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OF  
**Practical Divinity**  
WHICH HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE ENGLISH TONGUE.



IN THIRTY VOLUMES:

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1750, IN FIFTY VOLUMES, DUODECIMO.

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*BY JOHN WESLEY, M.A.*

LATE FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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VOL. XVII.

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LONDON:

PRINTED BY T. CORDEUX, FOR T. BLANSHARD, 14, CITY-ROAD, AND  
66, PATERNOSTER-ROW.



1823.



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**EXTRACTS**

FROM

**THE WORKS**

OF

**MR. HUGH BINNING:**

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

**SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE.**

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**VOL. XVII.**

**B**





THE  
**L I F E**  
OF  
**MR. HUGH BINNING.**

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JOHN BINNING, of Dalvennan, was married to MARGARET M'KELL, a daughter of MR. MATTHEW M'KELL, Minister at Bothwell: by her he had two sons, HUGH and ALEXANDER. The father was possessed of no inconsiderable estate; for MR. HUGH having died before his father, JOHN, the only son of MR. HUGH, was heir to his grandfather in the lands of Dalvennan.

The worldly circumstances of the grandfather being so good, MR. JOHN BINNING was thereby enabled to give his son HUGH a liberal education. When he was at the Grammar-School, he made so great a proficiency in the knowledge of the Latin tongue, that he outstripped some who were several years older than himself. When his school-fellows went to their play, he chose to employ himself, either in secret duty with GOD, or conference with religious people: in this way he spent the time which he had to spare from his studies. He began to have sweet intercourse with GOD, and to live in near communion with him, before others began to lay seriously to heart their lost condition by nature, and that additional misery to which they expose themselves by walking in a wicked way. When he arrived at the thirteenth or fourteenth year of his age, he had even then attained so much experience in the ways of GOD, that the most judicious Christians in the place confessed they were much edified, strengthened, and comforted by him;

nay, that he provoked them to diligence in the duties of religion, being abundantly sensible that they were much outrun by a youth.

Before he was fourteen years old, he entered upon the study of Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, wherein he made very considerable progress, and with as much facility outstripped his fellow-students, as he had before done those in the Latin school ; by which means, he came to be much noticed in the College by the Professors and Students : and at the same time, while he made proficiency in the liberal sciences, he advanced remarkably in religion. The abstruse depths of philosophy, which are the torture of weak capacities, he dived into without any trouble : and notwithstanding his surprising attainments and improvements, and his ready apprehension of things, whereby he was able to do more in one hour than others in some days by hard study, yet was he ever humble, never exalted above measure, nor swelled with pride and self-conceit, the common disease of young men of any greatness of spirit.

So soon as he had finished his course of Philosophy, he was made Master of Arts with great applause ; and, having furnished his mind with an uncommon measure of the knowledge of letters, he began the study of Divinity ; at which time there happened to be a vacancy in the College of Glasgow, by the resignation of MR. JAMES DALRYMPLE, who had been MR. BINNING'S master. MR. BINNING was determined, after much entreaty, to stand as a candidate for that post. The Masters of the College, according to the usual laudable custom, sent to all the Universities in the kingdom, inviting such as had a mind to dispute for a Professorship of Philosophy, to offer themselves for that preferment ; giving assurance that, without partiality and respect of persons, the place should be conferred upon him who should be found *dignior et doctior*.

The Ministers of the city of Glasgow, considering how much it was the interest of the church, that well qualified persons should be put into the Professorship of Philosophy, and that Universities by this means become most useful

seminaries for the church ; and knowing that MR. BINNING was eminently pious, and one of a solid judgment, as well as of a bright genius ; at last prevailed with him to declare, before the Masters, his willingness to undertake the dispute with others.

MR. BINNING was not full nineteen years of age, when he commenced Regent and Professor of Philosophy ; and though he had not time to prepare a system of any part of his Profession, yet such was the quickness of his invention, the tenaciousness of his memory, and the solidity of his judgment, that his dictates to the scholars had depth of learning and perspicuity of expression. And we are assured, that he was among the first in Scotland, who began to reform Philosophy from the barbarous terms and unintelligible distinctions of the schoolmen, and the many vain disputes and trifling subtilties, which rather perplexed the minds of youth, than furnished them with solid and useful knowledge.

He continued in this Professorship for three years, and discharged his trust so well, that he gained the general applause of the University. And this was the more wonderful, because, having turned his thoughts towards the Ministry, he carried on his theological studies at the same time, and made great improvements therein ; which he was enabled to accomplish by his deep penetration, and by a memory so retentive, that he scarcely forgot any thing he had read or heard. It was usual for him to transcribe any sermon, after he returned to his chamber, at such full length, as that the intelligent reader, who heard it preached, should not find one sentence to be wanting.

At the expiration of his third year as a Professor of Philosophy, the parish of Govan, adjacent to the city of Glasgow, happened to be vacant. MR. BINNING was some time after called and invited to be Minister of the said parish, about the twenty-second year of his age.

He was, considering his age, a prodigy of learning ; for before he had arrived at the twenty-sixth year of his life, he had such a large stock of useful knowledge, that he

might well have been an ornament in the most flourishing University in Europe. This will appear the more astonishing, if we consider his weakness of body, through which he was unable to read much at one time, or to undergo the fatigue of assiduous study. But this was well supplied, partly by a memory that retained every thing he heard or read, and partly by a solid and penetrating judgment, whereby he digested it well, and made it his own; so that, with a singular dexterity, he could bring it forth seasonably, and communicate it to others, drained from the dregs he found about it, or intermixed with it; insomuch that his knowledge seemed rather to be born with him, than to have been acquired by laborious study.

From his childhood he knew the Scriptures, and had been under much deep and spiritual exercise, until a little before his entry upon the office of the Ministry, when he came to a great calm and lasting tranquillity of mind, being mercifully relieved from all those doubtings, which had for a long time greatly exercised him; and though he was of a tender and weakly constitution, yet love to CHRIST, and a concern for the good of precious souls committed to him, constrained him to such diligence in feeding the flock, as to spend himself in the work of the Ministry. It was observed of him, that he was not averse at any time from embracing an invitation to preach before the most experienced Christians: And when one of his most intimate friends took the freedom to ask him, how he came to be so easily prevailed with to preach before persons of so great experience and judgment, he made this reply, "When I have a clear call to mention my blessed Master's name in any place, I have no more to say, but 'Here am I, send me:.' What am I that I should resist his heavenly call? And when He, whose name is holy and reverend, is spoken of and to, and is there present, the presence of no other person is to be regarded: under that impression, I forget who is present, and who is absent."

He married MRS. BARBARA SIMPSON, daughter to MR. JAMES SIMPSON, a Minister in Ireland. Upon the day on

same, as to set forth the glorious perfections of its Maker, in a most entertaining manner.

But the main object of his pious and devout contemplations was, **GOD** in **CHRIST** reconciling the world to himself. For **GOD**, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, had shined into his heart to give him the light of the knowledge of **GOD**, in the face of **JESUS CHRIST**; so that he not only understood the mysteries of the kingdom of **GOD** himself, but it was given to him to make others know them. His preaching was in the demonstration of the **SPIRIT**, and of power. His sermons are the very transcript of what had passed betwixt **CHRIST** and his own soul; he spoke and wrote his experimental knowledge, and did both speak and write, because he believed.

He earnestly contended for the articles of faith and truths of religion. And as to the duties of Christianity, he enforced the performance of these, with all the arguments of persuasion; so that, through the blessing of **GOD**, his pulpit-discourses became the power of **GOD** to the illumination of the understandings of his hearers, the renovation of their natures, the reformation of their lives, and the salvation of their souls.

The difficult part of a reprover, he acted in the most prudent and gaining manner: when he did lick with his tongue the mote out of his brother's eye, he did it with all tenderness, and with the tear in his own. His words wanted neither point nor edge for drawing of blood, when the case of the offender made it an indispensable duty; and when he was compelled to use sharpness with any, they were convinced that he sincerely intended their good. His compassion on the ignorant, and on them that were out of the way, made it evident, how much he considered himself as encompassed with infirmity, and so within the hazard of being tempted.

He was a person of exemplary moderation and sobriety of spirit, had healing methods much at heart, and studied to promote love and peace among his brethren in the ministry. He vigorously contributed to the recovery of

the humanity of Christianity, which had been much lost in the differences of the times, and the animosities which followed thereupon. These virtues and graces had such an ascendancy in his soul, that, as he carried coals about him taken from the altar, to warm the souls of all with whom he conversed with love to God, his truths, interests, and people, so he carried sanctuary-water about with him, to cool and extinguish any thing of undue passion which he perceived to accompany the zeal of well-designing persons ; a temper that is rarely found in one of his age. But ripe harvest-grapes were found upon this vine in the beginning of spring ; and no wonder, since he lived so near the Sun of Righteousness, and lay under the plentiful showers of divine grace, and the ripening influences of the HOLY SPIRIT.

He was no fomentor of faction, but studious of the public tranquillity. He was a man of moderate principles, and temperate passions. He was far from being confident, or vehement, in the management of public affairs ; and was never imposing or overbearing upon others, but willingly hearkened to advice, and yielded to reason.

After he had laboured four years in the Ministry, serving God with his spirit in the Gospel of his SON, he died of a consumption, when he was scarcely come to the prime of life, entering on the twenty-sixth year of his age ; leaving behind him a sweet savour after he was gone, and an epistle of commendation upon the hearts of his hearers. While he lived, he was highly valued and esteemed, having been a successful instrument of saving himself and them that heard him, of turning sinners unto righteousness, and of perfecting the saints ; and he died much lamented by all good people, who had the opportunity and advantage of knowing him. He was a person of singular piety, and of an humble, meek, and peaceable temper ; a judicious and lively preacher ; nay, so extraordinary a person, that he was justly accounted a prodigy, for the pregnancy of his natural talents, and his great proficiency in human learning, and in the knowledge of Divinity.

which he was to be married, he went, accompanied with his friends, (amongst whom were some grave and worthy Ministers,) to an adjacent country congregation, upon the day of their weekly sermon. The Minister of the parish delayed the sermon till they should come, hoping to put the work upon one of the Ministers whom he expected to be there; but all of them declining it, he next tried if he could prevail with the bridegroom, and succeeded, though the invitation was not expected. He went immediately to the pulpit, and preached upon 1 *Pet.* i. 15: "But as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." At this time he was so remarkably helped, that all acknowledged, God was with him of a truth.

In his sermons his matter gives life to his words, and his words add a lustre to his matter. That great Divine, MR. JAMES DURHAM, gave this verdict of him; "There was no speaking after MR. BINNING; and truly he had the tongue of the learned, and knew how to speak a word in season. The subject-matter of his Sermons was mostly practical, and yet rational and argumentative, fit to inform the understanding of his hearers, and move their affections: And when controversies came in his way, he showed great acuteness and judgment in determining them, and no less skill in applying them to practice."

He was a great student in the books of Creation and Providence, and took much pleasure in meditating upon what is written in these volumes: the wonders he discovered in both led him up to the infinitely wise and powerful Maker and Preserver of all things. Once when he came to visit a gentleman of good learning, and his intimate acquaintance, the gentleman took him to his garden. In their walk, he discoursed with him, to his great surprise, of the declaration which every thing makes of its Almighty Creator; and talked of the wisdom and goodness of God, particularly in clothing the earth with a green garb, rather than with a garment of any other colour: And having plucked a flower from it, he made a most savoury and spiritual discourse: and so dissected and anatomized the

He was buried in the church-yard of Govan, where MR. PATRICK GILLESPIE, then Principal of the University of Glasgow, at his own expense, caused a monument to be erected for him, on which there is to this day the following inscription :—

*HIC situs est MAGISTER HUGO BINNINGUS ;  
 Vir pietate, fucundiâ, doctrinâ clarus ;  
 Philologus, Philosophus, Theologus præstans,  
 Præco denique Evangelii fidelis et eximius ;  
 Qui e medio rerum cursu sublatus  
 Anno Ætatis XXVI., DOM. autem MDCLIII.,  
 Mutavit Patriam, non Societatem,  
 Eo quod vivus cum DEO ambulavit.  
 Et si quid inquiras, cætera sileo ;  
 Cum nec tu nec Marmor hoc capiat.*



---

**FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD:**

**OR,**

**SERMONS**

**ON THE**

**FIRST EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN,**

**CHAP. I. AND II.,**

**WHEREIN**

**THE TRUE GROUND AND FOUNDATION OF ATTAINING  
FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON,  
AND THE BLESSED CONDITION OF SUCH AS ATTAIN TO IT,  
ARE EXPLAINED.**

**BY HUGH BINNING.**

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# FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD.

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## SERMON I.

---

1 JOHN i. 1.

*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life.*

It is the great qualification of a disciple, or hearer, to be attentive and docile, to be capable of instruction, and to apply the mind seriously to it. It is much to get the ear of a man ; if his ear be gotten, his mind is the more easily gained : Therefore those who professed eloquence, and studied to persuade men, were accustomed, at the commencement of a discourse, to fall upon something that might stir up the attention of their hearers, or make them more inclinable to receive instruction, or catch their favour or good will, which is of great moment to persuasion : for it is sometimes fit to open the passages of the heart by such means, that there may be the more easy entrance for instruction and persuasion. Truly, something of this art runs here in a divine channel ; as indeed all these rules of human wisdom attain their perfection, when they meet with the DIVINE SPIRIT, who elevates them to a more transcendent use. Happy was that eloquence of PAUL, and the other Apostles, and something like the sweet inspiration of Angels, by which they prevailed with the spirits of men : and he that said, “I will make you fishers of men,” taught them to present some things for the allurements of

souls, and so to surround and enclose them with most weighty and convincing reasons. The beloved Apostle, JOHN, who leaned upon CHRIST's bosom, and was likely to learn the very secrets of this art, you see how he goeth about the business; he useth an holy art in this preface. Being about to give a recapitulation of the whole Gospel, and to make a short summary of the doctrine of it, for the more effectual establishment of souls already converted, and for the powerful persuasion of others to embrace it, he useth all the skill that can be in the entry, to dispose men's hearts to receive it: like a wise Orator, he labours to stir up their attention, to conciliate their affection, and so to make them easily teachable: he stirs up attention, when he shows that he is not to speak about trifling matters, or low things, or things that do not concern them; but about the greatest, most interesting, and most important things, even "the Word of Life," in which all their life was wrapped up: which, though it was ancient in itself, yet withal was a new thing to the world, and so, on all accounts, deserved to be taken serious notice of. Then he conciliates their benevolence by showing his own affection towards them, and his great design in it,—that it was only for their good and salvation, and that he had nothing else in view, but to have them partakers with himself in the same happiness: he hath found a jewel, and he hides it not, but proclaims it, that all men may have fellowship with him, and with GOD; and that cannot but bring in full joy to the heart. Now a soul being made thus attentive, and willing to hear, it is the best disposition that makes them the most capable of being taught.

O that ye would once listen to the Gospel! "Hearken, and incline your ears unto me," is the LORD's first great request: And if once you do but seriously apply your minds and hearts, to see what is held out unto you, and to prove what good is in it, certainly these sure and everlasting mercies will sweetly catch you, to your eternal advantage. Wisdom, the FATHER's Wisdom, begs but an equal hearing of you; let her have but a patient hearing, and a silent

and impartial judgment of the heart. It is lamentable that the voice of **GOD** should be out-cried by men's uninterrupted flood of business, which fills the heart with a continual noise, and keeps men in such a constant hurry and distemper, that they can give time and patience to nothing else : this is the advantage which the world and the lusts of it have ; for if they once come under a sober and serious examination, and the other party, that is, **JESUS CHRIST**, and "the Word of Life," might have the liberty to be heard in the inward and retired thoughts of the heart, it would soon be found how unequal they are, and that all their efficacy consists in our ignorance, and their strength in our weakness ; certainly **CHRIST** would carry it, to the conviction of all that is in the soul. I beseech you let us give Him this attention.

