amongst divines and philosophers, concerning the matter and substance

of *heaven*, we shall rest satisfied with these words of God, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters:" which Job expresses, "by stretching out the heavens as a molten looking-glass," ch. xxxvii. 18.

2. By the order of the elements, we may conclude that the material heaven is the purest, clearest, and most subtile matter of the great *mundane system*, free from all elementary mixtures; a pure, transparent, spotless, incorruptible body. It is also endued with various powers and capacities of acting upon this lower world; being expanded by the hand of the Almighty into a most capacious and splendid form, and incomprehensible sphericity; not only for the better containing the expansion of the air, and the terraqueous globe, that neither of the elements may move out of its place, (for on this account also it is called the *firmament*,) but that by the roundness of its figure, it may more conveniently and equally dispense its influences upon this lower world.

3. For the better understanding this, it will not be improper to consider it in relation to the other elements. The *earth*, we find, is thick, dark, and heavy. The *water* is more pure, subtile, and fine than the earth. For the less earthy mixture there is in the water, so much the clearer it is. The *air* is still purer and clearer than the water, being perfectly diaphanous and impalpable; so fine and pellucid, that it is imperceptible to the finest eye. Now, if there be so great a difference betwixt earth and water, and betwixt water and air, in respect to substance, it follows, that heaven, which is exalted above the region of the air, is of the clearest and purest essence. From whence it also follows, that, being so pure, it is endued with a greater energy and power of acting.

4. And who can doubt but that this bright and pure structure of heaven, with all its wonderful properties, is a strong evidence and witness of God? What is heaven, and all the beauty of nature, (says one of the ancients,) *but an illustrious mirror, in which we view the wonders of their Maker?* For if God created so glorious, so firm

a substance, as our weak understandings cannot comprehend or explain; how glorious, unsearchable, unutterable a Being must that God be who created it? If he has made so glorious a heaven to overspread, surround, and enlighten mankind, during their short abode here; how illustrious a mansion, think we, has he reserved for us hereafter, in the region of life and immortality? Hence St. Paul tells us, "We know if this earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven," 2 Cor. v. 1, 2.

5. And as to the stupendous *height* and compass of heaven, to which the earth is no more than a single point; how does it insinuate to us the immense and unsearchable power and wisdom of God? "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts, saith the Lord." Does not its *roundness* remind us of the éternity of God? For of both there is neither beginning nor end? Does it not also put us in mind of his *omnipotence*? For as the heaven surrounds and encompasses all things, so does the God of heaven contain, support, and comprehend all his creatures. "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? And meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?"

6. And as in a circle, no part can be called upper or lower; so God fills all things equally: heaven and earth are full of the majesty of his glory. "He is not far from every one of us: in him we live, and move, and have our being." For though there be many creatures under us, as is demonstrable from the figure of the earth; yet by the wonderful power of God, the heaven is every where over our heads, and we look up directly towards it, by reason of the immense largeness of this circular body. Of this roundness the son of Sirach speaks, "He com-

passeth the heaven with a glorious circle, and the hands of the Most High have bended it," *Ecclus. xliii. 12.*

7. Does not also the firmament of heaven remind us of the constant, immutable truth of God and his Word? For who is it that supports the heaven from falling? Where are the pillars that sustain it? or how does it hang, but upon the Word of God? "The pillars of heaven tremble," saith Job, "and are astonished at his reproof. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it," *ch. xxvi. 9, 11.* And if by his Word he hath so strongly fixed the heavens, who can doubt but he will keep his word and promise to us? "If he support the heavens by the word of his power," doubt not but he will support, protect, and preserve thee for ever.

8. But from this created heaven, learn to raise thy thoughts to the mystical one, "where there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore." This St. Paul calls "the third heaven;" and the glory into which Jesus "Christ was received." This our Lord himself calls "his Father's house, where he is now preparing a place for us," *John xiv. 2.* Moreover, by meditation upon this external heaven, thou mayest learn to descend into thyself—into thine own heart and soul; for there also is heaven, and the habitation of God.

9. Let this external heaven lead thee likewise to the new heaven, of which St. Peter speaks; "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness." For though this visible heaven was created so pure by God as not to be subject to corruption, yet "these heavens are not clean in his sight. They shall perish, and wax old like a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed." But every Christian shall say, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new! Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former



shall not be remembered, nor be brought into mind." How beautiful, how illustrious will be this city of God, this heavenly Jerusalem, whose builder and maker is God? Who can declare the glory of that happy place? "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things that God hath prepared for them that love him." Hence the evangelist, St. John, describes the new and heavenly city by all the precious and costly things in nature. "The city," he says, "was of pure gold, like unto crystal; the foundations were of precious stones, the gates of pearls: and it wants neither sun nor moon, because the glory of the Lord enlightens it." In a word, this is that heaven "in which God will be all in all," 1 Cor. xv. 28.

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### CHAP. III.

*Of the separation of the waters from the dry land; the work of the third day.*

1. THE earth is the grossest substance of the world, separated from the waters, and fixed by the power of God to be the receptacle of all the heavenly influences. Therefore, as the heavens are spherical, so is the earth in union with the water, making up one globe. This terraqueous globe hangs in the air by the power of the Almighty, replenished with the vital and invisible seeds of all the invisible trees, plants, and vegetables.

2. The stupendous structure and foundation of the earth, is a most certain and wonderful witness of the power of God. For by what pillars is the earth supported? or where are its foundations? "He hath hung the earth upon nothing," saith Job, ch. xxvi. 7 For it hangs in the midst of heaven, borne up in the expanded

air, begirt with the waters as with girdles or swaddling-bands. So saith the Psalmist, "Thou coverest it with the deep, like as with a garment," Psal. civ. 6. There is a great congruity between air and water, so that they support one another; as appears by the clouds, which though they be vast mountains of water, yet are supported by the air from falling; for the power of bearing and sustaining is a particular property of the air. "He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them," Job xxvi. 8.