He that answers a tale before he hears it, it is a folly and weakness to him : a folly certainly it is to give this Gospel a repulse before you hear it. It promiseth life and immortality, which nothing else doth ; and you entertain other things upon lower promises, even after frequent experiences of their deceitfulness. What a madness then is it, to hear this promise of life in **CHRIST** so often beaten upon you, and yet never so much as to put him to the proof of it ; and to put Him off continually, who knocks at your hearts, before you will consider attentively who it is that thus importunes you ! O, my Beloved, let Him speak freely to your hearts, and commune with them in the night on your beds, in your greatest retirement from other things, that you may not be disturbed by the noise of your lusts and business ; and then I persuade myself, that you who now mind this life, should seek your joy in **GOD**, and find it in Him. But to cut off all convictions and persuasions at first, and to set such a guard at your minds, as to provide that nothing of that kind may come in, or else that it may be cast out as an enemy, this is unequal, ignorant, and unreasonable dealing, which you alone will repent of ; it may be, too late, and when past remedy.

He propounds that which he is to speak in the fittest way, for the commendation of it to their hearts : And O

how vast is the difference betwixt this, and the ordinary subject of men's discourses ! Our ears are filled continually with reports ; and it is the usual way of men to delight to hear, and to report, even those things that are not so delightful in themselves : And truly there are not many occurrences in this world, that can give any solid refreshment to the heart, except in holy meditation on the vanity, vexation, and inconstancy, to which God hath subjected all those things. But it is said, that Christians, who have so noble and divine, so pleasant and profitable things, upon which to speak one to another, are notwithstanding as much subject to that Athenian disease ; itching after new things continually, and spending their time in reporting and hearing news. Alas ! what are those things that are tossed up and down continually, but follies, weaknesses, and wickedness ? And is there any thing in this, either pleasant or profitable, that we should delight to entertain our own thoughts, and others' ears with them ? But the subject that is here treated of, is of another nature ; nothing else is of itself so excellent, nothing else to us so convenient. " That which was from the beginning, of the Word of Life, we declare unto you." O how much more pleasant and sweet a voice is that which sounds from heaven, than those confused noises which arise from the earth ? This is a message that is come from heaven, with Him that came down from it. There are four properties, by which this infinitely surpasses all other things. For itself it is most excellent ; for its endurance it is most ancient ; to us it is most profitable ; and both in itself, and to us, it is most certain : and by these the Apostle labours to prepare their hearts for serious attention.

For the Excellency of the Subject, it is incomparable ; for it is no less than that jewel which is hid in the mine of the Scriptures, and which he, as it were, digs up, and shows and offers unto them ; that jewel, I say, which when a man hath found, he may sell all to buy it ; that jewel, more precious than the most precious desires and delights of men, even JESUS CHRIST, the substantial Word of Life, who is

the substance of all the shadows of the Old Testament, the end of that ministry, the accomplishment of the promises, and that very life of all religion, without which there is nothing more vain and empty. It is true, the Gospel is "the Word of Life," and holds out salvation to poor sinners: but yet it is CHRIST who is the Life of that Word, not only as touching the efficacy and power of it, but as touching the subject of it; for the Gospel is a Word of Life only because it speaks of Him, who is "the Life and the Light of men." It is but a report of the true Life; as JOHN said, "I am not that Light, but am sent to bear witness of that Light." (*John* i. 8.) So the Gospel, though it be called "the power of God to salvation," (*Rom.* i. 16,) and "the savour of life," and "the Gospel of salvation," (*Eph.* i. 13,) yet it is not that true Life, but only a testimony and declaration of it; it hath not life and immortality in itself, but is only the bringing of those to light, and to the knowledge of men. It is a discovery where these treasures are lying, ready for our searching and finding.

To speak of this "Word of Life, JESUS CHRIST," according to his eternal subsistence, would require a divine spirit, elevated above the ordinary sphere of men, and separate from that earthliness and impurity, that make us incapable of seeing that holy and pure Majesty. Angels were but low messengers for this; for how can they express to us that which they cannot conceive themselves, and at the mystery of which they therefore wonder? I confess, the best way of speaking these things, which so infinitely surpass created capacities, were to sit down in silence, and wonder at them; and withal to taste such a sweetness, in the immense greatness and infinite mysteriousness of what we believe, as might ravish the soul more after that which is unknown, than all the perfections of the world, known and seen to the bottom, can do.

Consider that a Saviour is holden out unto us, who is "the Rock of Ages," and upon whose word this huge frame is bottomed, and stands firm; one who infinitely exceeds all things visible or invisible; one who was pos-

sessed by the FATHER, as his delight, before the foundation of the world, and so is most likely to reconcile Him to us, and prevail with him ; yea, most certainly, they must have one will, and one delight, who were undivided from all eternity. I would have you, upon this, to gather two considerations : one, what an incomparably excellent SAVIOUR we have,—one with God, equal to Him, yea, one with Him from all eternity ; and so how strong a foundation there is for faith and confidence ! Who could purchase unto us such absolute blessedness throughout all eternity, who was not himself from all eternity ? What marvellous congruity and beauty are in the ways of God ! How is all fitted and framed by infinite wisdom, to the end that we may have strong consolation ! Again, what worth is put upon the immortal soul of man, that is but of yesterday ; when He who was the delight of God, before all beginning, is weighed in the balance, as it were, with it, and no other thing found sufficient for exchange and compensation, that the soul may be redeemed ! And doth not this answer all the jealousies, and suspicious thoughts, and fearful apprehensions, arising from the consideration of our own weakness and infirmity ; when such an one is offered, as is able to save to the uttermost ? Then I would desire you to believe, that the FATHER is as well minded to the salvation of sinners, as the SON ; for they were together from all eternity, and, as it were, contrived this design between them, to save and redeem mankind. Some entertain harsher thoughts of the FATHER, as if CHRIST was more accessible, and exorable ; but the truth is, He hath given the SON this command, and therefore he professed, that it was not so much his will as his FATHER's, about which He was employed. Therefore correct your apprehensions ; do not stand back from the FATHER, as it were, till you have prevailed with CHRIST ; no, that is not the way ; come in your first address to the FATHER, in the SON, for so he wills you ; not because he must be overcome by his SON's persuasion, but because he would have his love to run in that channel, through CHRIST, to us.



But there is withal a Newness in this subject, which both increases admiration, and may the more engage our affection; for “the Life was manifested,” saith he; (ver. 2;) and He is such a Word of Life, as though he was invisible and untouchable from the beginning, yet he was lately clothed with flesh, which made him both visible, and capable of being handled. Now truly these are the two poles, about which the mystery, glory, and wonder of Christianity turn; the antiquity of his real existence, as God, and the lateness of his appearance in the flesh, as man. Nothing is so old, for He hath the infinite fore-start of the most ancient creatures. Take those Angels, the sons of God, who sang together in the first morning of the creation; yet their generation can soon be told, and their years numbered: it is easy to calculate all antiquity, and we should not reach six thousand years, when it is taken at the largest measure; and what are six thousand years in his sight? Suppose a mountain of sand, as big as the earth, and an Angel to take from it one grain every year; your imagination would weary itself, ere ye reckoned in what space this mountain should be diminished or removed. Now imagine as many years, or ages of years, to have run out before the world took its beginning, as the years in which the Angel would exhaust this mountain; yet we have not come a whit nearer the endurance of our LORD and SAVIOUR, whose being is like a circle, without beginning or end. “Behold, He is great, and we know him not, and the number of his years cannot be searched out.” (*Job xxxvi. 26.*) Now He that was thus blessed from everlasting, “who dwelt in inaccessible light and glory, which no man hath seen, nor can see,” infinitely removed from all human capacities and senses; He, I say, begins to be manifested in the fulness of time; to make himself visible, he takes our flesh; and all for this purpose, that He who was the substantial life in Himself, and the eternal life, in an essential and necessary way, might become life to poor dead sinners, and communicate to them eternal life. And truly it was no wonder that all ages were in expectation of this, from the

beginning of the world since it was first promised, and that the inhabitants of heaven were in a long expectation to see and look into this mystery; for there is something in it more wonderful than the creation of this huge frame of heaven and earth. God made himself in a manner visible, by making the visible world: his power, goodness, and wisdom, are every where imprinted in great characters on the whole, and all the parts of it. The light, how glorious a garment is it, with which He is, as it were, clothed! The heavens, how majestic a throne! The earth, how stately a footstool! The thunder, how glorious and terrible a voice! In a word, the being, the beauty, the harmony and proportion, of this huge frame, are but a visible appearance of the invisible God. But in taking our flesh, the Word is more wonderfully manifested, and made visible; for, in the first, the Creator made creatures to start out of nothing, at his command; but in this, the Creator is made a creature. He once gave a beginning of being to things that were not: Being before all beginning himself, he now takes a beginning, and becomes flesh, which he was not. And what is it in which he was manifested? Is it the spiritual nature of angels? Though that far excels ours, yet it is no manifestation of Him to us. Is it in the glory, perfection, and flower of the visible world, as in the sun and lights of heaven? Though that have more show of glory, than the flesh of man, yet it makes not much to our comfort; there would not be so much consolation in that manifestation. Therefore, O how wisely and wonderfully is it contrived, for the good of lost man, that the Son of God shall be made of a woman, that the Father of Spirits shall be manifested in the lowest habit of our flesh? And the lower and baser that be, in which he appears, the higher the mystery, and the richer the comfort. Suppose the manifestation of glory should not be so great, yet the manifestation of love is so much the greater: nay, I may say, even the glory of "the only-begotten Son of God" was the more visibly manifested, in that he appeared in so low and unequal a shape. For

power to show itself in weakness, for glory to appear in baseness, and such glorious rays to break forth from under such a dark cloud; this was greater glory, and more majesty, than if he had showed himself in the perfection of the creatures. Now it is easy to distinguish the veil from that which it covers; to separate infirmity from divinity: but then it would have been more difficult, if his outward appearance had been so glorious, to give unto God what was God's, and to give the creature what was the creature's: the more near his outward shape had been to his divine nature, the less able had we been to see the glory of his divinity through it.

Now when both these are laid together, the Ancientness of our SAVIOUR, and withal the Newness of his appearance in the flesh, by which he hath come so near us, and, as it were, brought his own majesty within our sphere, to be apprehended by us; and for no other end, but to make life and immortality to shine forth, as beams from him, to the quickening of dead souls; O how should this conjunction endear him to us! That the Everlasting Father should become a child for us, that is one wonder. The next wonder is, that "we, who are enemies, should be made the children of God by him." When such a dark representation of this Word of Life was the very life of the godly in the world for four thousand years, O how much is the cause of joy increased, by the rising of "the Sun of Righteousness" himself, and by his appearing in the very darkest night of superstition and idolatry. O, then, let us open our hearts to him, and entertain these new and fresh tidings with new delights: though these be now more than sixteen hundred years old, yet they are still recent to a believing heart; there is an everlasting spring in them that sends out every day fresh consolation to souls, as refreshing as the first day on which this spring was opened.

But such an everlastingly glorious Person, though he have life in himself, though he be ever so excellent, as the Son of God, yet what is that to us? It seems he is never a whit nearer us, or not more suitable to restore us, than the very Majesty that we offended. How far is he without our

sight, and without our comprehension! He is high as heaven; who shall ascend to bring down that eternal life to us? But stay and consider, that he is not only so glorious in himself, but so gracious to us; he is not only invisible, as God, but manifested to our senses, as Man: he not only hath his throne in heaven with his FATHER, but hath come down to the world, to bring that eternal life near to us, even into our mouth and hearts; to preach it, to purchase it, to seal it, and to bestow it. "And the Life was manifested." "The Life," and "That Eternal Life," are words of force, that have some emphasis in them: "The Life" is much, "That Eternal Life" is more; and yet these had been little to us, if not manifested to us: Life might have remained hid in God; Eternal Life might have resided in CHRIST the fountain for all eternity; and nothing of their happiness would have been diminished, if these had never sprung out and vented themselves; if that Life that was with the FATHER from the beginning, had never come down from the FATHER, we alone had been miserable by it. Well, then, there is a manifestation of life in CHRIST's low descent to death; there is a manifestation of the riches of love and grace in the poverty and emptiness of our SAVIOUR; and thus he is suited to us and our necessities, every way fitly correspondent. And now it is not only, "as the FATHER hath life in Himself, so the SON hath life in Himself;" but there is a derivation of that life to man; that donation of life to the SON (*John* v. 26) was not so much for any need he had of it, as by Him to bestow it on us, that it might be, "as the living FATHER hath sent me, and I live by the FATHER; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." (*John* vi. 57.) Himself is the bread of life sent from heaven, that whosoever receiveth it with delight, and ponders and meditates on it in the heart, and so digests it in the soul, shall find a quickening, quieting, comforting, and strengthening virtue in Him. Nay, there is a straight connexion between his life and ours; "Because I live, ye shall live also;" as if He could no more want us, than his FATHER can want Him, (*John* xiv. 19,) and as if He could be no more happy with-

out us, than his FATHER without Him. And whence is it come to pass, but from his manifestation for this very end and purpose? Behold the infinite wisdom, power, and grace of GOD, giving life to the dead, by the death of Life itself; saving those that are lost, by one that lost himself; overcoming the world by weakness; conquering Satan by suffering; triumphing over death by dying.

Now for the certainty of this manifestation of “the Word of Life” in our flesh, both that He was man, and that He was GOD: this, I say, we have the greatest evidence of, that the world can afford, next to our seeing and handling. To begin with the testimony, set down here, of those who were ear and eye-witnesses of all; which, if they be men of credit, cannot but make a great impression upon others. Consider who the Apostles were, men of great simplicity, whose education was so mean, and expectation in the world so low, that they could not be supposed to conspire together to a falsehood; and especially when there was no worldly inducement leading them thereto, but rather all things persuading to the contrary. Their very adversaries could never object any thing against them, but want of learning, and simplicity, which are farthest from the suspicion of deceitfulness. Now how were it possible, think you, that so many thousands, every where, should receive this new doctrine, so unsuitable to human reason, from their mouths, if they had not known that themselves were eye-witnesses of all these miracles that He did, to confirm his doctrine, and that this testimony had been above all imaginable exception? Yea, so evident was it in matter of fact, that enemies themselves, the Jews and Gentiles that persecuted that way, were constrained, through the evidence of the truth, to acknowledge that such mighty works showed forth themselves in Him. And besides, the Apostle appealed to the testimony of five hundred, who had seen JESUS rise from death, which is not the custom of liars; neither is it possible for so many, as it were, of purpose, to conspire to such an untruth, as had so many miseries and calamities following on the profession of it.

But what say they? “That which we have heard of;”—not only from the Prophets, who have witnessed of Him from the beginning, and do all conspire together to give a testimony that He is the SAVIOUR of the world, but from JOHN, who was his messenger, immediately sent before his face, and whom all men, even CHRIST’S enemies, acknowledged to be a Prophet; and, therefore, his pointing out the Lamb of God, his declaring how near He was, and preferring Him infinitely before himself, his instituting a new ordinance, plainly pointing out the MESSIAH at the door, and publishing constantly that voice, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand;” these we and all the people have heard, and heard, not with indignation, but with reverence and respect. But above all, we heard Himself, the true Prophet and Preacher of Israel; since the first day he began to open his mouth in the Ministry of the Gospel, we have, with attentive ears, and earnest hearts, received all from his mouth, and laid up these golden sayings in our hearts. He did not constrain them to abide with Him, but there was a secret power that went from him, that chained them to him inevitably; “LORD, whither shall we go from thee, for thou hast the words of eternal life?” That was an attractive virtue, a powerful virtue, that went out of his mouth. We heard Him, say they, and we never heard any speak like him, not so much for the pomp and majesty of his style,—for he came low, sitting on an ass, and was as condescending in his manner of speech as in his other behaviour,—but because “he taught with authority;” there was a divine virtue in his preaching; some sparkles of a divine spirit and power in his discourses broke out from under the plainness and simplicity of it, and made our souls truly to apprehend of Him what was sacrilegiously attributed in flattery to a man, “the voice of God, and not of man.” We heard him so many years speak familiarly to us, and with us, by which we were certainly persuaded he was a true man; and then we heard him in his speeches open the hidden mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, revealing the will of the FATHER, which no man could

know, but He that was with the FATHER, and came down from him. We heard him unfolding all these shadows of the Old Testament, expounding MOSES and the Prophets, taking off the veil, and uncovering the Ark and Oracles : and “ how did our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us, and opened to us the Scriptures ? ” We heard him daily in the synagogues expound the Scriptures, whereof Himself was the living commentary, when he read them ; we saw the true exposition before our eyes.

Now, my Beloved, you may be admitted to hear him too ; for the sum of the living words that came from the Word of Life are written : his Sermons are abridged in the Evangelists, that you may read them ; and when you read them, think within yourself, that you hear his holy mouth speak them. Set yourselves as among his disciples, “ that so ye may believe, and believing may have eternal life.”

There is a gradation of certainty here : Hearing Himself speak, is more than hearing by report ; but an eye-witness is better than ten ear-witnesses ; and handling adds a third assurance, for the sense of touching gives the last and greatest evidence of truth. It is true, that the sense is properly correspondent to sensible things, and of itself can only give testimony to his humanity ; yet I conceive these are here alleged for both, to witness also his glorious and divine nature ; which though it did not fall under sight and handling, yet it discovered itself to be latent, under that visible covering of flesh, by sensible effects ; no less than the spirit of man, which is invisible, manifests its presence in the body, by such operations as can proceed from no other principle : and therefore this faithful witness adds, “ which we have looked upon ; ” which relates not only to the outward attention of the eyes, but the inward intention and affection of the heart. Our senses did bring in such marvellous objects to our minds, that we stood gazing, beheld it over and over, and looked upon it with reason, concluding what it might be ; we fastened our eyes, that we might detain our hearts, in the consideration of such a glorious person. From this then you have two

things clear : one is, that our **LORD JESUS CHRIST** was a true Man, and that his disciples had all possible evidence of it ; he conversed with them familiarly ; he ate and drank with them ; and indeed, to testify the truth of his human nature, he came so low as to partake of all human infirmities, and to be subject to such afflictions and crosses, as, to the eyes of the world, did quite extinguish his divine glory. This evidence that he was Man, was the grand stumbling-block and offence of the Jews and Gentiles ; which they made use of as an evidence and certain testimony that he was not **GOD**. But let us consider this,—for it is a sweet and pleasant subject, if our hearts were suitably framed to it,—that there was as much evidence to the conviction of all men's senses, of his divine majesty, as of his human infirmity ; and that there are two concurring evidences, which enlighten one another ; which was shown, partly from his own works and miracles, and partly from the miraculous success of the Gospel after him.

Do not the trophies of these apostolic victories remain to this day, in every corner of the world, after so many hundred years, in so many different, and so far distant nations ; that same Name being preached, and all knees bowing to it ? These things considered,—how much was done, and by means worse than nothing,—it transcends all the miracles that ever the world wondered at. Now, my Beloved, these things I mention for this end, that ye may be persuaded upon sure grounds, that He who is preached unto you is “ **GOD** able to save you ; ” and according to the evidence of these grounds ye may believe in Him, and give a cordial assent to these everlasting truths. I know not a more pleasant and profitable meditation than this, if we would enter into a serious consideration of the truth and certainty of these things which we have received. O how would such evidence open the heart to an entire and full closure with them, and embracement of them !



## SERMON II.



1 JOHN i. 3.

*That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you,  
that ye also may have fellowship with us.*

THERE are these two peculiar excellencies in the Gospel, or “Word of Life,” that it is never unprofitable, nor unseasonable; but doth contain in it, at all times, the greatest advantage to the souls of men, of infinitely more concernment than any other thing can be. And then we have no doubtful disputations about it; it varies not by times and circumstances; it may be declared with the same full assurance at all times, which certainly cannot be attained in other things. Should not all other things, then, be thought impertinent and trivial in respect of this, the salvation of sinners? And what hath a connexion with that, but JESUS CHRIST, and “the Word of Life?”

Two principles actuated this divine Apostle. The first was the exceeding love of his Master, for he loved much, as he was much beloved; and this carries him, on all occasions, to give so hearty a testimony to him. And, then, another principle moved him, the love of others’ salvation. “These things I declare, that ye may have fellowship with us;” finding in his own experience how happy he was, what a pearl he had found, how rare a jewel, “eternal life,” he cannot hide it, but proclaims it. His next wish is, Now, since I am thus blessed, O that all the world knew, and would come and share with me. I see that unexhausted fountain of life, that infinite fulness of grace in JESUS CHRIST, that I, and you, and all that will, may come and be satisfied, and nothing diminished. There is that immense fulness in spiritual things, that superabundance, and infinite excess

over our necessities, that they may be enjoyed by many, by all, without envy or discontent, and without prejudice to one another's fulness, which the scantiness and meanness of created things cannot admit. O seek that happiness in fellowship with God, which having attained, you lack nothing but that others may be as happy!

"These things I declare, that ye may have fellowship with us."—O that Ministers of the Gospel might say so, and might from their own experience invite others to partake with them! When some get into the favour of great and eminent persons, and have the honour to be their companions, they are very loth to invite promiscuously others to that dignity; this society would beget competition and emulation. But O, of how different a nature is this fellowship, which whosoever is exalted to, he hath no other grief, but that his fellow-creatures either know not, or will not be so happy: therefore he will always be about the declaring of it to others.

Ye are invited to this very communion with the Apostles; the lowest and meanest amongst you hath this high dignity in your offer, to be fellow-citizens with the saints, with the eminent pillars of the church.

Now, my Beloved, what more can be said for our comfort? Would you be as happy as JOHN, as blessed as PAUL? Would you think yourselves well, if it were possible, to be in as near relation and communion with CHRIST as his mother and brethren? Truly, that is not only possible, but it is holden out to you, and you are requested to embrace the offer, and come and share with them. "He that heareth my words and doeth them, the same is my mother, and sister, and brother:" you shall be as dear to him as his dearest relations, if you believe in him. Do not, then, entertain jealous and suspicious thoughts, because you are not like Apostles, or such holy men as are recorded in Scripture: if you forsake not your own mercy, you may have fellowship with them in that which they account their chief happiness. There is no difference of quality or condition, no distance of other things,

which can hinder your communion with them. There are several sizes and growths of Christians, both in light and grace ; some have extraordinary raptures and ecstasies of joy ; others attain not to that, but are rather kept in attendance and waiting on God in his ways ; but all of them have one common salvation. As the highest have some fellowship with the lowest in his infirmities ; so the lowest have fellowship with the highest in his privileges. Such is the infinite goodness of God, that what is absolutely necessary, and most important either to soul or body, is made most universal, both in nature and grace ;—as the common light of the sun to all, and the Sun of Righteousness too, in an impartial way, shining on all them that come to him.

Verse 3. “And truly our fellowship is with the FATHER and the SON.”—It was both the great wisdom and the infinite goodness of God, that he did not only frame a creature capable of society with others of his own kind, but that he fashioned him so, as to be capable of so high an elevation, to have communion and fellowship with Himself. It is less wonder of Angels, because they are pure incorporeal spirits, drawing towards a nearer likeness to his nature, which similitude is the ground of communion ; but that he would have one of the material and visible creatures below, who for the one half is made of the dust of the earth, advanced to this inconceivable height of privilege, to have fellowship with Him, this is a greater wonder ; and for this end he breathed into man a spirit from heaven, that he might be capable of conformity and communion with Him, who is “the Father of Spirits.” Now take this in the plainest apprehension of it, and you cannot but conceive that this is both the honour and happiness of man, for the footstool to be elevated up to the throne, for the poor contemptible creature to be lifted up to the society and friendship of the most high and glorious God, the only fountain of all the hierarchies of heaven, or degrees upon earth. So much as the distance is between God and us, so much proportionally must the dignity rise, to be

advanced out of this low estate to fellowship with God. The soul that is aspiring to this communion with God, is extracted out of the dregs of beastly mankind, and is elevated above mankind, and associated with blessed Apostles, and holy Angels, and Spirits made perfect : and that were but little, though it be an honour above regal or imperial dignities ; but it is infinitely heightened by this, that their association is with God, the blessed and holy TRINITY.

Herein consists man's happiness too ; for the soul being enlarged in its capacity and appetite, far beyond all visible things, it is never fully satiated till it be possessed of the chief and universal Good ; and then the soul rests from its labours ; then there is eternal rest proclaimed,—“ Return to thy rest, O my soul ; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.” (*Psal.* cxvi. 7.) What a poor *Requiem* do men sing to their own hearts from other enjoyments ? Oftentimes men's hearts, whether dreaming or waking, speak in this manner, “ Soul, take thy rest ; ” but how ill grounded is that peace, and how false that rest, daily experience in part witnesseth, and the last day will fully declare. But, O ! how much better and wiser were it for you to seek the favour and light of his countenance upon you, and to be united to Him who is the fountain of life, so that ye might truly, without hazard of such a sad reprehension as that fool got, say, “ Soul, take thy rest in God.”

Man was advanced to this dignity and happiness, but he kept not his station. He is now associated with, and made like to, beasts or devils ; he is a stranger to God from the womb ; all the imaginations of his heart tend to distance from God ; he is banished from God's presence, the type whereof was his being driven out of the garden ; and yet he is not long out, nor far away, when the infinite love of God sends after him to recall him ; many messengers are sent beforehand, to prepare the way, and to dispose men's hearts to peace ; many prophecies and fore-intimations were given of that great embassy of love, which at length appeared ; for “ God sent his SON, his own SON,” to take away the difference, and make up the distance.

And this is the thing that is declared unto us by these eye and ear-witnesses, that we may know how to return to that blessed society which we had forsaken. Is man banished out of the Paradise of God into the accursed earth? Then the SON is sent out from the Paradise above, to come into this world, and to save the world. Is there such a gulf between us and heaven? CHRIST hath put his own body between, to fill it up. Do the Cherubims watch with flaming fire to keep us from life? Then the SON hath shed his own blood in abundance, to quench that fire, and so to pacify and compose all in heaven and earth. Are there such odds and enmity between the families of heaven and earth? He sent his SON, the chief heir, and married him with our nature; and in that eternal marriage of our nature with Him, he hath buried in everlasting oblivion all the difference, and opened a way for a nearer and dearer friendship than before. And whence was it, I pray you, that God dwelt among men, first in a tabernacle, then in a fixed temple, and that so many were admitted and advanced again to communion with God? Was it not all from this, the anticipating virtue of that uniting and peace-making Sacrifice? It was for His sake who was to come, and in his flesh to lay a sure foundation for eternal peace and friendship between God and man.

To speak aright of this communion would require more acquaintance with it than readily will be found amongst us: but it is more easy to understand in what it is exercised, than to bring our hearts unto it. Certainly it must neither be taken so low and wide, as if it consisted all in the external duties and approaches of men to God; for there is nothing capable of communion with "the Father of Spirits" but a Spirit; and sure I am, the most part of us act little that way. It is a lamentable thing that men pretend to please God with such vain empty shows, and bodily appearances, without any serious exercise of their souls, and attention of their minds in divine worship. Neither yet must it be taken so high, and made so narrow, as if it consisted only in ravishments of the soul after God,

joined with extraordinary sweetness and joy : though that be a part of it, yet it is not universal to all God's children. There may be a solid serious attendance on God in his ordinances, which may have more true substantial life, and more of the marrow of Christianity in it, though a soul should not be acquainted with these raptures, nor ever carried without the line of an equal walking with God. Therefore that which I would exhort you to, is to acquaint yourselves with JESUS CHRIST, and you shall find a new way opened in Him, by which you may boldly come to God ; and having come to God in Him, you are called to walk with him, to entertain that acquaintance that is made, till all the distance and estrangements of your hearts be removed. And I know not any thing which is more apt, either to beget or preserve this fellowship, than the communication of your spirits often with Him in prayer, and with his Word in meditation ; and this is not to be discharged as a custom, but from the love of God within, drawing the heart willingly towards communication with Him, and constraining you to pour out your requests to him, and wait on him, even though ye should not find that sensible sweetness that sometimes is found.

Verses 3, 4. "And truly our fellowship is with the FATHER, and with his SON JESUS CHRIST. And these things write we unto you, that our joy may be full."—You have here the express end and purpose of the Gospel, to make up the two breaches in the creature, between God and men, and between men and men. It is a Gospel of Peace ; wherever it takes hold of men's spirits, it reduceth all to a peaceable temper, and joins them to God, and one to another : for the very sum and substance of it is the love of God to mankind, proposed for this end, to engage the love of man again ; and love is the cement that alone will conjoin hearts unto this fellowship. It is a strange thing, and much to be lamented, that *Christendom* should be a field of blood, beyond other places of the world ; and that where the Gospel is pretended to be received, men have so far put off even humanity, as thus to bite and devour one another. Certainly it is, because where it is preached, it is not believed :

therefore, “sin taketh occasion by it to become the more sinful.” Yet let us take heed, that it is the grand design of the Gospel to restore us to a blessed fellowship with the **FATHER**, and withal to a sweet fellowship amongst ourselves; for both, you see, are included here.

We are called to fellowship with the **FATHER**; and what is that, but to have the **FATHER** of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST** for thy Father, and for thee to be his son by adoption? This is the very marrow of the whole covenant, and all the promises thereof; “I will be your Father, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the **LORD ALMIGHTY**.” (2 *Cor.* vi. 18.) “I go (saith **CHRIST**) to your Father and my Father, to your **GOD** and my **GOD**.” O what a sweet complication and interchange of relations! “I will be your **GOD**, and ye shall be my people.” Here is the epitome of all happiness; in this word all is enclosed, and without this nothing is to be found that deserves the desires of an immortal spirit. For hence it follows, that a soul is filled with “all the fulness of **GOD** ;” (*Eph.* iii. 19 ; ) for that is made over to thee who believest the Gospel.”—Then, to have “fellowship with his **SON JESUS CHRIST**” is another branch of this dignity; and this is that which introduceth the other. **CHRIST** is the middle person, the Mediator between **GOD** and man, given for this end, to recover men from their dispersion and separation from **GOD**, and restore them again to that blessed society: and therefore our acquaintance, as it were, begins with Him, and by Him we are led to the **FATHER**. “No man can come to the **FATHER** but by the **SON** :” therefore, if you have His friendship, you have done the business; for He and his **FATHER** are one.