3. This foundation of the earth in the waters, and by the waters, in the centre of the vast expanse of air, is a very clear argument of the Divine omnipotence. "Where wast thou," saith he to Job, "when I laid the foundations of the earth? Who hath laid the measures thereof? Who laid the corner-stone thereof?" ch. xxxviii. 4. Signifying thereby, that this foundation of the earth could not be comprehended by human understanding; but must be counted amongst the infinite wonders of Omnipotence; of which this is not the least, that the globe of the earth should stand in the waters, and yet not be swallowed up by them. Therefore saith holy David, "We will not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof rage and swell, and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same," Psal. xli. 2.

4. And this is that earth which, as the Psalmist tells us, "God hath given to the children of men," Psal. cxv. 16. And though, as to its external form, it appears to be a shapeless, hard, thick, dead, dry, and cold mass; yet it is in truth a living and noble element, enriched by God with a variety of blessings and seminal virtues. These seminal powers never rest; but, like hidden, living stars, are always labouring till they have produced their fruits, adorned with a beautiful form, symmetry, smell, taste, and colour; with external signatures, representing their inward virtues and qualities.

5. So, then, out of the earth, as out of a bed-chamber,

came forth all the varieties of plants and vegetables, having exchanged their old clothes for a new, bright, and shining dress. They come forth with exquisite beauty, smell, and colour; and do, as it were, call to mankind, "Look upon us, ye unbelieving sons of men! We were once dead, and now are alive again. We have laid aside our old garments and bodies, and are renewed into our root and original. Do ye also imitate us. *Lay aside the old man, and put on the new*; being renewed into your eternal Original, God, in whose image ye were created. If ye do this, then, in the day of the righteous judgment of God, when ye have lost your old bodies, ye shall, like us, come forth out of the earth with new bodies, clothed with immortal glory, of which our new-born beauty is but a faint resemblance. And whilst ye are in this world, 'take not too much thought for the body.' Consider us, whom the God of nature has yearly, for so many thousand years, since the foundation of the world to this time, provided with beautiful and comely clothing, as an argument of his bounty and goodness. Consider our virtues and powers, which are given and laid out, not for our own, but for your sake and benefit. We bloom and blossom, not for our own good, but your's; yea, the blessing of God blossoms through us."

6. Among the vegetables also a man may discern ten thousand times ten thousand witnesses of the goodness and omnipotence of God. For here we have a perfect collection of drugs and simples, an admirable and complete herbal; yea, a living one; not furnished with faint draughts, and dead pictures; but graced with living characters and impressions, to be read by every curious spectator, but not to be fully understood by any but him that made them. And till we come fully to understand their Divine signatures, we cannot so perfectly know the wonders of Providence contained under them.

7. Every herb and plant has its proper mark and signature, which is nothing less than the inscription and hand-writing of God, whereby he hath wonderfully and

beautifully marked and distinguished them all, according to their secret virtues and qualities. All which are plain to be discerned by the curious observer. Every turf we tread upon is furnished both with food and physick. Yea, in the smallest grain or seed is manifested the unsearchable wisdom of God. He has created nothing in vain. And the minutest part of the creation is not to be overlooked or despised; since we know not the thousandth part of its virtues.

8. Consider, moreover, how the bountiful Creator has provided not only for man, but also for the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field; how “he has provided food for all flesh;” how “he bringeth forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men;” how “he brings food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man.” So that we may properly call the earth the store-house of God, in which are laid up such variety of blessings both for man and beast; upon which account the Psalmist says, “The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.”

9. A very wonderful effect of this Divine goodness is, that *bread* sustains the whole body; so that in one single morsel is contained the nourishment of all the members of the external body, and its virtue diffuses itself through the whole. And because of this universal, nutritive quality that is in bread, the eternal Son of God calls himself the “bread of life,” John vi. 35; denoting his spiritual and universal power of nourishing and sustaining the whole man, body, soul, and spirit.

10. It is no less wonderful that the greatest plant, yea the greatest tree, with its root, trunk, boughs, leaves, seed, flowers, and fruit, (each of which has either a nutritive or sanative virtue) should be contained in a very small seed. And that every year the same catalogue of plants and trees, with their respective fruits and seeds, should appear in their proper order and season: That small seed contains in it all those powers which successively display themselves in so great a variety, size,

bigness, thickness, and height ! Which is indeed amazing to any one that shall duly consider it.

11. I cannot also but take notice, how the herbs and grass, upon which the beast and cattle feed, become food for man ; being changed into the milk and flesh of the creatures that eat them. How even our beds and clothes grow out of the earth ; forasmuch as both sheep and birds live upon the fruits of it ; lastly, how the sheep get their wool, and the birds their feathers, from the pasture of the field.

12. As to the fruitfulness of the earth, David speaks of it very nobly, “Thou visitest the earth, and blessest it ; thou makest it very plenteous. The river of God is full of water. Thou preparest their corn, for so thou providest for the earth. Thou waterest her furrows ; thou sendest rain into the little valleys thereof ; thou makest it soft with the drops of rain, and blessest the increase of it. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy clouds drop fatness,” Psal. lxxv. 9, 10. That is, every month produces its peculiar fruit out of its treasury, the bosom of the earth. This natural fertility of the earth has been very much contracted by the curse of the Almighty. “Cursed is the earth, (saith God,) thorns and briars shall it bring forth to thee,” Gen. iii. 17. Fruitfulness, therefore, must be regarded as the blessing of God, without which a man can neither plough, nor sow, nor plant with success. “For it is God that giveth the increase.” Thus we are to understand, “A fruitful land maketh he barren, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein,” Psal. cvii. 34.

13. Now let our meditations on the fruitfulness of this earth, carry our thoughts to that new one, “wherein dwelleth righteousness.” There the curse, to which the present earth is in bondage, shall have no place ; it shall be the region of perfect blessedness. This is the new paradise, full of celestial sweetness, where we shall truly sing, “The flowers appear in the earth,” Cant. ii. 11.

14. I come next to the mountains, which by their height and beauty are no small ornament to the earth. Of these the Psalmist speaks, "The hills ascend, and the valleys descend into the place which thou hast appointed for them," Psal. civ. 8. The mountains are in a more particular sense the treasury of God, in which all sorts of metals are prepared and formed. These are as it were so many furnaces, in which the matter of all metals and minerals is separated and brought to maturity.