Now this fellowship, to branch it forth more particularly, is either real or personal. By real, I mean, a communion of all good things, a communion with him in his nature, offices, and benefits; and this must be laid down as the foundation-stone of this fellowship. He came near us, to partake of flesh and blood with us, that we might have a way, a new and living way consecrated, even “the vail of his flesh,” to come to **GOD**

by; for certainly this gives boldness to a soul to draw near to **GOD**, when it is seriously considered, that our nature is so nearly conjoined already to **GOD**: by this step a soul climbs up to the majesty of **GOD**; and by means of this, we become “partakers of the divine nature,” as **GOD** of human nature. (*2 Pet. i. 4.*) By the same degrees we ascend to **GOD**, through which **GOD** hath descended to us: He drew near to us by our nature; and we, by the intervention of that same nature, ascend to Him, and receive his image and stamp on our souls; for the **LORD** did stamp his own image upon **CHRIST**’s human nature, in order to make it a pattern to us, and to represent to us, as in a visible symbol and pledge, what impression he would put upon us.—Then we have fellowship with him in his offices. I need not branch them out severally; you know what he was anointed for: to be a Priest, to offer sacrifice, and to reconcile us to **GOD**, and to make intercession for us; to be a King, to rule us by his word and **SPIRIT**, and defend us against our enemies; to be a Prophet, to reveal the will of **GOD** to us, and instruct us in the same. Here is a large field of fellowship; we have admittance, by faith in **JESUS CHRIST**, to the real advantage and benefit of all these: there is nothing in them but it redounds to us. The living virtue of that Sacrifice is as fresh this day, to send up a savour of rest to heaven, and to pacify a troubled conscience, as the first day it was offered. That perfect Sacrifice is as available to thy soul, as if thou hadst offered it thyself; and this day ye have the benefit of his prayers in heaven; we partake of the strong cries and tears in the days of his flesh, and of his intercession since, more than of our own supplications. What shall I say? You have one to teach you all things that are needful for you; to subdue your sins under you; and, by virtue of fellowship with **JESUS CHRIST** in these offices, there is something derived from it, and communicated to us, that we should be “Kings and Priests to **GOD** our Father;”—Kings, to rule over our own spirits and lusts, in as far as grace reigns in us to eternal life, (and that is truly an heroic, royal spirit, that overcomes himself and the world,) and Priests, “to



offer unto God continually the sacrifice of prayer and praises," (1 *Pet.* ii. 5,) which are sweet-smelling and pleasant in his sight ; yea, we should "offer up our own bodies as a reasonable service ;" (*Rom.* xii. 1 ; ) and this is a holy and living sacrifice, when we dedicate and consecrate all our faculties, members, and abilities, to his will and service.

Let us sum up all this :—Whatsoever grace or gift is in CHRIST JESUS ; whatsoever pre-eminence he hath above angels and men ; whatsoever he purchased, by his obedient life, and patience in death ; there is nothing of all that, but the soul may be admitted to fellowship in it, by its union with him by faith. Have Him, and have all that he hath : faith makes him yours, and all that he hath is a consequential appendix to Himself : the word of the Gospel offers him freely to you, with all his benefits, interests, and advantages. O that our hearts may be induced to open to Him !

Now being thus united to JESUS CHRIST, that to which I would next persuade, is a personal communion ; that is, a suitable entertainment of Him, a conjunction of your soul to Him by love, and a conspiracy of all your endeavours henceforth towards Him. It is certain, that true friendship is founded on a conjunction and harmony of souls by affection, by which they become in a manner one ; for love makes a kind of transport of the soul into another, and then all particular interests are drowned in oblivion ; no more *mine* and *thine*, but He makes an interchange ; *mine thine*, and *thine mine* ; *my heart thine*, and *thy honour mine*. Now certain it is, that in this God leads the way ; for he declares his love to the world, in the rarest effect of it, "God so loved the world, that he sent his SON." And you have the most infallible argument of his SON's love ; "Greater love hath no man than this, to lay down his life for his friends ;" but He for his enemies. Now then, you see how the heart of God and his SON JESUS CHRIST is fixed on the sons of men, and so fully set towards them, that it hath transported the SON out of his own glory, and brought him down in the state of a servant.

Now the love of a believer being the result of GOD's love, this it is which is the source and spring of constant communion; and it vents itself in converse with GOD, and daily entertainment of Him in our spirits and ways. There is a keeping of company with Him in prayer and meditation, and all the ordinances; there is a communication and familiar conference of the heart with Him, either in thinking on him, or pouring out our requests to him; there is a mutual and daily intercourse of the soul with GOD in answering his word by obedience, in praying to him, and receiving answers from him, and then returning his answer again with a letter of thanks and praise, as it were; these are the ways to increase our love of GOD, and kindle it up to a higher flame; and being thus increased, it gathers in all the endeavours and abilities of the soul, and sets all on fire, as a sweet-smelling sacrifice. It is henceforth the great study of the soul, to remove all things that are offensive to Him; for the entertaining of sin, his enemy, is inconsistent with this true fellowship. This will mar that sweet correspondence in prayer and praises; for it is a breach of covenant, to maintain his enemies. Therefore the soul that loves GOD will study to compose itself in all things to his good pleasure; as his love, which is as strong as death, puts him upon a careful watching to do all things for our profit; and so this takes in our whole walking in religious approaches, or in common business, to have this as our great design, "conversing with GOD, and walking to all well-pleasing."

Now if we be once enrolled in this blessed fellowship with the FATHER and the SON, then it follows, as a fruit of this, that we have fellowship one with another; and truly the more unity with GOD, the more unity among ourselves; for He is the uniting, cementing principle. He is the centre of all Christians: and as lines, the further they are from the centre, the further distant they are one from another, so the distance of souls from GOD sets them at furthest distance among themselves.

The nearer we come every one to JESUS CHRIST, the

nearer we join in affection one to another : and this is implied in that expression of CHRIST's prayer, "that they may be one in us." (*John xvii. 21, 22.*) No unity can be enjoyed but in that *one* LORD, and no perfect unity but in a perfect union with Him.

Verse 4. "That your joy may be full."—All motions tend to rest and quietness : we see it daily in the motions below, and we believe it also of the revolutions of the heavens above ; and there is a day coming in which they shall cease, as having performed all they were appointed for. And as it is in things natural, so it is in things rational in a more eminent way ; their desires, affections, and actions, which are the motions and stretches of the soul towards that which it desires and apprehends as good, are directed, by the very intention of the soul, to some rest and tranquillity. If other things, that have no knowledge, have their centre of rest, how much more must man, who is an understanding creature, have it by the appointment of GOD ; but there is this wide difference in the point of capacity of happiness between man and other creatures, that they, whatsoever excellent virtues or properties they have, yet know them not themselves, and so can neither enjoy what excellency themselves have, nor use what is in others. For to what purpose is it to shine forth, if there be no eye to see ? What advantage hath the rose in its fragrancy, if it cannot smell itself ? That which is not perceived is as if it were not. And therefore it is an evident testimony, that all these visible things were created, not for themselves, but for man's sake, who knows them, can use them, and enjoy them. Here is then the peculiar capacity which GOD hath given to man, to know what he seeks, what he hath, and possesses, that so he may be able to enjoy it, or use it, according to the nature of it. This is a great point of GOD's image, and of conformity with him, whose infinite blessedness riseth from that perfect comprehension of himself, and his own incomprehensible riches. So then, man's happiness or misery must depend upon this, both what the soul fixeth upon, and what it apprehendeth to be in it ; for if that eternal and universal

good, the fulness of God, be the centre of the soul's desires and endeavours, and there be apprehended and discovered in God that infinite excellency and variety of delights, which nothing else can afford so much as a shadow of, then there cannot but result from such a conjunction of the soul's apprehension, and of the excellency and goodness of God, such a rest and tranquillity, such joy and satisfaction, as must make the soul infinitely happier than the enjoyment of any other thing could do.

This being the thing then, to which all men's desires naturally tend, this tranquillity and perfect satisfaction, the great misery of man is, that he mistakes the way to it, and seeks it where it is not to be found. The generality of men are so far degenerated both from the impression of a Divine Majesty, and the sense of an immortal being within themselves, that they think to content their hearts in these outward, inconstant, and perishing things; and so their life is spent in catching at shadows, in feeding on the wind, in labouring in the fire. There is nothing which satisfies our expectations, so as to reward the expense of our labour, toil, and travail about it; there is nothing therefore but a continual, restless agitation of the heart from one thing to another, from one thing that now displeases or disappoints, to things that were formerly loathed, as a sick man turns him from one side to another, and at length returns, expecting to find some ease where he lay at first.

How is it possible that they can give content to the soul of man, which are so utterly disproportioned to it, both because they are only suited to the senses, and likewise, because they are changeable? Now the soul is framed with a higher capacity; and can no more be satiated with visible things, than a man that is hungry can be satisfied with gold: and, besides, it is immortal, and must have something to survive all the changes of time. Now though these things cannot truly fill the heart, yet they swell the belly like the east wind, which causeth many torments and distempers in the soul; and though they cannot give ease, yet they may be "as thorns to prick and pierce a man

through with many sorrows." So that there is no more wisdom or gain in this, than in gathering an armful of thorns, and enclosing and pressing hard unto them; the more hardly and strongly we gripe them, the more grievously they pierce us.

I am sure that your experiences give a testimony to this, that there is no solid, constant, and equable heart-joy in all the imaginary felicities which this world adores. There is nothing of these things, that is not lower in actual possession, than in the apprehension of them afar off. Nothing in them answers either our desires or expectations; and, therefore, instead of peace and tranquillity, they breed more inward torment and disquiet, because of that inevitable disappointment which attends them. Therefore the Apostle passeth all these things in silence, when he writes of fulness of joy; for he knows that in them there is neither that joy, nor that fulness of joy, which we would wish from them.

There have been some wiser than others, who have their apprehension above the rest of mankind, and have laboured to frame rules to lead man to rest and tranquillity; and in this they have done much, to discover the vanity and madness of the common practice of men, and to draw man from sensible and outward things, to things invisible and spiritual; yet there is a defect in all the rules which natural reason can reach.

But here the failing is, that while they call a man off from things without, they lead him but into his own spirit within, as if he could find rest in the enjoyment of his poor miserable self. But CHRIST JESUS calls us into our own spirits, not to dwell there; for O what a loathsome habitation is a defiled heart, and a guilty conscience! But rather than find nothing of that refreshment within, we may forsake ourselves, as well as the world without, and transport ourselves into GOD in CHRIST, the only habitation of joy and delight; that being filled with anguish from the world, and from ourselves, we may more willingly divorce ourselves from both, and agree to be joined unto JESUS

**CHRIST**, and to embrace him in our hearts, who is the only fountain of life and joy ; who had no other errand and business from heaven, but to repair man's joy, which had suffered as grievous a breach as any in the creation. "These things I have spoken unto you, that your joy may be full." (*John* xv. 11.) Therefore the Apostle propounds this as the end of his writing ; "These things I write, that your joy may be full ;" and the way to attain this he expressed in the former verse, by "fellowship with the **FATHER** and **SON**."

In these we find all things suited and proportioned to the exigencies of the soul. There is suitableness in them, because of their spiritual nature, whereby they may close immediately with thy spirit : other things are material ; and what union, what fellowship, can a spirit be supposed to have with them ? They are extrinsic things, that never come to a nearer union with thy soul ; and though they could, they would debase thy soul, not exalt it, because of an inferior nature. But these things,—**JESUS CHRIST**, eternal life in him, the precious promises of the Gospel, the spiritual privileges of sonship,—are of a more divine nature ; and, by faith, souls come to close with them : these are inward things, more near the soul that believes, than himself is to himself ; and so he may always carry them about in his heart, which may be a spring of everlasting joy. "This no man can take from him." For the ground and fountain is inward, seated without the reach of all vicissitudes and changes. Then, as they have a suitableness, so they have a fulness in them ; they are cordials to the heart, things that are in their own nature refreshing to the soul.

Besides, as the things of the Gospel affect the heart and soul, so there is a fulness in them, which may fill all the corners of the heart with joy ; there is an unexhaustedness in these things, an universality in **CHRIST**, "all in all," "all the treasures of wisdom." And may not this cause a spring-tide of joys ? The heart is eased upon the lowest clear apprehension of **CHRIST** and the Gospel ; it gives a heart-serenity and calmness to a troubled soul, that nothing

else could do. Yet to make up the fulness of joy, as well as the solidity of it,—to extend the measure of it, as well as to beget the true quality of it,—it is requisite that not only there be a fulness in the object, but there must be a kind of fulness in the apprehension; it must be represented fully as it is, and the clouds of unbelief scattered; and then, indeed, upon the full aspect of the Gospel, and CHRIST in it, there is a fulness of joy that flows into the soul, as the sea is filled upon the full aspect of the moon.

If once this were established in thy soul, that here is that truth and fulness of joy, which elsewhere is vainly sought, would it not divert thy desires, and turn the current of thy affections and endeavours, to fall into this ocean of delight?

When a soul is possessed with CHRIST by faith, and dwelleth in GOD by love, there is both reality and plenty: all the dimensions of the heart may be filled up. Such is the fulness of joy which flows from that blessed fellowship of the FATHER and the SON. Now though these two be only mentioned, yet the HOLY GHOST must not be excluded, for the apostolic prayer doth attribute our fellowship with GOD chiefly to the SPIRIT; so that it is the SPIRIT who unites our hearts, associates them to GOD, and seems to correspond between him and us: so then there is such a fellowship with the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, as leaves no vacuity in the heart, and fills all the dimensions and corners of it with peace and joy.

Add to this, in the third place, that these things have not only a fulness, but withal a durableness; not only a plenty, but besides, a perpetuity, to correspond to the immortality of the soul. Suppose any thing could for the present give a fulness of joy, and absolute content to the heart, yet if we imagine that thing may be separated from the heart, and cease to be, certainly the very expectation of such an eternal separation would almost extinguish all the joy.

But now, that fear is removed, and the believer needs not lose the sweetness of the present enjoyment of GOD, through anxious foresight of the future; because he may

know, that the perfect fulness which shall never ebb is but coming; and the sun is but ascending yet towards the meridian, from whence he shall never go down, but stand fixed, to be the eternal wonder and delight of angels and men.

Now though it be true, that Christians here have neither that plenty, nor that perpetuity of joy, which the object of it gives ground for; though their hearts be often filled with grief, partly from outward, partly from inward evils and afflictions; yet certainly this ariseth from the dark, dim belief, and slight consideration, of these things which CHRIST spoke, and his Apostles wrote unto us: we might, no question, keep our hearts in more peace and tranquillity, in all the commotions of the times, or alterations in ourselves, if we did more steadfastly believe the Gospel, and keep more constant fellowship with God.

O let us lay these things to heart, which, being laid up in the heart, will fill it with this perfume of peace and joy. They are written for this end; let us hear them for this end too, that our joy may be full.

Joys of the HOLY GHOST, arising from the consideration of the grace and goodness of God, and the experience of it in the soul, affect the heart, and give the answer of a good conscience, in the blood of CHRIST, which is a continual feast; these drive out the bitter apprehensions of sin and wrath; these sweeten and refresh the soul in all worldly afflictions.

The torments and perplexities of a troubled soul are better felt by ourselves, than known by others; and so are the joys of that heart which apprehends JESUS CHRIST, and peace purchased in him; they are such, as no man that is a stranger to such things in his experience can apprehend. It is "joy unspeakable." And truly if you did not interpose the clouds of unbelief and sin between you and his shining countenance, there needed not be so often an eclipse in the joys of believers; yet the day is coming when ye shall see Him fully as he is, and nothing be interposed between you and him; and then your joy shall be full for ever.