15. The mountains ought to put us in mind of the protection of God; and so the expression is used in Scripture, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," Psal. cxxi. 1. As also of the church of God, "The mountain of the Lord's house," Isa. xlv. 8. "The mountains shall bring peace, and the little hills righteousness," Psal. lxxii. 3. Under this head we may likewise consider the little springs, and rivers of waters that run through the valleys, adorning, enriching, and beautifying the earth. For though in strict propriety the fountains belong to the work of the fifth day; yet the royal prophet, (Psal. civ. 10,) puts the mountains and springs together; because the rivers arise from the hills, and equally partake of the celestial influences with them.

16. Solomon tells us, "All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again," Eccles. i. 7. Though the waters, passing out of the sea, through the earth, are sweetened by percolation; yet they do not every where break forth, nor make springs in all places, but according to the secret order and appointment of Providence. So saith the Psalmist, "He sendeth the springs into the rivers," Psal. civ. 10. And their perpetual flowing, and continual streams, are not only a great blessing, and miracle of Divine power, but are also an apt representation of eternal life. I need not speak particularly of those streams in the desolate parts of the earth, serving for nourishment and refreshment, "Of

which all the beasts of the fields do drink, and at which the wild asses quench their thirst," Psal. civ. 11.

17. Now if God take so much care of the beasts of the earth, shall he not much more take care of us? If "the beasts of the field cry unto him when the rivers are dried up," Joel i. 20, how much more ought we to call upon him in all our distresses? And whereas those places are generally most pleasant, where there is the greatest plenty of springs and rivulets; so the birds generally resort thither, and "sing among the branches," Psal. civ. 12. As if God had taken care to fill even the deserts with their music, that so every place might resound with his praises, and that man might learn, even from the brute creatures, that not only himself, but all the creatures were made to praise and glorify God.

18. These natural fountains should put us in mind of the fountain of grace and salvation, the water of life, even Jesus Christ, And "with joy let us draw water out of the wells of salvation," Isa. xii. 3. We may truly say, "With thee is the well of life," "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," Isa. lv. 1. "The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them forth to living streams of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," Rev. vii. 17

19. The 104th Psalm, which gives us a beautiful account of the work of the third day, first speaks of the earth in general; how God laid its foundations; divided it from the waters; adorned it with mountains, and watered it with springs: And thence descending to particulars, takes notice of seven of its remarkable productions; 1, The dew, wherewith he waters the mountains. 2, The grass. 3, Bread. 4, Wine. 5, Oil or balsam. 6, The fruits of the trees. 7, Birds and beasts.

20. Thus David speaks, ver. 13, "He watereth the hills from above, the earth is filled with the fruit of thy works." Thus we often see with admiration the clouds hovering upon the mountains, like multitudes of armed

men, and dropping showers of plenty upon the hills, “as the bottles of heaven,” Job xxxviii. 37 Sometimes also adding his dew, which has wonderful affinity to the mountains, watering and refreshing them with great plenty. Thus it continually watered the little hill of Hermon in Judea; and the mountains of Gilboa, where Saul, and Jonathan his son were slain. Therefore David said, “Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you,” 2 Sam. i. 21.

21. The effects of it are expressed in these words; “The earth is filled with the fruit of thy works.” For it is the property of dew, “to make the ground rich and fruitful,” to refresh the flowers scorched with excessive heat, from whence at last the bees, by a wonderful and artful mixture, draw their honey. Sometimes we see a sort of honey-dew lying upon the leaves, as did the manna heretofore. Just so, the gospel, like a spiritual honey, is composed of the dew of the Holy Spirit; and Jesus Christ, who is the flower of all flowers.

22. And whereas it is said, “That the earth is filled with the fruit of God’s works;” it signifies, that the word of God, the Creator, is still as powerful and efficacious as formerly it was; when he spake the word, saying, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding fruit.” So that all things, from the beginning of the world, to this day, spring from the word of God, as from an eternal root and fountain of Divine blessing.

23. Secondly, the prophet says, “He produceth grass for the cattle.” Nor is that the least of God’s blessings; for how could so many beasts, that minister to the necessities of man, subsist, should the grass fail, even only for one summer? From whence we learn, how merciful God is to mankind, and how liberally he provides for our necessities. Hence, though the grass may seem to be the least and meanest of all the blessings of God, yet we cannot be sufficiently thankful for it. So true is that saying, “The least of God’s blessings exceeds our highest gratitude.”



24. This also may furnish us with new proofs and arguments of the Divine providence. 1, He that considers, God takes care of the grass of the ground, cannot question, but he takes care of him and his affairs: 2, It may put us in mind of our own vanity. "For all flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof, as the flower of the field." 3, It may also minister comfort under afflictions and persecutions, according to Psal. xxxvii. 1, 2, "Fret not thyself because of the ungodly, neither be thou envious against the evil doers; for they shall soon be cut down as the grass, and wither as the green herb."

25. Thirdly, "Bringing forth herbs for the service of man, that he may bring food out of the earth, and bread to strengthen man's heart," Psal. civ. 14, 15. Now the very notion of bread implies in it a great variety of miraculous blessings. 1, It insinuates to us, God's paternal affection. For a father naturally cares and provides for his children. So Matt. vii. 9, "What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?" Let us remember then that God is our Father. And for this purpose he made us indigent creatures, surrounding us with infirmities and necessities. So that our very hunger and thirst are as so many monitors to lead us unto God; and every bit of bread we eat should put us in mind of the paternal affection of God.

26. 2. Let us admire and reverence the wise dispensation of providence, which assigns to every man his convenient portion of bread, so that no man has reason to complain "that he is forgotten before God," Heb. xiii. 5. 3, Let us remember the nutritive virtue in bread, is the very word of God. And if God should withdraw it, then all flesh and blood would wither and decay as the grass of the field. And this gives light to that place of St. Matthew, ch. iv. 4, Deut. viii. 3, "Man doth not live by bread alone."

27 Lastly, the strengthening faculty of bread puts us in mind of the bread of life, which is Christ. So John vi. 25, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh unto me

shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." For in this bread of life, all the powers of heaven and earth, yea, and all the power of God is contained; because "it pleased God that in him all fulness should dwell," Col. i. 19, "and that of it we should all receive grace for grace," John i. 16, and by him, "be filled with all the fulness of God," Eph. iii. 19. Blessed is he that eateth this bread! The earthly bread cannot save us from death, but he that eateth of Christ, the bread of life, shall never die.

28. The fourth thing mentioned is wine, "that maketh glad the heart of man," Psal. civ. 15. How wonderful is the love of God, who has provided even natural means to refresh and comfort us! And as for the dejected and broken spirit, he refreshes that by the wine of the Holy Spirit, and celestial consolation, drawn from the living vine, the Lord Jesus Christ. This was the wine the holy prophets drank of, which made them break forth into songs of joy and exultation.

29. The fifth thing is, "Oil to make him a cheerful countenance." By which we are to understand, the precious balsam or spikenard used among the Jews, and other eastern nations, which diffused a wonderful strength and vigour through their whole bodies. In this sense we are to understand Psal. xxiii. 5, "Thou anointest my head with oil." So our blessed Saviour, when he was entertained by Simon, was anointed with oil, in token of a more than ordinary welcome. And so great was the virtue of these eastern unguents, that they used them in embalming the dead; and by that means preserved them many hundred years from corruption, as appeared in the body of Alexander the Great, which was found in the time of Augustus, as fresh as if he had been interred but yesterday, though he had lain above 300 years. And this balsam is a proper representation of that oil, with which the Son of God, according to his human nature, was anointed without measure. Hence the holy Psalmist, "Wherefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee

with the oil of gladness above thy fellows," Psal. xlv. 7.

30. The sixth thing mentioned is, "The trees of the Lord (which) are full of sap; even the cedars of Libanus, which he hath planted," Psal. civ. 16. There are many strange things to be considered in trees; of which, two are more particularly taken notice of in the Holy Scriptures. The first is, that whereas they seem to be dead all the winter, yet upon the return of the spring, they produce, first leaves, and afterwards fruit, in a manner plainly miraculous, and such as no art can imitate. For where is the artist, that from the juice of any tree or vine, can form an apple or a grape? Secondly, whereas it is said, "that the Lord hath planted them;" we must understand it of his creating word, Gen. i. 12; by the power of which, new trees daily arise to supply the room of those that die or are cut down. This blessing will cleave to the earth as long as it lasts, because the word of the Lord is the universal root and seed of all things. Now the trees, with their fruits, may put us in mind of that Divine charity, which ought to be in us. For as these freely bestow their several fruits upon man; so ought we to be affected towards God, and towards one another; "That we may be trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified."

31. Seventhly, the birds are the product, or at least a very great ornament to the earth. For though they had their original from the water, yet they build upon the trees, and help to furnish our tables, as do also the wild beasts. "There the birds build their nests, and the fir trees are a dwelling for the stork. The hills are a refuge for the wild goats, and so are the stony rocks for the conies," Psal. civ. 17, 18.

32. From all this we may learn, that God made not the earth to be desolate; but has allotted even deserts to be inhabited by birds and wild beasts, that his bounty to man, and his magnificence might be made known by the multitude of his creatures; his omnipotence by his

works ; and his wisdom by that infinite variety of distinct virtues and properties, which he has bestowed upon the creatures. “ All the beasts of the field are mine, and so are the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field are in my sight. If I be hungry, I will not tell thee ; for the earth is mine and the fulness thereof. Thinkest thou that I will eat bulls flesh, or drink the blood of goats ?” Psal. l. 10, &c. But what then is the sacrifice that God expects ? “ Offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay thy vows to the Most High, and call upon me in the time of trouble, so will I hear thee, and thou shalt praise me.”



## CHAP IV

*Of the Sun, Moon, and Stars ; the work of the fourth day.*

1. THE stars are bright, heavenly bodies, fixed in the firmament of heaven, by the word of the Most High, to enlighten the earth, to distinguish the night from the day, to adorn the heavens ; to be signs and tokens of nature, of judgment, of mercy, of seasons, days, and years. 1 Cor. xv. 41, Gen. i. 14, Eccles. xliii. 2.

2. “ Lift up your eyes on high, (saith God, Isa. xl. 26,) and behold who hath created these things ; that bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by their names.” We ought, therefore, according to his command, to contemplate these illustrious works of his hands, and learn from thence to admire and adore the power and wisdom of him that made them. “ For the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work,” Psal. xix. 1.

3. In the stars there are three things chiefly worthy of our admiration ; their *magnitude*, their *courses*, and their *operations*.

4. I doubt not but if a man were to see a globe of fire as big as a vast mountain, or a large city all in flame, moving to and fro in the air, he would look upon it with astonishment and horror. Now it is demonstrable, that the globe of the sun is many hundred times greater than the earth ; from whence we may conjecture, how great and inconceivable a space in the heavens the sun must take up. Yea the least of the fixed stars in the firmament of heaven, is far greater than the earth. And yet in the firmament are many millions of these stars, which, by reason of their vast distance, cannot be discerned by us. -

5. Here reason is at a stand. No created mind can reach the height and dimensions of heaven. Hence it is, that the Holy Scripture, speaking of God's infinite compassion, compares it to the greatness of heaven. " Look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth, so great is his mercy also towards them that fear him. Look how wide the east also is from the west, so far has he set our sins from us." For though " the earth be full of the goodness of the Lord," (Psal. xxxiii. 5,) yet is the compass of it too small to be compared therewith. For this cause, the Holy Spirit bids us look up to the height of heaven, furnished with innumerable glorious bodies, all full of the goodness of God, and vastly larger than this lower world.

6. Moreover, the incomprehensible greatness of the Divine Power is manifested, not only in the *bulk* of the heavenly bodies ; but also in their *constant and immutable courses*.\* For who can observe without admiration, such prodigious bodies, not only hanging in the sky, but moving up and down in it with constant regularity?

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* This, and what follows, is to be understood of the motions, not of the fixed stars, but of the planets and comets.