## SERMON III.



1 JOHN i. 5.

*This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that GOD is light.*

THE great design of the Gospel is to make up the breach of man's joy, and open the way to the fulness of it : and therefore it is the "glad tidings of great joy," the best message that ever came to the world. Now it shows unto us the channel, into which this river of gladness runs ; it discovers what is the way of conveying it to the soul, and what are the banks it runs between, and that is, "Fellowship with the FATHER and the SON." In this channel that river of delight runs, between the banks of the love of GOD to us, and our love to him. Herein a soul is happy ; and so much do we profit by the Word, and answer the design of the Gospel, as we estimate our happiness from this alone, the communication of GOD to us. Whensoever the Gospel takes hold of your hearts, it will undoubtedly frame them to this, to a measuring of all blessedness from GOD alone : and this will carry the heart to undervalue all other things, and so to a forsaking of any thing for the closer enjoyment of GOD. I fear many believers are little acquainted with this joy, because they draw not their joy singly out of the pure fountain of delight ; but turn aside to other external comforts, and drown their souls in them. Now these two cannot subsist together : if we take in any thing else to make up our happiness, so much we lose of GOD ; and therefore our hearts should be more purified from carnal delights, if we would have experience of this joy. We must hang only upon his countenance and company ; else we lose the sweetness of it.

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Now the Apostle prosecutes this further, to discover what conformity must be between them that should keep this fellowship ; and what likeness of nature and qualities is necessary for them who would be happy in God's society. "This is the message we have heard, saith he, and which we declare unto you, that God is light." Take this jointly with that which went before, "This we declare, that ye may have fellowship with the FATHER and the SON."

And to the end that this fellowship may be maintained, and yield you fulness of joy, it is necessary that the nature of God should be laid down as the pattern to which ye must be conformed. "God is light," and therefore ye must be light too, if ye would have fellowship with that pure light. This is the full message of the Gospel, that which was sent down from heaven by the SON of God, "the Messenger of the Covenant," and which the Apostles heard from him.

"This then is the Message,—that God is light." The ground of communion of persons, is their union in nature or likeness. There is some general society between all mankind, as being conjoined in one common nature ; but the contracting of that, in narrower bounds of affinity and consanguinity, doth enlarge the affection the more. True friendship draws the circle yet narrower, and contracts the love that is scattered abroad towards mankind, to run towards one, or a few ; and the foundation of this is some peculiar likeness in manners, and sympathy of disposition, which make the souls of men to melt one into another ; this is the bond which knits this near society. Now that which holds good in the communion of man with man, must be much more needful in man's communion with God : for all the societies or conjunctions of the creatures are but shadows of this higher communication of the spirit of man with God "the Father of Spirits." And indeed we may find some rude draughts and resemblances of this divine society, and of the rule according to which it must be modelled, in all the near conjunctions of creatures ; for every thing is best preserved, and agrees best, with things of its own nature.

This divine society must be constituted according to this fundamental rule; that is, It is necessary, to the end that God and man may have fellowship together, that they should come nearer in likeness one to another. Now as to God, you know that he cannot be more like us, for he is unchangeably holy. That were most absurd, to bring down His majesty to partake of our wretched sin and darkness. Indeed in this he hath come as far as his own nature and our good would permit, by communicating in our nature, and in all the sinless infirmities of it. It is impossible then that He should make up the distance by any change of Himself; but we must be changed, and in some way raised up to partake of the purity of his nature, and be transformed into some likeness to him; and then is the foundation of society and fellowship laid. This is the Apostle's meaning, in declaring to us what God is; that, according to that pattern, and in that glass, we may see what to conform ourselves to.

"God is light, and in Him is no darkness."—Now take the just opposition; man is darkness, and in him is no light. What communion then can light have with darkness? Either the light must become darkness, or the darkness become light; either the light must leave its glorious purity, which cannot be, or else the darkness of men's souls must be abolished by the brightness of God's light; and then there may be a communion between the primitive light, and the derivative light,—between the original light, and that which flows out from the original. But take darkness, remaining darkness, and light, remaining light, and they cannot join together; for the great separation that was made in the world was between light and darkness. "And God saw the light that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness." (*Gen. i. 4.*) And so it is impossible for men that live in the darkness of their minds, in ignorance, and in the darkness of sinful lusts, to have any fellowship with God, who is a fountain of pure light, and undefiled sanctity.

But who is a fit Messenger to declare this message? Can darkness comprehend the light? Or can those that are blind form any lively notion of light, to the instruction of

others? Truly, no more can we conceive or speak of God, who is that pure light, than a blind man can discourse on colours, or a deaf man on sounds. "Who is blind as the Lord's servant?" And therefore, who more unmeet to declare this message of light? What reverence then and godly fear ought this to be declared with, when mortal man speaks of the eternal God? What composure of spirit should be in us? What trembling and adoration? For, at our best, we can but declare our own ignorance; and the furthest attainment in this knowledge is but a further discovery of man's darkness. We have three ways of creeping towards that glorious light of God. First, His works are some visible appearances of that invisible and incomprehensible God; and in these we know him, but not what he is in Himself. How dark and dull are we in piercing into the hidden natures of things, even below us, such as beasts and plants. We behold some effects flow from them; but from what principle these flow, we know not: how much less can we apprehend any thing suitable of the Divine Majesty, which is infinitely above us, from these wonderful and glorious works of his power and wisdom? Man is endowed with wisdom to do some excellent works of art, such as planting, building, painting, weaving, and the like. But the beasts that are below us cannot apprehend, from these works, what the nature of man is. Now is there not a greater disproportion between us and the divine nature, so that we cannot rise up to an understanding of it, in itself? Nay, one man will do many things which another cannot understand; he beholds the art of it, he sees the matter, but yet he cannot pierce into the mind of the workman. Therefore all that we can conclude from these wonderful works of God, is some silent admiration of him. If these be such, then what must He be? How infinitely transcendent over them? But what He is, these cannot declare, and we cannot apprehend. Then we are accustomed to climb up to the knowledge of God, by attributing to Him all the perfections of the creatures. Whatsoever commends them, we apprehend that to be originally and infinitely in

Him; and thus we spell out that name, which is simply one, in many letters and characters, according to our mean capacity, as children when they begin to learn; so we ascribe to him wisdom, goodness, power, justice, holiness, mercy, truth. All these names being taken from the creatures, and so having significations suited to our imperfections, must needs come infinitely short of him; and so must our apprehensions of them in him. These are scattered among the creatures, and therefore they cause divers conceptions in us; but all these are united in Him. He is a most simple, pure being, who virtually is all things, and properly is none of all.

Another way we have of apprehending Him, by way of negation, denying all the imperfections of the creatures, and removing them to an infinite distance from Him; and truly, though this be an imperfection in knowledge, yet it is the greatest knowledge we can attain to, to know rather what he is not, than what he is. He is not limited to any place, nor bounded by any measures and degrees of perfection, as creatures are; therefore we call him *infinite*: He is not comprehended within the limits of time, but comprehends all within himself; therefore he is *eternal*: He is not subject to changes and alterations, therefore he is called *immutable*: He is not compounded, as a result of divers parts, therefore he is most purely simple and *one*: He is not like these things which we see and hear, that fall under our senses; therefore we call him a *Spirit*.

Now in all these weak endeavours of man, to detain and fix his own spirit in the contemplation of God, if he cannot reach the understanding of what God is, yet he will attain this wisdom, not to be ignorant of his own ignorance. And truly, my beloved, this is the thing I would have us learn to know, that the admiration of God in silence is the best expression of him. We should not search into these mysteries, to satisfy our curiosity, but rather compose our hearts to a continual silent wondering before him; for where our understandings are confounded, and our minds overwhelmed with the infiniteness of that glory, so that we can see nothing but our own ignorance of all, this should

certainly compose all to quiet admiration ; for silence and wonder is the natural posture of a soul that is at a stand, and can neither get forward for inaccessible light, nor will retire backward, because of what it apprehends already.

“ This then is the message,—that God is light.” Because we cannot conceive, in our poor narrow minds, what God is in himself, therefore he expresseth it to us in similitudes drawn from the creatures, and condescends to our capacity. As he stands in manifold relations to us, so he takes the most familiar names, which may hold out to our dull senses what we may expect of him : therefore he calls himself a *Father*, a *King*, a *Husband*, a *Rock*, a *Buckler*, a strong *Tower*, a *Mountain*, and whatsoever else may represent to our hearts that which may strengthen them in believing. But there is no creature so directly attributed to God, as *Light* ; none used to express his very nature and being, as abstracted from these relations, but this, “ God is Light :” and CHRIST takes it to himself, “ The Light of the world,” and “ the Life of men.” The truth is, it hath some excellency above all other visible creatures, so that it may fitly carry some resemblance to him. The Scripture calls light “ his garment ;” (*Psalms* civ. 2 ;) and truly it is a more glorious robe of majesty, than all the imperial garments of state, which either angels or men could contrive. The light is, as it were, a visible appearance of the invisible God : He hath covered his invisible nature with this glorious garment, to make himself, in a manner, visible to man. It is true, this light is but, as it were, a shadow of that inaccessible light. It is the dark shadow of God, who is himself infinitely more beautiful and glorious. But yet, as to us, it hath greater glory and majesty in it, than any creature besides : it is the chief of the works of God, without which the world would be without form, and void : it is the very beauty of the creation, that which gives lustre and amiableness to all that is in it, without which the pleasantest paradise would become a wilderness, and this beautiful structure and adorned palace of the world would be a loathsome dungeon. Besides the admirable beauty of it, it hath a wonderfully

swift conveyance throughout the whole world; in the twinkling of an eye, it is carried from the one end of heaven to the other in a moment: "And who can say by what way the light is parted?" (*Job*, xxxviii. 24.) Moreover, it carries along with it a refreshing heat and warmth, which is the very life and subsistence of all the creatures below. And whereas there is nothing so beautiful, so there is nothing so universally and highly profitable; to all this add that singular property of it, that it is not capable of infection; it is of such absolute purity, that it can communicate itself to the dunghill, as well as to the garden, without receiving any mixture from it: in all the impurities it meets with, it remains unfixed and untainted, and preserves its own nature entire. Now you may perceive that there is nothing visible that is fitter to resemble the invisible God, than this glorious, beautiful, pure, and universally communicable creature, **LIGHT**.

Hereby you may have shadowed out unto you the nature of God, that he is an all-knowing, intelligent Being, as light is the first and principal visible thing; yea, that which gives visibility to all things; and so is in its own nature a manifestation of all things material and bodily: so God is the first object of the understanding. Nothing is so fit an emblem of knowledge as light, and in that respect God is the original light, a pure intellectual light, that hath in himself the perfect idea and comprehension of all things: He hath anticipated in himself the knowledge of all, because all things were formed in his infinite understanding, and lay, as it were, first hid in the bowels of infinite power. Therefore he is a globe, or mass, of light and knowledge, like the sun, from whom nothing is hid: "Hell and destruction are not covered to Him;" there is no opacity, no darkness in the creation, that can terminate or bound this light, or hinder his understanding from piercing into it. Now as all things, by the irradiation of the light, become visible, so the participation of this glorious "Sun of Righteousness," and the shining of his beams into the souls of men, makes them partake of that heavenly intellectual nature, and reflects a

wonderful beauty upon them, which is not in the rest of the world.

Besides, here is represented to us the absolute purity and perfection of God's nature ; "God is light, and in him is no darkness." Besides the purity of the light of knowledge, there is a purity of the beauty of holiness ; the glorious light of God, his virtue, and power, and wisdom, is communicated to all the creatures : there is an universal extent of his influence towards the good and bad, as the sun shines on both ; and yet there is no spot or stain upon his holiness, from all his intermingling with the creatures, the worst and basest creatures. All his works are holy and righteous, even his works in unholy and unrighteous men ; he draws no defilement from the basest of the creatures, nor yet from the sinfulness of it. He can be intimately present in working, in virtue and power, in care and providence, with the dirt and mire of the streets, and with the beasts of the field, and yet there is no stain upon him, as men would suppose it to be ; no more than it is a dishonour to the sun to shine on the dunghill. In a word, there is no mixture of ignorance, darkness, impurity, or iniquity in him, not the least shadow, change, or turning, not the least seed of imperfection.

Add unto this, to make up the resemblance more fully, the bounty and benignity of his influence upon the world, the flowings forth of his infinite goodness, which enrich the whole earth. The sun is the greatest and most universal benefactor ; his influence and heat is the very renovation of the world ; it makes all new, and green, and flourishing ; it puts a youth upon the world, and so is the very spring and fountain of life to all sublunary things. How much is that true of "the true Light," of whom the sun is but a shadow. He is "the life of the world, and the light of men." Every good gift descends from Him ; this influence is more universal to the being, to the moving, to the living of all things. And JESUS CHRIST, "the Sun of Righteousness," is carried about in the orb of the Gospel, and in his beams there is a healing virtue ; these



are the refreshments of poor wearied souls. There is an admirable heat of love and affection, which this glorious light carries embosomed in it; and that it is which pierces into souls, and warms hearts, and quickens dead spirits, and puts a new face upon all. This is the spring of all the life that is truly spiritual; and it hath as sweet and comfortable effects upon the souls of men, who receive the truth in love, the light in love, that is, the light with heat, as ever the sun approaching near the earth hath had upon plants and living creatures.

And, to complete the resemblance, there may be something of the infallibility and incomprehensibility of the Divine Majesty here represented; for though nothing be clearer than the light, yet there is nothing in its own nature darker than light: that which is so manifest to the eyes, how obscure is it to the understanding? Many debates and inquiries have been about it, but yet it is not known what that is, by which we know all things. Certainly, such is the Divine Light: it is inconceivable and inexpressible, therefore he is said "to dwell in light inaccessible." (1 *Tim.* vi. 16.) There is a two-fold darkness that hinders us from seeing God, a darkness of ignorance in us, and a darkness of inaccessible light in him. The one is a veil upon our hearts, which blinds and darkens the souls of men, that they do not see that which is manifest of God, even in his works. O that cloud of unbelief which is spread over our souls, and which hinders the glorious rays of that divine light from shining into them! To this darkness Satan contributes much, who is "the Prince of Darkness." (2 *Cor.* iv. 4.) This makes the most part of souls like dungeons within, when the glorious light of the Gospel surrounds them without: this earthliness of our hearts makes them, like the earth, receive only the light in the upper and outer surface, and not suffer it to be transmitted into our hearts. But when it pleaseth Him, who at first, by a word of power, "commanded light to shine out of darkness," He can scatter that cloud of ignorance, and draw away the veil of unbelief, and can, by his power and art, so

transform the soul, as to remove its earthly quality, and make it transparent and pure ; and then the light will shine into the heart, and get free access into the soul. But though this darkness were wholly removed, there is another darkness, that ariseth not from the want of light, but from the excessive superabundance of light ; a divine darkness, a darkness of glory, such an infinite excess of light and glory, above all created capacities, that it dazzles and confounds all mortal or created understandings. We see some shadows of this, if we look up to the clear sun ; we are able to see nothing for too much light. So there is such an infinite disproportion between the eye of our mind, and this divine light, that if we curiously pry into it, it is confounding and astonishing ; and therefore it fills the souls of saints with continual silent admiration and adoration.