And how great and incomprehensible a space must each of them have to perform their courses in ; and these so determined and settled, that they never exceed their appointed limits, nor interfere with each other in their revolutions ? So that David truly pronounces, “ God by his excellent wisdom, made the heavens,” Psal. cxxxvi. 5. How transcendently excellent must that wisdom be, that can guide and govern the infinite host of heaven in such admirable order, and call them all by their names !

7. Wonderful it is also that these vast lucid bodies should have a motion *in themselves*, that they cannot naturally, for one moment, stand still, or rest from their courses. For if they should, the whole heavenly order would be disturbed. So then the least star never stands still, but is perpetually in quick and inconceivable motion. If a man could, but for a quarter of an hour, take a view of all their distinct motions, he would be able to tell us very surprising things, and witness to us, that the whole heaven is actuated by a vital spirit or principle.

8. And the consideration of the *motions* and *multitude* of these stars may put us in mind of those bright and invisible stars, the *angels* of God. To this Job alludes, ch. xxxviii. 7, “ When the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy.” By which words the holy writer leads us from the natural stars to the supernatural, even the holy angels. For if God has created so great a multitude of stars, who can doubt but that he has a much greater multitude of celestial spirits, who praise him without ceasing ?

9. I proceed to the *benefits* which God bestows upon us by the light of the *sun and moon*. And these we must consider in the fear of God, and shew how we may use them, both in a natural and spiritual sense. “ Tell me,” saith God to Job, “ where is the way where light dwelleth ? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof ? Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion ? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season, or canst thou guide

Arcturus with his sons? Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? Canst thou set the dominions thereof in the earth? Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of water may cover thee?" Job xxxviii. 19, 31, &c. In which words God represents to us his infinite power and wisdom, such as no mortal can search out. For so unable is the wisest man to form light or darkness, that he cannot so much as produce a blade of grass. "Not unto us then, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the praise;" for thou hast made all these things, and thy hand hath formed them.

10. And first, as for the *moon*, how wonderful is its increase and decrease! Sometimes it seems to be shut up in darkness; and again in its season to emerge, by degrees, into a fulness of light. And these varieties hath God appointed for a regular distinction of times and seasons, and of the affairs and business of mankind.

11. And how abundantly is the wisdom of God displayed, even in this certain course of the moon, and distinction of seasons! In all states and conditions, the chief part of prudence is, to keep a good order; and to observe the proper opportunities of acting. So "God himself hath ordered all things in measure, and number, and weight," Wisd. xi. 20. And every season hath its proper opportunities and blessings attending it. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven," Eccles. iii. 1. And as the hitting the proper season is truly an happiness, so it is also a blessing of God; of whom we ought to ask it by prayer.

12. And who can choose but admire the certain course of the sun; from which the heathens themselves gathered the being of a God, a perfect, intelligent mind, which could govern it with such exact regularity, as that it should never break out of its proper sphere, (which they call the way of the sun, the ecliptic line) or ever deviate from the path prescribed to it? Thus it never passes southward over the first point of *capricorn*; but having brought us to the very point of winter, it turns back

again. So when it comes northward, as far as the first point of *cancer*, it immediately retires back. And this course it so regularly and nicely fulfils, that it never makes a single mistake, even of a moment.

13. And now, who can consider these amazing acts of Divine power and wisdom, without admiration and praise to the Author of nature? This astonishing mystery of nature appeared so stupendous to the ancient heathens, that they worshipped even the sun for their god; as being the greatest and most beautiful of all creatures, enlightening all the world, and directing by its course and influences the inferior creation. And this was but a pardonable conclusion for blind corrupt reason to draw, though every part of the creation, to pure and right reason, does fully manifest the being and excellencies of the Creator.

14. As to the magnitude of the sun, moon, and stars, it is ridiculous to imagine, that they are really no bigger than they appear to us. For though the moon and some of the planets are less than the earth; yet the sun may be plainly and infallibly demonstrated, to be at least 166 times bigger; and that it appears so small to us, is owing to *the immensity of its distance*. Ocular demonstration convinces every man of this, that the more remote any object is, the lesser it appears. But a nice disquisition of these matters we must leave to astronomers; and be content religiously to admire what we do not understand.

15. And here ought we, I, to adore the omnipotence of God, who appointed the sun to be the light of the day, and the moon of the night. If we highly admire a light, well-built house, with a fair prospect, well furnished with good statues and pictures, and painted with a great variety of colours; how much more ought we to look up with gratitude and astonishment, upon that noble palace of heaven, adorned with so many, and so stupendous lights? For light is the highest ornament of all creatures.

16. 2, How profound is the wisdom of God, "Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names," Psal. cxlvii. 4, 5. To which is immediately subjoined, "Great is our Lord, and great is his power, yea, and his wisdom is infinite." How ought we then to depend upon this wisdom, and be satisfied in all its determinations concerning us, and not charge him with folly, by pretending to be wiser than he ; "For the foolishness of God is wiser than men," 1 Cor. i. 25.

17 The certain and regular course of the sun and moon, puts us in mind of the truth of God, and the undoubted certainty of his promises. Such as that of sending the Messiah ; of the changes and revolutions of certain states and kingdoms ; and other deliverances of mankind ; all which appeared in their time. Thus saith the Lord, by the prophet Jeremiah, "If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, that there should not be day nor night in their season ; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant," ch. xxxiii. 20, 25.

18. The sun, moon, and stars, are also witnesses of *the Divine goodness* ; and of that eternal light, that enlightens, comforts, and refreshes every man that cometh into the world. We should, by the distinction of the natural light, aspire to the knowledge of him that made it ; and by the beauty of the created, be drawn to the love of the uncreated light. And as we naturally take pleasure in the outward light, as the most beautiful of all the creatures ; so ought we, with our whole hearts, to love him, who is light eternal ; and to walk and rejoice in his light, by withdrawing ourselves from the darkness of sin.

19. Lastly, the visible sun should put us in mind of Jesus Christ, the spiritual and eternal Sun of Righteousness. For as that shines equally upon all men ; so Christ freely bestows himself, and the light of his grace, upon all that will receive him.

CHAP. V.

Of the sea and the waters ; the work of the fifth day.

1. THE water is greater than the earth, or dry land. In treating of this, we shall first, speak of its place or situation. 2, Of its productions. 3, How it extends its branches and fruits, like a great tree of water, spreading itself through the whole globe of the earth.

2. First then as for its place. It possesses the cavities of the earth, and is so formed that man may live upon it, and travel over it as well as upon dry land. It so encompasses the globe of the earth, as never to slip out of its place. And that part of it which is under the earth, sticks as close as that which is above. Yea, the very cavity, which is the true centre and place of the watery element, has no bottom, neither is supported by the earth ; but, like an egg, holds itself fast together, without falling out of its shell. Which is none of the smallest miracles of nature.

3. That is unquestionably the best philosophy, which gives the fairest and best account of the works of God. And this knowledge, every true lover of God ought to endeavour after, that he may thereby know how many glorious creatures God has created for our use and benefit. And let the trifling pretenders to philosophy look to it, that they spend not their time in impertinent inquiries ; which, instead of teaching them the true knowledge, lead them into ignorance, and forgetfulness of God.

4. The first thing to be observed, is the mutual relation and harmony that is betwixt the different elements ; so that one does as it were breed in the other's bosom, and bring forth their fruits for the use of man. Thus the firmament breeds its rains, dews, winds, and cooling breezes in the air, and then sends them down to us. So the earth produces its fruits in the air, where they bud,

blossom, and ripen, are nourished and cherished by the virtue of the air, without which they would quickly languish and die.

5. And as the air receives into its bosom the fruits of the earth, and kindly cherishes them as foster-children ; so likewise the earth and water entertain the fruits of the air, viz. its generative and vegetative virtue with which it is endued. For the air penetrates all the other elements, and supplies them with life and vigour. This is plain by the fire, which burns no longer than it is cherished and refreshed with the air. So also the water, without this universal spirit, putrifies and dies, like the vegetables upon the ground. Thus the water breeds in the bosom of the earth ; and there with great and wonderful variety produces its fruits in greater or lesser plenty, according to the difference of climates.

6. Among these productions of the watery element, the first are the rivers which are as it were great branches of that wonderful, living tree. From hence also sprout forth little rivulets, which are, as it were, shoots from the same tree. So that as from one bough of a great and fruitful tree, spring many little branches, and a great deal of fruit ; so one great branch of the element of water, as the Rhine or Danube, produce great varieties of fruit ; such as rivulets, lakes, and fountains, which all depend immediately upon the great branch, as that does upon the tree.

7. Now the same that we have said of the rivers, as the fruits of the seas, may be also said of metals and minerals, of gems, of salts, of rocks and quarries of stone, &c. Because in whatsoever part of the world they are found, they proceed from the element of the water, and have their seed, first matter, and root thence. For as many different trees spring out of the earth, and every tree has its proper fruits, so the element of water shoots forth her metallic trees and branches into the cavities of the earth ; and when they are there, they are quickly coagulated into a metallic or a mineral tree ;

which sometimes extends its branches 50 or 60 miles in compass ; and when the fruits are plucked off, and the branches lopt, the tree withers and dies of itself ; that is, when the mines are exhausted, the vegetative spirit that impregnated them ceases to act, and they produce no more. At the same time another mine is discovered elsewhere, at times and places appointed by the wise Maker and Governor of the world.

8. How stupendous then is the wisdom and goodness of God, who has so wonderfully created the fruits of the water ; so wisely distinguished them ; and so plentifully bestowed them on the sons of men ? Who has given them so great beauty, and so many virtues ; not only gold and silver, but also corals, pearls, amber, and gems ? (Ezek. xxviii. 13.) All which are given us by God, not to feed our vanity, but for the supply of our necessities, and the setting forth his own glory.

9. And here it is observeable, that the sea and all its productions have, as the other elements, their proper order, time and motion, implanted in them by God. So in the heavens, the stars have their stated times, regular order, motion, rising, and setting. So the earth at certain seasons produces different fruits, and in that sense is in perpetual motion. So likewise the sea hath its innate laws of motion, and produces all its fruits, at such appointed seasons as may best serve the use and benefit of man.

10. Let us now take a survey of the wonderful power and wisdom of God in the sea, and see what inferenees may be drawn from thence. “ Who hath shut up the sea, with doors, (saith God to Job,) when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb ? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thiek darkness a swaddling band for it, and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, hitherto shalt thou come, and no further ? And here shall thy proud waves be stayed. Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea ? Or hast thou walked in the search of the depth ? ”

ch. xxxviii. 8, &c. In which words, God seems to point out the great and dreadful ocean as an obscure image of his unsearchable power. For it is a surprising miracle, that God should by his word alone, as with bars and doors, enclose the sea so strongly, that it should not be able to overflow its bounds. No less wonderful is its ebbing and flowing; so that the sea being as it were conscious of the Divine command, so soon as it touches the earth, seems to fly back and retire in a fright, as at the presence of God, as Jordan and the Red Sea. "He gathereth the waters of the sea together, as it were upon an heap, and layeth up the deep as in a treasure-house," Psal. cxiv. 3.—xxxiii. 7. It is also wonderful that the sea should be higher than the earth. For when the Egyptians were attempting a passage out of the Nile into the Red Sea, it was found, that the sea was 12 feet higher than the level of the river and land of Egypt.

11. And whereas God tells Job, "That he has made the clouds to be the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it;" that plainly appears when its waves roll and toss themselves up to the clouds; which do as it were receive them into their embraces, and cover them with darkness and horror; so that they seem to be blended with each other, then do appear the mighty wonders of God, which a man cannot behold without fear and astonishment.

12. To this work of the fifth day, belongs also that of the holy Psalmist, "In the great and wide sea are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan whom thou hast made to take his pastime therein," Psal. civ. 25, 26. In which words are pointed out, 1, Its vast extent. 2, The innumerable multitude of its fishes and monsters. 3, Its navigation. 4, the great whales; of all which we shall speak particularly.