“ And in him is no darkness at all.”—As there is a light of understanding and wisdom in God, and a light of holiness and purity, so there is in our souls, opposite to these, a darkness of ignorance and unbelief, and a darkness of sin and impurity. Now, what communion can light have with darkness ? Let every man ask this at his own heart, if there can be no happiness without this society, and no possibility of this society while I remain in darkness, then is it not high time to come to the light ? This then is the first change that is made in a soul ; the darkness of ignorance and unbelief is driven out, by the approach of the glorious light of the Gospel to the heart ; then is discovered to the soul that deformity of sin, that loathsomeness, which it never before apprehended ; then there is a manifestation of the hidden works of darkness, of the desperate wickedness of heart, which lay unobserved and unsuspected all the while ; and a man cannot in that view but abhor himself, for that which none else can see in him. There is withal manifested that glorious holiness in God, that inviolable righteousness, that omnipotent power, which formerly were never seriously thought upon ; these are now represented to the life before a sinner. And to close up all, there is a manifestation of the grace and goodness of God in CHRIST,

which discovers a way of salvation, and delivery from sin and wrath; and this refresheth all the faculties of the soul. Thus the soul is in part conformed to that original light, when a beam is sent from it, and hath pierced the heart, and scattered the darkness, that did alienate the minds of men from God. But it is not only an illumination of the outside of the soul, not only a conviction of the judgment, but by virtue of that divine heat that is transmitted with the light of the Gospel, the soul is purified and cleansed from its grosser nature, and so is made transparent, that the light may shine into the very inwards of the heart; and this is the special point of conformity to God, to have our souls purged from the darkness of sinful, earthly, and muddy affections, and purified by the light of God from all the works of darkness, so that the shining beauty of holy affections may succeed and fill up the vacant room. This it is which advanceth the soul to the nearest conformity with God,—the looking often upon God, till our souls be enlightened, and our hearts purified; and this again puts the soul in the nearest capacity for that blessed communion with God. “Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.” (*Matt. v. 8.*) Truly, it is not profoundness, acuteness, and sharpness of wit; it is not pregnancy in understanding, or eminence of abilities, that will dispose the soul to this blessed vision of God, and frame it to a capacity of fellowship with Him; no, there needs no extraordinary abilities for this, nothing but that the heart be purified from corruptions, those inward earthly qualities, that are like so many vicious and gross humours, filling the organ of the sight. Pride, self-love, passion, malice, envy, strife, covetousness, love of pleasures, ambition;—these things, which possess the hearts of the most excellent natural spirits, cast a mist upon their eyes, and hinder them from seeing God, or from enjoying that delight in him, which some poor, weak, and ignorant creatures, whose hearts the Lord hath purged from sin, do find in God. Therefore, if any of you have an aim at this, to have fellowship with God, know both for your direction,

and your enjoyment, that "God is Light." Take it for your direction, because that must be your pattern, and if you have no study to be like him in holiness, you shall not see him. But take it likewise for an encouragement: "God is Light," the original, primitive light; and that light is freely and impartially communicable to poor sinners: "With thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light shall we see light." Let a soul that apprehends its own darkness and distance from him, thus encourage itself: My light is but a beam derived from his light, and there is no want in Him: He is a "Sun of Righteousness;" if I shut not up my heart through unwillingness and unbelief, if I desire not to keep my sins, but would be purged from them, then that glorious light may shine without stop and impediment into my heart: He is not only light in his own nature, but he is a light to us; and if he please to remove that which is interposed between Him and us, it shall be day-light in our hearts again.

Verse 6. "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and say not the truth."—Those who delude themselves in this matter are of two kinds. The generality pretend to Christianity in general, and to an interest in salvation; but if we descend into the chief parts of Christianity, such as holiness, fellowship with God, walking after the SPIRIT, and the like, these they do not so much as pretend to; and, withal, they think they have a dispensation from such strictness, and make it a sufficient plea that they are not such, because they never professed to be such. Others again, though fewer, pretend even to these higher points of Christianity, and in this they are more consonant to their profession: but there may be a practical lie in it too, if we compare their practice with their profession.

I would speak a word to you, who are of the first sort,—the multitude of professing Christians. Because you do not profess so much as others, you think yourselves exempted from the stroke of this soul-piercing doctrine; you think it is not pertinent to apply this to you, about walking contrary

to your profession, and so committing this gross lie, in not doing the truth. Therefore since you do not presume so high, you think you have escaped the censure that follows. But, I beseech you, consider what you engage yourselves to, by the general profession of Christianity. I know you will all say you are Christians. Now, do ye understand what is included in that? - If any man say, that he is a Christian, he says that he hath fellowship with God; if any man say, he is a Christian, he says he hath fellowship with CHRIST, and is partaker of his SPIRIT; for as the Apostle (*Rom. viii. 9*) declares unto you, "If any have not the SPIRIT of CHRIST he is none of his;" that is, he is no Christian. For what is it, I pray, to be a Christian? Is it not to be a new creature, formed again by the SPIRIT of CHRIST? Therefore as you pretend to be Christians, and yet are not professors of holiness, and think you have a dispensation from such a walking in God, and after CHRIST, you fall under a two-fold contradiction, and commit a two-fold lie: First, Between your profession and practice; and therefore in your profession itself: your practice is directly cross to the very general profession of Christianity. But besides that, there is a contradiction in the bosom of your profession; you affirm you are Christians, and yet refuse the profession of holiness; you say you hope for heaven, and yet do not so much as pretend to walking spiritually. Nay, you disjoin in your profession these things, which are really one, without which the name of Christianity is an empty, vain, and ridiculous appellation. There must be then great darkness in your minds, that you take the name of Christians, and will not know what it imports; and therefore, in the mean time, you profess that which destroys and annuls your former profession. Now, certainly, this is a gross lie, a flat contradiction. It is so palpable, that I wonder the common principles of truth do not rise up within, to testify against it: for if ye do not own the profession of holiness and communion with God, what advantage have you then of Christianity? Tell me, what will it serve you for? Can it save you? Can a bare,

empty title save you? And if it do not save you, it will make your condemnation the greater. Let this then first be settled in our hearts, and laid down as a principle, that the general profession of Christianity lays an inviolable obligation upon us, to all that is imported in the particular expressions of a Christian's nature, walk, and society. Whether we take it so or not, thus it is: To be a Christian infolds all that can be said; and if it do not import these, it is not true to its own signification, nor conformed to CHRIST's meaning. You may deprave the word as you please, and deform that holy calling so as to suit your carriage; but according to this word, in this acceptance of it, you shall be judged: And if your Judges shall in that great day lay all this charge upon you, what will it avail you now to absolve yourselves, in your imaginations, from the obligation itself?

Let us suppose then, that you are convinced of this, that Christianity, in the most general acceptance, is inclusive of fellowship and communion with God, and that you profess and pretend to both; and then let us apply this just rule of the Apostle's, to examine the truth and reality of such a profession. The application being made, there is a discovery of the falsehood and crookedness of most men's hearts: this golden rule of examination is a rule of proportion, so to speak; or it is founded upon the harmony that should be between profession and practice, words and deeds, and upon that conformity that should be between those who have communion one with another. Now apply these to the generality of Christians, and behold there is no harmony and consent between their speaking and walking; their profession, as Christians, imports communion with God, who is the pure unmixed light, and yet they declare, otherwise, that themselves are in the darkness of ignorance, and walk in the darkness of sin; and so that communion must be pretended, where there is no conformity and likeness to God intended. The result then of all is this: herein is the greatest and most dangerous lie committed; it is the greatest lie, because it takes in all a man's conversation, which all along makes up one great universal lie, a lie

composed of infinite contrarieties, of innumerable particular lies ; for every step, every word, and action, is in its own nature contrary to that holy profession ; but all combined together make up a black constellation of lies, one powerful lie against the truth. And besides, it is not against a particular truth, but against the whole complex of Christianity. Error is a lie against such a particular truth as it opposeth ; but the course of an ignorant, ungodly conversation is one continued lie against the whole bulk and body of Christianity. It is a lie drawn the length of many weeks, months, and years, against the whole frame of christian profession : for there is nothing in the calling of a Christian, that is not retracted, contradicted, and reproached by it. O that ye could unbowel your own ways, and see what a cluster of lies is in them, what reproaches these practical lies cast upon the honour of your christian calling, and how they tend to the disgracing of the truth, and the blaspheming of God's name. These things ye would find, if ye would examine your own hearts and ways : and if you found how great that lie is, you could not but fear the danger of it ; for it being no less than a denying of JESUS CHRIST, and a real renunciation of him, it puts you without the refuge of sinners, and is most likely to keep you without the blessed city ; for "there shall in no wise enter therein any thing that defileth, or maketh a lie." (*Rev.* xxi. 27.) What shall then become of them whose life all along is but one continued lie ?

What shall we say, to carry these things home to your hearts ? Where shall convincing words be had ? It is strange that you are in such a deep dream, that nothing can awake you out of it. And how little is it that you have to please yourselves with ? Some external privileges, the temple of the LORD, his covenant, and the seals of it, your ordinary hearing the word, and such like. But are there not many things in your hearts and ways, that act the most contradictory lie to these that can be ? For wherefore do we thus meet together ? Do ye know an end, or propose any ? I scarcely believe it of the most part. We come out of custom,

and many as by constraint, and with little or no previous consideration of the great end of this work ; and when you go forth, what fruit appears ? Ordinary discourses immediately succeed ; and who is it that either bows his knee to pray for the divine blessing, or entertains that holy word in his own meditation, or speaks of it to the edification of others ? Are you not, the most part of you, that ground of which CHRIST speaks, which lies in “ the way-side,” and every thing comes and takes the seed up ? And, alas ! how many souls are choked and stifled ; the truth being suffocated in the very springing, by the thorns of the cares of this world, and the throng and importunity of business and earthly desires ! How many good motions come to no maturity by this means ! How few of you use to pray in secret, and to dedicate a time for retirement from the world, and enjoyment of GOD ! Nay, you think you are not called to it ; and if any be induced to it, and to public worship in their families, yet all the day is but a flat contradiction to that. What earthly-mindedness, what unholiness of affection, what impurity of conversation, what one lust is subdued ? What one sin is mortified ? Who increaseth more in knowledge of the truth, or in love of GOD ? Is it not midnight with the most part of you ? O the darkness of your minds, by which you know not that Religion which you profess, more than Turks ! And what are the ways you walk in ? Are they not such ways, as “ will not come to the light, and as hate the light, because it reproves them ? ” Are they not such, in which men stumble, though they seem to walk easily and plainly in them ? Yet, O that everlasting stumble which is at the end of them, when you shall fall out of one darkness of sin and delusion into an utter, extreme, and eternal darkness of destruction and damnation ! O that fearful dungeon, and pit of darkness, into which you are posting ! Therefore, if you love your own souls, be warned. I beseech you, be warned to flee from utter darkness, be awaked out of your deceiving dreams, and flattering imaginations, and “ CHRIST shall give you light.” The discovery of that gross darkness in which you



walked, in which you did not see whither you went; I say, the clear discerning of what it is, and whither it leads, is the first opening of that light, the first visit of that morning-star, that brings salvation.

Let me exhort all of you, in the name of the LORD, as ye desire to be admitted within the holy city, and not to be excluded among those “who commit abomination, and tell a lie,” that ye would henceforth impose this necessity upon yourselves, or know that it is laid upon you by GOD, to labour to know the will and truth of GOD, that you may see that light which shines in the Gospel; and not only to receive it in your minds, but in your hearts by love, that so you may endeavour, in all sincerity, the doing of that truth, the practising of what you know.

Verse 7. “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of JESUS CHRIST his SON cleanseth us from all sin.”—In darkness there is nothing but confusion and disorder; and light only makes that disorder visible to the soul, to the affecting of the heart. Now, when once the soul hath received that light, there is a desire kindled in the heart after more of it; as when the eye hath once perceived the sweetness of the light, it opens itself to a fuller reception of more: So the soul that is once thus happily prevented by the first salutation and visit of “that day-spring from on high, while he was sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death,” afterwards follows after that light, and desires nothing more than to be embosomed with it. That tender preventing mercy so draws the heart after it, that it can never be at perfect rest, till the night be wholly spent, and all the shadows of it be removed, and the sun clearly up above the horizon; and that is the day of that clear vision of GOD’s face. But, in the mean time, this is the great ambition and endeavour of such an one, to walk in that light, and this is the very entertainment of that fellowship with GOD: he is already in the light, that is to say, he is translated from a state of darkness to light, and endued with the living and saving knowledge of GOD in JESUS

CHRIST; he is in the light, one enlightened from above, having his eyes opened to discover the mystery of the iniquity of his own heart, and to see afar off that bottomless pit of misery, to which his way would lead him; one who hath by this divine illustration discovered eternal things, and seen things not seen; and, withal, gotten knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins. Now such an one, being thus in the light, his duty is, and his infinite dignity besides, to walk in that light; that is, to lead all his life under that eternal light of God, which shines in the word, and to bring it all forth in his view; to make his whole course a progressive motion towards heaven, wherein that glorious light shines most gloriously.

This consists especially in the inward retirement of the soul to God, and the outward shining of that light, in our conversation to others. These are the chief parts of it,—borrowing from his light, and then lending and imparting it to others by a holy conversation. The most lively and unmixed partaking of the light of God, and the sweetest society with him, are in the secret withdrawals of the soul from the world to God; those little intervals, and, as it were, stolen hours of fellowship with God, that are taken from the multitude and throng of our business. These are the fittest opportunities of transforming the soul into his similitude, of “purifying it as He is pure,” and of filling it with divine light and love; for then the heart lies, as it were, perpendicularly under his beams, and is opened before him to give admission and entry to this saving, transforming light; and it is the shining of God’s countenance then upon the soul, that draws it most towards conformity with Him, and leaves an impression of light and love upon it. This makes a Christian come forth, as MOSES from the Mount, with his face shining; he comes out, from the retired access to God, with a lustre upon his carriage, that may beautify the Gospel; and (as one well saith) with the Tables of the Law in both his hands, written in his practice; the light of the Law shineth

in his life; and truly this is the Christian's diurnal motion in his lower sphere, wherein he carries about that light that is derived from the higher Light; in all his converse with men, it shines from him, to the glorifying of Him who is the Father of Lights, walking righteously and soberly, without offence; "doing good to all, especially the children of light;" extending offices of love and benevolence to every one; forbearing and forgiving offences; not partaking with other men's sins; and, finally, declaring in word and deed, that we have communion with the Fountain of pure Light, and one day expect to be translated out of this lower orb, and fixed in the highest of all, where we may have the immediate, full, uninterrupted, and clearest aspect of his countenance, which shall then make the description that is here given of God communicable to us,—that, "as he is light, and in him is no darkness," so we, being fully and perfectly shined upon by him, may be light likewise, without any mixture of darkness.

Now, my beloved in the LORD, this is that to which we are called, to walk in the light, in the light of obedience and sanctification; and that is the great thing ye should learn to aspire unto, rather than [merely] to the light of consolation. Indeed I conceive, that which maketh many of us to walk in darkness; that is, without comfort, peace, and joy, and without clearly discerning our interest with God, is, because we walk in another darkness, that is, of sin and distance from God. The one darkness is introductive of the other; nay, they cannot be long the one without the other; the dark cloud of sin, and careless uncircumspect walking, cannot but eclipse the light of consolation, and fill the soul with confusion. Therefore, if ye would walk in the light of joy and comfort, O take heed that nothing be interposed between God and your souls. You must likewise walk in the light of his law, which is as a lamp to the feet; and this light, as the ray, begets that light of comfort, as the splendour, which is the second light of the sun.