13. And first, as for *the greatness and wideness of the sea*, who can but admire the power of God, which, notwithstanding that so much water flows into the sea every

day, and has done so from the beginning ; yet suffers not its waters to exceed their appointed quantity ? And though its waves sometimes rage and swell, and lift themselves above the mountains, yet they are quickly at rest, and settled within their proper bounds.

14. Under this head, we may not improperly speak of the *islands*. Who can behold, without wonder, several large and populous countries, and entire kingdoms, lying in the midst of the sea ? Who can tell on what foundations they are built, and what that is that keeps them fixt and immovable ? Though some of them indeed being encompassed with vast rocks, are supposed to be built and founded on them. Upon the whole, the fruitfulness, tillage, fruits, and the occasion and manner of their being peopled, is what we may rather admire than understand. So that (which is very strange to say,) the sea is as populous as the earth. As the earth is much less than the sea, God would not suffer the greatest part of the globe to be uninhabited, and therefore he planted it up and down with islands ; that none of the miracles and blessings which he works in the sea, might escape the observation of mankind. Therefore also to these islanders did he send the gospel of truth, by his holy apostles, “ shaking both the sea and the dry land, after the desire of all nations was come,” Hag. ii. 6, 7.

15. No less wonderful, 2, is the *vast multitude of creatures that inhabit the sea* ; for some affirm, that there is as great a variety of them in the sea as in the land. Who can behold, without astonishment, prodigious shoals of fish rising from the depths of the sea, like a flock of sheep, and offering themselves to the use and necessities of mankind ? So that the sea is a great storehouse of God, out of which he feeds a great part of mankind.

16. I come, 3, to *navigation* ; an art taught us by God ; as we learn from the story of Noah’s ark, which was built, and pitched within and without, by the special command of God, Gen. vi. 14.

17. I might mention the many stupendous voyages

that have been performed within the memory of us and our fathers, to the most distant parts ; and chiefly by the assistance of the *magnet*, a stone that seems to have nothing in it either of beauty or use, and yet by it the greatest things are performed. By this the pilot steers his ship, and keeps his way in the pathless waters ; and by constantly pointing to the pole, it guides the mariner to the intended port.

18. Lastly, 4, “the huge whales,” mentioned by holy David, give us a great idea of the mighty power of God. Of this, God himself takes notice, when he talks with Job ; “His bones are as strong pieces of brass, his bones are like bars of iron.* He is the chief of the ways of God. He drinketh up a river, and hasteth not : he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out : out of his nostrils goeth smoke, and a flame goeth out of his mouth. He maketh the deep to boil like a pot. He maketh the sea like a pot of ointment,” ch. xl. 13, 24, xli. 9, 11, 16, 22:

19. Thus much for the *greatness of the sea* ; which is a great illustration of the power of God. “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand ?” saith Isaiah, ch. xl. 12. To which the Psalmist answers, “Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, in the earth, in the sea, and in all deep places,” Psal. cxxxv. 6. All then that remains is, to praise, honour, and glorify *the wisdom of God*, which is so wonderfully manifested in the deep ; the riches of his goodness in that vast variety of fishes, and other productions of the sea, for the use of man.



* Learned men seem to be now generally of opinion, that not the whale, but the *hippopotamus*, or river-horse, is here intended ; and that by *leviathan*, spoken of ch. 41, the *crocodile* is meant. See *Benson's Commentary* on the passages.

CHAP. VI.

Of the living creatures ; the work of the sixth day.

1. If God take so much care for the comfortable subsistence of all his creatures, we cannot think that he made man for perpetual anguish and sorrow ; but is pleased to see us cheerful in the fear of God. So we are directed to pray, that “ God would comfort us again, after the time that he has plagued us, and for the years in which we have suffered adversity,” Psal. xc. 15. And, Isai. lxxv. 13, he promises his servants that they shall eat, drink, and rejoice. And, from the words of holy David, it plainly appears, that he intends to feed his servants, not sparingly, but plentifully and bountifully ; to which end, he maketh his “ clouds drop fatness,” Psal. lxxv. 11. Experience itself also teaches us, that all the creatures are so plentifully fed by God, that, at proper seasons, the birds of the air, the wild beasts of the forest, the cattle in the fields, and the fish of the sea, may offer themselves for the use and nourishment of man. So wonderful is the providence of our great Master ; so transcendent is the wisdom, so great is the concern of God, to provide for all the necessities of his children.

2. And whereas the Psalmist adds, “ When thou hidest thy face, they are troubled ; when thou takest away their breath, they die, and are turned again to their dust : when thou lettest thy breath go forth, they are made. Thou renewest the face of the earth,” Psal. civ. 29 : his meaning is, that the life of all creatures is nothing else but the *breath of God* ; or that enlivening spirit and virtue implanted in all creatures. Thus it is said, “ O Lord, thou lover of souls, thine incorruptible Spirit is in all things,” (Wisdom. xi. 26, xii. 1 ;) *i. e.* thy quickening and preserving power, by which at first thou createdst, and still preservest all things. And this quickening virtue

and power of God is that *Word*, by which all things were made. "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth," Psal. xxxiii. 6. And this Word was not a bare, empty sound, but became the life of all creatures, resting upon them as a principle of life and power; as St. Paul tells us, "The Lord sustaineth all things by the Word of his power," Heb. i. 3. So that the life and being of all things does as much depend on God, as the shadow of a tree docs upon the substance.

3. So that when God withdraws this word of life from the creatures, they immediately sink into their primitive nothing. The whole world is full of God; "from whom, and by whom, are all things." He is said "to be above all, and through all, and in us all. So that the Lord is the strength of our life." For as men of sorrowful and distressed spirits perceive a true and vital power in the Word of God; so there is in all creatures a sort of natural and vital power, which is nothing else but the *Word of creation*; the privation of which is death. By this Word also all the creatures are blessed and multiply. By this the face of the earth is every year renewed by a succession of plants, fruits, and living creatures, as if there were a new world every year. "While the earth remaineth," saith God to Noah, "seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease," Gen. viii. 22. And by the same blessing the world is preserved to this day.