"And the blood of JESUS CHRIST his SON cleanseth us from all sin."—"Can two walk together except they be

agreed?" As darkness cannot have fellowship with light, till it be changed into some conformity to the light; even so there can neither be any fellowship in walking, nor conformity in nature, between GOD and us, unless there be some reconciliation of the difference. Now, here is that which maketh the atonement,—“The blood of JESUS CHRIST his SON cleanseth us from all sin.” This it is which takes away the difference between GOD and men, and makes reconciliation for us; this blood hath quenched the flame of indignation and wrath kindled in heaven against us. And this alone can quench and extinguish the flames of a tormented soul, that is burnt up with the apprehension of his anger: all other things which thou canst apply, or cast upon them, will be as oil to increase them. Therefore, my beloved, let me, above all things, recommend this unto you, as the foundation of all religion, upon which all our peace with GOD, and pardon of sin, and fellowship with GOD must be built, that the blood of JESUS CHRIST be applied unto your consciences by believing; and that, first of all, upon the discovery of your enmity with GOD, and infinite distance from him, you apply your hearts unto this blood, which is the atonement,—to the reconciling sacrifice, which alone hath power with GOD. Do not imagine that any peace can be without this. Would ye walk with GOD, which is a bridge of agreement? Would ye have fellowship with GOD, which is a fruit of reconciliation? Would ye have pardon of sins, and the particular knowledge of it? And all this, without and before application of CHRIST, who is our peace, in whom only the FATHER is well pleased? If you desire to “walk in the light, as He is in the light,” why weary ye yourselves in by-ways? Why take ye such a compass of endless and fruitless perplexity, and will not rather come by the strait way at it, by the door of JESUS CHRIST? He is the new and living way, into which you must enter, if ye would walk in the light; and the wounds of his side, out of which this blood gushed, open for you a way of access to him, because he was pierced for us. That stream of

blood, if ye come to it, and follow it all along, will certainly carry you to the sea of light and love, where you may have fellowship with God. And O, how much comfort is in it, that there is such a stream running all the way of our walking with God, all the way of our fellowship? That fountain of CHRIST's blood runs along with the believer, for the cleansing of his after-pollutions, and of his defilements, even in the very light itself. This then, as it is the first foundation of peace and communion with God, so it is the perpetual confirmation of it; that which first gives boldness, and that which still continues boldness in it. It is the first ground, and the constant security of it, without which it would be as soon dissolved as made. If that blood did not run along all this way, to wash all his steps, if the way of light and fellowship with God were not watered and refreshed with the continual current of this blood, certainly none could walk in it without being consumed: therefore it is, that the mercy of God, and the riches of grace in CHRIST, have provided this blood for us, both to cleanse the sins of ignorance, before believing, and the sins of light, after believing, that a poor sinner may constantly go on in his way, and not be broken off from God.

You see then the Gospel runs in these two golden streams, pardon of sin, and purity of walking; they run undividedly, all along in one channel; yet without confusion one with another, as it is reported of some great rivers, that run together between the same banks, and yet retain distinct colours and natures all the way: but these streams that gladden the city of God never part from one another; the cleansing blood and the purifying light are the perfect sum of the Gospel; purification from sin, and from the guilt of sin, and the purity of walking in the light, flowing from that, make up full Christianity; which are so nearly conjoined together, that if they be divided, they cease to be, and cannot subsist, save in men's deluded imagination. The end of washing in the blood of CHRIST

is, that we may come to this light, and have fellowship with it; for the darkness of hell, the utter darkness of the curse of God, which overspreads the unbelieving soul, and eclipses all the light of God's countenance from him; this, I say, must be removed by the cleansing of the blood of CHRIST, and then the soul is admitted to enjoy that light, and walk in it. And it is removed chiefly for this end, that there may be no impediment in the way of this fellowship; this blood cleanseth, that you, being cleansed, may henceforth walk in purity; and there is no purity like that of the light of God's countenance and commands. And so you are washed in the blood of CHRIST, that you may walk in the light of God, and take heed that you defile not your garments again.

But this is our foolishness, that we look upon the Gospel only by halves, and this begets misapprehensions and mistakes; for, ordinarily, we supply that which we see not with some fancy of our own. When the blood of JESUS CHRIST is holden out in its full virtue, in its efficacy to cleanse all sin, and to make peace with God, and wipe away all transgressions, as if they had never been, the generality of you think this is all that is in the Gospel, and begin to "bless yourselves, though you live in the imaginations of your own hearts," and never apprehend the absolute need of walking in purity after pardon. And, alas! something of this sometimes overtakes the hearts of true believers. In the slight consideration of the mercy of God, and blood of CHRIST, you do not lay the constraint upon your hearts to a holy conversation. I say, it is not because you apprehend that blood, that you take more liberty to the flesh; but rather because you too slightly and superficially consider it, and that but the one half of it, without piercing into the proper end of that cleansing, which is, that we may walk in purity.

But, on the other hand, some believing souls having their desires enlarged after more holiness and conformity to God, and apprehending not only the necessity of it, but the beauty and comeliness of it, yet finding withal

how infinitely short they come, and how often their purposes are broken and disappointed ; this doth discourage them, and drives them to such a dejection of spirit, that they are ready to give over the way of holiness as desperate. My beloved, I earnestly beseech you, to open your hearts to receive the full body of the truth ; to look upon that cleansing blood, as well as that pure light ; to consider the perpetual use of the one, until you have fully attained the other. Know that the fountain is kept open ; not only to admit you at first, but to give ready access in all after-defilements ; and there is no word more comprehensive than this, “ It cleanseth from all sin.” All thy exceptions, doubts, and difficulties, are about some particular sins ; thy debates run upon some exception ; but here is an universal and comprehensive word, that excludes all exception ; no kind of sin, either for quality, or degree, or circumstance, is too great for this blood ; and therefore, as you have reason to be humbled under your failings, so there is no reason to be discouraged, but rather to revive your spirits again, in the study of walking in the light. Nay, take this along with you, as your strength, and encouragement to your duty, as the greatest provocation to more purity, that there is so constant readiness of pardon in that blood.

## SERMON IV.



1 JOHN i. 8.

*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

“THE night is far spent, the day is at hand.” (*Rom. xiii. 12.*) This life is but as night, even to the godly: There is some light in it, some star-light, but it is mixed with darkness; and so it will be, till the sun arise, and the morning of their translation to heaven come. But though it be called night in regard of that perfect and glorious day in heaven, yet they are called “the children of light, and of the day,” and are said “to walk in the light,” and are exhorted “to walk honestly, as in the day;” because, though there be a mixture of darkness in them, of weakness in their judgments, and impurity in their affections, yet they are born to greater things, and are aspiring to that perfect day. There is so much light, as to discern their own corruptions, and SATAN’S temptations, and to fight continually against them. They are about this noble work, the purifying of themselves from sin and darkness; so that they lie in the middle, between the light of angels and glorified spirits, which hath no darkness in it, and the midnight of the rest of the world, who are buried in darkness and wickedness. The whole world lieth in wickedness. “But we know that we are of GOD:” Therefore the Apostle subjoins here very seasonably a caution, or correction of that which was spoken about “walking in the light,” and “fellowship with GOD;” which words, to our self-flattering minds, might suggest too high an opinion of ourselves. If we, even we that have fellowship with GOD, “say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.”



But this is not all that is here meant; there is another way of saying this, than by the tongue, and many other ways of self-deceiving, than that gross one, more dangerous, because less discernible. There is something of this, into which even true believers may fall; and there is something of it more common to the generality of professed Christians.

Among believers in CHRIST, there is much difference in self-judging; both between divers persons, and in one and the same at divers times. You know that some are kept in the open view of their own sins and infirmities; and while they aim at holiness, they are wholly disabled by their discouragements, arising from the apprehension of their own weakness, and infinite short-coming. Now to elevate and strengthen such spirits, that word was seasonably cast in, "And the blood of JESUS CHRIST cleanseth from all sin." For it properly belongs to the comfort of such fainting souls; and it is all one as if he had said, Up, and be doing, and the blood of CHRIST shall cleanse your evil doings. He goeth not about to persuade them to have better thoughts of themselves, or lower apprehensions of their sins, but only to have higher thoughts of CHRIST, and the virtue of his blood; and this is the only cure,—not to abate that low esteem of ourselves, but to add to the esteem and lively apprehension of CHRIST. I would not counsel you to think yourselves better, but to think better of Him, so that all your confidence may arise from Him.

There are others, and it may be that same person at another time,—(for the wind of temptation is sometimes in one corner, sometimes in another; our adversary useth many stratagems, and will seem to flee before us, in yielding us the victory over our unbelief, that he may in his flight return, and throw some other dart unawares,)—who when they have attained any fervency of desires after holiness, and this is seconded with any lively endeavours, and confirmed with the presence of God; then they are ready to apprehend too highly of themselves, as if they had attained, and

to look upon others with disdain; then there is not that present discovery of themselves, which would intermingle humble mourning with it, but a kind of unequal measuring of their attainments by their desires, which in all true Christians are exceedingly mounted above themselves. Do not your walking and the posture of your spirits import so much, as if you had no sin to wrestle with, no more holiness to aspire unto, no further race to run, in order to obtain the crown? Do not deceive yourselves, by thinking it sufficient to have so much grace, as is precisely necessary for salvation. Truly, if ye be so minded, you give a miserable hint, that you are not yet translated from the black side of darkness. If you continue thus, without stirring up yourselves to a daily conversion and renovation, at length it may prove a self-destroying deceit, when you shall find yourselves not passed over that line which separateth between heaven and hell. Now for the generality of professed Christians, though there be none who have a general confession of sin oftener and more readily in their mouths, yet it is easy to demonstrate that there is much of this self-deceit in them, which declares that “the truth is not in them.” I seek nothing else to prove it, than your own ordinary clearings and excusings of yourselves. Ye confess that ye are sinners, and break all the commands; yet come to particulars, and I know not one of twenty that will cordially and seriously acknowledge almost any sin: yea, what you have granted in general, you retract and deny it in all the particulars; which declares both that you are altogether strangers to the real truth of even that which you seem to know, and that you are over-blinded with a fond love of yourselves. I know not to what purposes your general acknowledgments are, but to be a mask to deceive you, a blind to hide you from yourselves; since the greater part of you, whensoever challenged as to any particular sin, or inclination to it, justify yourselves; and whenever ye are put to a particular confession of your sins, you have all wrapped up in such a bundle of confusion, that you never know one sin from another. Certainly, “ye deceive yourselves, and the truth is not in you.”

Let me add another instance : Do you not live, and walk in sin securely, as if you had no sin, no fear of God's wrath ? Do not the most part contentedly live in so much ignorance of the Gospel, as if they had no need of CHRIST, and so, by consequence, as if they had no sin ? For if you did believe, and consider, that your hearts are sinks of iniquity and impurity, would you not think it necessary to apply to the Physician ? And would you not then labour to know the Physician, and the Gospel, which is the report of Him ? Certainly, inasmuch as you take no pains for the knowledge of a SAVIOUR, you declare that you know not your sin ; for if ye knew the one, ye could not but search to know the other. What is the voice of most men's walking ? Doth it not proclaim this, that they think there is no sin in them ? For if there be sin in you, is there not a curse upon you, and wrath before you ? And if you did really see the one, would you not see the other ? And did you see it, would it not drive you to more serious thoughts ; would it not affright you ; would it not cause you often to retire into yourselves, and from the world ? And above all, how precious would the tidings of a SAVIOUR be, which now are common and contemptible ? Would you not every day wash in that blood ? Would the current of repentance dry ? But, forasmuch as you are not exercised this way, give no thoughts nor time for reconciliation with God, walk without any fear of hell, and without any earnest and serious study of changing your ways, and purifying your hearts ; though ye confess sin in the general, yet your whole carriage declares, that you think it not a thing much to be feared, and that a man may live in it, and be well here and hereafter. And is not this to deny the very nature of sin, and to deceive your own souls ?

Verse 9. But “ if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”—“ If we confess our sins.” There is a stream of “ the blood of JESUS CHRIST,” which never dries up, and is never exhausted, but flows as full and

as free, as clear and fresh, as ever it did : and this is so great, and of so great virtue, that it is able to swallow up the stream of our pollutions, and to take away the daily filth of a believer's conversations. But though the blood of JESUS CHRIST be of such infinite virtue, that it would be sufficient to cleanse the sins of the whole world, yet it is not actually applied to the cleansing of all men's sins, but the most part of men are still drowned in a deluge of wickedness : therefore it concerns us to know the way of application of this blood ; and this way is set down in this verse, " If we confess our sins, he is just to forgive." Though the blood of CHRIST be fully sufficient to cleanse all sin, yet it is not so prostituted to sinners, as to be bestowed upon them who do not know their sins, and who never enter into any serious examination of themselves. Such, though they say they are sinners, yet never descending into themselves to search their own hearts and ways, and so never coming to the particular knowledge of their sins, cannot make application of that blood to their own consciences. Though the river and fountain of CHRIST's blood run by them, in the daily preaching of the Gospel, yet being destitute of this self-knowledge, and altogether ignorant of themselves, they can no more wash here, than those who never heard of this blood. Let us then have this first established in our hearts, that there is no cleansing from sin, without the knowledge of sin ; for how should our sins be pardoned, when we know nothing of them but in a confused generality ? Certainly, the righteousness and wisdom of God require, that such a monstrous thing be not passed away in silence without observation. If we do not observe, he will ; for to what purpose should pardon be lavished upon those who are not capable of knowing what favour and grace are in it ? And, certainly, that none can know, without the feeling knowledge of the height and heinousness of sin. Now, I pray you, how should ye know your sins, when ye will not allow any time for the searching of yourselves ? Many cannot say that ever they did purposely and deliberately withdraw from the world,

and separate their spirits for this business of self-examination; and therefore they remain perpetually strangers to themselves, and as great strangers to the virtue of this blood.

In this verse he declares plainly, in what way and method sin is pardoned by this blood. By the former verse we see, that we must search and try our ways, that so we may truly know our sins; and here it is superadded, that we must confess them to him; and the promise is annexed, "He is faithful and just to forgive." Now many of you may think, if this be the way, and these be the terms of pardon, then we hope all shall be pardoned; for if there be nothing more but to confess our sins, who will not willingly do that, and who doth not daily do it? But let us not deceive ourselves; it is true, as ye take confession, there is nothing more ordinary; but if it be taken in the true Scripture-meaning, I fear there is nothing among men so extraordinary. Consider how you take this word in your dealings with men;—certainly in a more real sense than you use it in religion. If any had done you wrong, suppose your servant, what acknowledgment would you take from him? If he confessed his wrong only in general and ambiguous terms, if he did it either lightly, or without any sense of sorrow for it, if he did withal excuse and extenuate his fault, and never ceased, notwithstanding his confession, to do the like wrong when occasion offered, would not you think this a mockery? And would it not rather provoke than pacify you? Now, when ye take words in so real significations in your own matters, what gross delusion is it, that you take them in the slightest meaning in things that relate to God? And I am sure the most part of men's confessions are of that nature which I have described,—general, ignorant, senseless, without any feeling of the vileness and loathsomeness of sin, and their own hearts; whenever it comes to particulars, there is a multitude of extenuations and pretences, to hide and cover the sin; and generally men never cease from sinning; it puts no stop in their running "as the horse to the battle;" to-

day they confess it, and to-morrow they act it again with as much delight as before. Now, of this I may say, "Offer it thy governor, and see if he will be pleased with thee;" or let another offer such an acknowledgment of wrong to thee, and see if it will please thee; and if it will not, why deceive ye yourselves with the outward visage of things, in these matters that are of greatest concern? Should they not be taken in the most inward and substantial signification that can be, lest you be deceived with false appearances, and lest, while you give but a shadow of confession, you receive but a shadow of forgiveness. Therefore we must needs take it thus, that confession of sin is the work of the whole man, not of the mouth only. It is the heart, tongue, and all that is in a man, joining together in the acknowledgment of sin, and of God's righteousness; and therefore it includes in it, not only a particular knowledge of our offences, and the temper of our hearts, but a sensible feeling of the loathsomeness and heinousness of these. And this is the spring from which it flows, a broken and contrite heart, that is bruised under the apprehensions of the weight of guilt, and is imbittered with a sense of the gall of iniquity, which possesseth the heart. Here then is the great moment of confession,—what is the inward fountain from which it flows? If the heart of a man be brought to the clear view of himself, and so to fall down under the mighty hand of God, as not being able or willing to open his mouth in excuse or extenuation, or to plead for compassion from any consideration in himself; a soul thus placed between iniquities set in order and battle array on the one hand, and the holy law and righteousness of God on the other hand; the filthiness of the one, filling it with shame and confusion, and the dreadfulfulness of the other, causing fear and trembling; in this posture, I say, for a soul to come and fall at the Judge's feet, and make supplications to Him in his SON CHRIST, is indeed to confess our sins. For when our confession is a disburdening of the heart, it flows from the abundance of inward contrition; and as this must be the spring of it,

so there is another stream that will certainly flow from the ingenuous confession of our sins, and that is, a forsaking of them. These are the two streams that flow from one spring: SOLOMON joins them; he that “confesseth and forsaketh shall have mercy.” (*Prov.* xxviii. 13.) And this is opposed to covering of sins; for “he that covereth his sins shall not prosper.” And what is it, to cover one’s sin? Confessing them in a general, confused notion, without any distinct knowledge or sense of particular guiltiness, that is a covering of sins; or confessing sin, and not forsaking it, that is a covering of sin; for, to act sin over again is to retract our confessions, and to bury and cover them with new transgressions. Now, take this unto you, “you shall not prosper;” you are but in a dream of happiness, and you shall one day be taken out of it, and that fancied pardon shall vanish, and then your sins, which you covered in this manner, shall be discovered before the Judge of the world, and “you shall not stand in judgment.”