4. But this *wonderful and universal providence of God* consists chiefly in three things. First, *in his knowledge*: "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." By this infinite and incomprehensible wisdom he knoweth, seeth, and heareth all things; therefore he is called in Scripture, "The God that liveth and seeth," Gen. xvi. 14. For no creature is hidden from him; but all things are naked and open in his sight. And he is called "the Living;" not only because he him-

self liveth for ever, but also because he is the life of all things.

5. The second head of Divine Providence is, *his fatherly goodness*; by which he taketh care of all things. "He maketh his sun to rise on the good, and on the evil," Matt. vi. 26. And if his mercy be not only extended to the least, but even to the undeserving parts of his creation; how ungrateful are we, if ever we entertain any suspicion of the kindness of so indulgent a Father? And if nothing be done upon earth but by his direction, we may from hence learn to submit with patience to every thing that befalls us, without murmuring; firmly believing that he careth for us; and by his unsearchable wisdom ordereth all things for our good, and for his own glory.

6. The third head of God's universal providence over all his creatures is, his *omnipotence*. By this he is always present to his creatures, governing and preserving them. By this he governeth the hearts of all men, and turneth them which way he pleaseth, Psal. xxxiii. 15. Whence it follows, that in all our thoughts, words, and actions, we ought to have a lively and devout sense of his omnipresence, and dread to do any thing that is hateful in his sight. For as is the clay in the hand of the potter, such are men in the hand of God.

7 Moreover, as God is every where, and preserveth and governeth every thing, so he is so exactly careful of his own servants, "that not an hair of their heads can fall to the ground without his permission." He preserveth and keepeth us "in the midst of our enemies." Therefore, when we are in distress, and have no apparent hopes of relief, we should support ourselves with this consideration, That the Lord himself, "great in counsel, and mighty in work," (Jer. xxxii. 19,) that laid our cross upon us, can easily lighten it, or strengthen us to bear it. "Let us commit our way unto the Lord," (Psal. xxxvii. 5,) like Abraham, who was ready to offer up his only son, without questioning how God could perform his promise unto him, but cast all his care upon God.

A PRAYER.

O LORD GOD, the Creator of heaven and earth, sanctified be thy name in me, thy poor creature, for all the works of thy hands, and especially for honouring and advancing me among the creatures which thou madest. O when shall I behold thy majesty in glory unchangeable, and enjoy those excellent good things in thy house, in comparison whereof all the things that I see, both in heaven and earth, are accounted as nothing. Those are the things which no eye hath seen, no ear heard, nor heart conceived, which thou hast prepared for them that love thee. If thou, O Lord God, dost send so innumerable benefits unto me, for this corruptible body of mine, from the sky and the air, from the land and the sea, from the light and darkness, from heat and shadow, from dew and rain, from wind and showers, from snow and hail, from fowls and fishes, from beasts and cattle, from herbs and things that grow upon the earth; how excellent, how great and innumerable shall those good things be which thou hast prepared for them that serve and love thee, in thine heavenly kingdom; where I hope to see thee face to face! If thou dost so much for us in prison, O what wilt thou do in thy palace! Great and innumerable are thy works, O Lord, thou King of heaven! And they all praise thee. O let thy great mercy, by this consideration of them, be opened unto me! Shine, O shine upon me, more and more, with thy light, that it may be the more opened unto me. For by these least things I comprehend thy great things. And by these visible things I begin to comprehend thine invisible things, O holy Lord God, my most good and gracious Creator. And now, since all these things, as they came forth from thee, are good and pleasant, which thou hast delivered to good and bad men together; what manner of things shall those be which thou hast laid up in store for the good

only ? And if this our prison contains so many delectable things, how much more delectable things containeth our Father's house ! For great art thou, O Lord, my God ; neither is there end, number, or measure of thy loving-kindness ; and according to thy majesty, so is thy mercy, even over all thy works. O how great is thy house, and how large is the place of thy possession ! Great, and hath no end ; high, and unmeasurable. Blessed therefore be the Builder of this house ; yea, blessed be the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth ; and let all thy works bless thee, O Lord, and praise thee, and magnify thee for ever, with thine almighty and eternal Word, by that Spirit which filleth and reviveth all things ! Amen.

A PRAYER

For the love of God.

MOST gracious God, and merciful Father, the everlasting Fountain of love and goodness ! behold the coldness and deadness of my love ; dead to thee, but alive and strong to the vanities of this world.

I have not loved thee, O blessed Father, O merciful Redeemer, O holy and only Comforter, as I ought ; though I know that thou alone art worthy of my love. Pardon, O merciful Lord, the greatness of my sin, and the errors of my deluded mind. Inflict not on me that heavy punishment denounced by the apostle, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed."

Extinguish in me all the love of the world. Destroy in me the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life ; and kindle in my soul the pure flame of Divine love, that I may love thee alone for thine own sake, and rest entirely in thee, my only good, the perfection of love, beauty, holiness, and wisdom.

Grant me grace to submit my heart, my will and understanding to thee, that I may keep thy commandments

with a filial obedience; and, denying my own will, may joyfully fulfil thine, testifying thereby the sincerity of my love.

O Jesu! let thy pure and perfect love inflame my frozen heart! Let thy flaming love enlighten my benighted soul! Let that exalted love of thine raise and purify my grovelling earthly heart! Let thy love strengthen and nourish all the powers and faculties of my soul and body!

Grant that, being filled with this love, I may abhor every thing that is displeasing to thee, and do and suffer every thing in obedience to thy will; and confirm me in this to the end of my life! Let this pure love draw and unite me to thee, and transform my whole spirit, soul, and body into thee! Let me think and speak of thee alone! Let me hunger and thirst after thee alone; that at last my heart may be satisfied with thy celestial sweetness, and that I may for ever abide in thee, and thou in me!

Grant that, from a sense of thy love, I may love all men in thee, and for thy sake, as my own self; that I may readily forgive and pray for mine enemies, doing them good for evil, and overcoming them by love!

Grant all this, for the immense love of the Father, my merciful Creator; of the Son, my blessed Redeemer; and of the Holy Ghost, my true and only Comforter! Amen.

THE END.