The freedom of GOD’s grace, and the greatness of his wisdom, shine forth most brightly in the dispensation of the Gospel, and both of them beautify and illustrate one another. That there is, first, an expiation of sin by the blood of JESUS CHRIST; that a way is laid down of reconciling the world, and that by the blood of the cross; that peace is purchased, and so preached unto sinners, as a thing already procured, and now only to be applied unto the soul by faith;—herein are the inestimable riches of the grace of GOD exhibited to the view of angels and men. The great work of Redemption is ended, ere it come to us; and there remains nothing, but to publish it to the world, and invite us to come and receive it, and have a part in it; all is ready, the feast is prepared, and set on the table, and there wants nothing but guests to eat of it; and these are daily called by the Gospel, to come to this table, which the wisdom of the FATHER hath prepared for us, without either our knowledge or concurrence. Besides, the very terms of proposing the Gospel speak forth

absolute freedom. What can be more free and easy than this? CHRIST is sent to die for sinners, and to redeem them from the curse; only receive him, come to him, and believe in him. He hath undertaken to save, only do you consent too, and give up your name to Him; ye have nothing to do to satisfy justice, or purchase salvation; only be willing that he do it for you, or rather acquiesce in that which he hath done already, and rest on it. But how shall our sins be pardoned, and justice satisfied? Only confess your sins to Him, and ye are forgiven, not for your confession, but for CHRIST: Only acknowledge thine iniquity and wrongs, and He hath taken another way to repair his justice than by thy destruction and condemnation: He is so far from extending his justice against thee, that he is rather engaged by his faithfulness and justice to forgive thee, because of his promise.

Yet ye should not conceive so of this manner of proposal of forgiveness and salvation, as if the requiring of such a thing as repentance in us were any derogation from the absoluteness of his grace; because it is not required with a view to the satisfaction of God's justice, and expiation of sin; for that has been done already upon the cross.

“He is just and faithful.” Herein is the wonder of the grace of God increased, that when we are under an obligation to infinite punishment for sin, the most great and potent LORD, who can easily rid himself of all his enemies, and do all his pleasure in heaven and earth, should come under an obligation to man to forgive him his sins. A strange exchange! Man is standing bound by the cords of his own sins over the justice of God. God in the mean time is free from the obligation of the first Covenant, that is, his promise of giving life to man; we have loosed him from that voluntary engagement, and are bound under a curse. And yet, behold the grace, man is loosed from sin, to which he was bound, and God is bound to forgive sin, to which he was not bound. He enters into a new and voluntary engagement by his promise, and gives right to poor creatures to sue forgiveness of him, according to his faith-



fulness. Yet in this plea, as it becomes us to use confidence, because he gives us ground by his promise, so we should season it with humility, knowing how infinitely free his condescension is, and being always mindful that he may in righteousness exact punishment of us for sin, rather than we seek forgiveness from him. And yet we ought to seek it, because he hath engaged his promise; which opportunity not to improve, were as high contempt and disobedience to Him, as those sins by which we have offended him.

Certainly the very Name of God, those general characters of his name, Mercy and Goodness, Power and Greatness, might suffice to make us, in the apprehensions of our own guiltiness, to look no other way than to his own gracious nature. Suppose we had nothing of a promise from Him; yet, as the very apprehension of the goodness and bounty of God ought to draw the creature towards him in all his wants; so, if we did only apprehend that God is the fountain of mercy, this alone might draw us to pour out our hearts before him, in the acknowledgement of our guiltiness, and to cast ourselves upon his mercy. It is the last refuge of a desperate sinner, to surrender himself unto God, to resign himself to his free disposal: since I cannot but perish (may a soul say) without him, and there is no other way of escaping from his wrath, I will rather venture, and “go in to the King, and if I perish, I perish.”

A man ought to reason so, from the very natural knowledge which he hath of God: but when ye have not only his name and nature published, but his word and promise so often proclaimed, and himself come under a tie to accept graciously all sinners that fly under the shadow of his wings for mercy; then with how much boldness should we come to him, and lay open our sins before him, who not only may pardon them, and is likely to do it, seeing he hath a gracious nature, but certainly will pardon them, and cannot but do it, because his faithfulness requireth it. Certainly he hath superadded his word to his name, his promise to his nature, to confirm our faith, and give us ample ground of strong consolation.

There is another notion about the justice of God, in forgiving sin ; but whether it be imported here, I dare not affirm. Some take his *faithfulness* in relation to his promise, and his *justice* in relation to the ransom paid by CHRIST ; importing as much as this, that whatever sinner comes to GOD in CHRIST, confessing his own guilt, and supplicating for pardon, he cannot in justice refuse to give it him, since he hath taken complete satisfaction of CHRIST. When sinners seeks a discharge of all sin, by virtue of that blood, the LORD is bound by his own justice to give it, and to write a free remission to them : since he is fully paid, he cannot but cancel our bonds. So then a poor sinner, that desires mercy, and forsakes sin, hath a two-fold ground to sue for forgiveness, CHRIST's blood, and GOD's own word ; CHRIST's purchase and payment, and the FATHER's promise : "He is just and righteous," and therefore he cannot take two satisfactions, two payments for one debt ; and "he is faithful," so that he cannot but stand to his promise, and thus is forgiveness assured unto the confessing sinner.

Before I proceed, I will give you some characters out of the text, to discover the vanity and emptiness of your ordinary confessions. The confession of sin must be *particular, universal, and perpetual, or constant*.—*Particular*, I say, because there are many thousands who confess that they are sinners, and yet do not at all confess their sins : for to confess sins, is to confess their own actual guiltiness, that which they have committed, or are inclined to do. So the sincere confession of a repenting people is expressed, (1 *Kings* viii. 38,) "What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, which shall know the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands, then hear thou in heaven, and forgive every man, whose heart thou knowest." Now consider whether you be so acquainted with your own hearts and ways, as to know your particular plague. Are you not rather strangers to yourselves, especially the plague of your hearts ? There are few that keep so much as a register of their actions done against GOD's law ; and therefore, when

you are posed about your sins, you can speak nothing to that, but that you never knew one sin from another ; that is, indeed, you never observed your sins, you never knew any sin, but contented yourself with the tradition you received, that you were sinners. But if any man be used to reflect upon his own ways, yet the greatest part of men are altogether strangers to their hearts ; if they know any evil of themselves, it is at most something done, or undone, but nothing of the inward fountain of sin. I beseech you, then, do not deceive yourselves with this general acknowledgment, that you are sinners, while in the mean time your particular sins are hid from you. Certainly you are far from forgiveness, and that blessedness of which DAVID speaks ; (*Psalms* xxxii. ;) for this belongs to the man “ that hideth not his sins, and in whose heart is no guile.” While you confess only in general terms, you confess others’ sins rather than your own ; but our duty is, to descend into our own hearts, to find out our just and true accusation, our real debt, and to charge ourselves as narrowly as we can, that He may discharge us fully, and forgive us freely.

Secondly, confession must be *universal*, that is, of all sin, without partiality or respect to any sin. I doubt whether a man can truly repent of any sin, except he in a manner repent of all sin ; or truly forsake one sin, except there be a divorcement of the heart from all sin : Therefore the Apostle saith, “ If we confess our sins,” not *sin* simply, but *sins*, taking in all the body of them. There lies a necessity upon us to confess what we have ; we have all sin, and so should confess all sins. Not that it is absolutely necessary that a soul should come to the particular knowledge of all his sins, whether of ignorance or infirmity ; nay, that is not possible, for “ who can understand his errors ? ” saith DAVID, “ cleanse thou me from secret sins.” (*Psalms* xix. 12.) There are many sins of ignorance, that we know not to be sins, and many escapes of infirmity, that we do not advert to, which otherwise we might know. Now, I do not impose on a soul the burden

of confessing every individual sin of that kind: but this certainly is required; there must be such a discovery of the nature of sin, and the loathsomeness of it in God's sight, and the heinous guilt of it, as may abase the soul in his presence; there must be a more distinct view of the dispositions of the heart than men generally attend to, and, withal, a discovery of the spiritual meaning of God's law, which may unfold a multitude of transgressions that are hid from the world, and make sin to abound in a man's sight and sense; and to close up this, as there are many sins now discovered unto such a soul, which lay hid before, the light having shined in upon the darkness, and, above all, the desperate wickedness of the heart, so there is no sin known and discerned, but there is an equal and impartial sorrow for it, and indignation against it. As a Believer hath "respect to all God's commands," and loves to obey them, so the penitent soul hath an impartial hatred of all sin, even the dearest idol, and desires unfeignedly to be rid of it.

Thirdly, this confession should be *perpetual* or *constant*. Confess your sins, as long as you have them; draw out this to the length of ~~that~~. Be continually groaning to Him under that body of death, and mourning under your daily infirmities. While that stream of corruption runs continually, let the stream of your contrition and confession run as incessantly; and there is another stream of CHRIST's blood, which runs constantly too, to cleanse you. Now, herein is the discovery of the vanity and deceitfulness of many of your confessions, public and private; the current of them soon dries up; there is no constancy in them, no daily humbling or abasing of yourselves; but all that is, is by fits and starts, upon some transient convictions, or outward censures: And thus men quickly bury their sins in oblivion, and forget what manner of persons they were; they are not under a daily, impartial examination of their ways; they take notice of nothing but some gross escapes, and these are but a short time under their view.

Now, let me apply a little to the encouragement of poor

souls, who are inwardly burdened with the weight of their own guiltiness. As you have two suits, and two desires to Him, one that your sins may be forgiven, another, that they may be subdued; so He hath two solemn engagements to satisfy you; one to forgive your sins, and another to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. The soul that is truly penitent is not only desirous of pardon of sin; that is not the only design of such in application to CHRIST; but it is withal desirous of being purified from sin, and all unrighteousness, and of having ungodly lusts cleansed away: and herein is the great probation of his sincerity; it will not satisfy such an one, to be assured of delivery from wrath and condemnation, but he must likewise be redeemed from sin, that it may have no dominion over him; he desires to be freed from death, that he may have his “conscience withal purified from dead works, to serve the living God.” (*Heb. ix. 14.*) He would have sin blotted out of an accusing conscience, that it may be purged out of the heart; and he would have his sins washed away for this end, especially, that he may be “washed from his sins.” (*Rev. i. 5.*) Now, as this is the great desire and design of such a heart, in which there is no guile, to have sin purged out of it, as well as pardoned, so there is a special tie upon God our Father by promise, not only to pardon sin, but to purge from sin; not only to cover it with the garment of CHRIST’s righteousness, and the breadth of his infinite love, but also to cleanse it by his SPIRIT, applying that blood to the purifying of the heart. Now, where God hath bound himself voluntarily, and out of love, do not ye loose him by unbelief, but labour to receive these gracious promises, and to take him bound, as he offers. Believe that he will forgive you, and cleanse your heart from sin; believe his engagement by promise to both, and this will set a seal to his truth and faithfulness.

Verse 10. “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”—There is nothing in which religion more consists, than in the true knowledge of ourselves. The Heathen supposed that sentence,

**KNOW THYSELF**, to have descended from heaven: and certain it is, that the true understanding of ourselves descends from "the Father of Lights," and is as great a gift as man is capable of, next to the knowledge of God. There is nothing more necessary to man, either as man, or as a Christian, than that he should be thoroughly acquainted with himself, his own heart, its dispositions and inclinations, his ways and actions; that while he travels abroad, he may not commit so shameful an absurdity as to be a stranger at home. Yet how sad is it, that this, which is so absolutely needful, should lie under so many difficulties in the attainment of it; so that there is nothing harder, than to bring a man to a perfect understanding of himself; what a vile, haughty, and base creature he is, how defiled and desperately wicked his nature, how abominable his actions; in a word, what a compound of darkness and wickedness he is, a heap of defiled dust, a mass of confusion: even the highest of mankind, those of the rarest and most refined extraction, they are as sepulchres, painted without, and putrefied within, outwardly adorned, and within full of rottenness and corruption.

Now, here is the great business and labour of religion, to bring a man to the clear discerning of his own nature; to represent to him justly his own image, as it is painted in the word of God; by such a surprising appearance, to bring his heart to self-abhorrence in dust and ashes; and to have this representation continually present to his mind, that he may not forget what manner of person he is.

It was the custom of **PHILIP**, King of Macedon, to have a young man to salute him every morning with these words, "**PHILIP**, thou art a man," to the end that he might be daily reminded of his mortality, and the inconstancy of human affairs; and this was done before any other person could have access to speak with him, as if it were to prepare him for the actions of the day. How much more ought a Christian to train up his own heart, and accustom it to suggest continually, and whisper in the morning, and mid-day, and evening, "Thou art a sinner." We ought

to hold our own image continually before us, in prayer and praises, in constraints, and in liberties of spirit, in religious actions, and in all our ordinary conversation, that it may season all our thoughts, words, and deeds, and keep them from that ordinary corruption of pride and self-conceit, which maketh all our ointment stink.

“If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar.”—Why is this repeated, but to show even to you who believe in CHRIST, how hard it is to know ourselves aright. If we speak of the grosser sort of persons, they scarcely know any sin ; therefore they live in security and peace, and bless themselves in their own hearts. For such, I shall only say unto them, that their lie is gross, and quickly seen through.

But I would turn myself to you who are in some measure acquainted with yourselves. Yet there is something against you from this word ; for after ye have once got peace and pardon, you many times fall out of acquaintance with yourselves, and remain strangers to your hearts. Now, herein you are to be blamed, that you do not rather go into the fountain, and there behold the streams, than only behold the fountain in the streams : you ought, upon the LORD’s testimony of man, to believe what is in you, before you find it, and see it breaking out, and to keep this character continually in your sight.

Indeed, self-love is that which blinds us ; we look upon ourselves through this false medium, and it represents all things more beautiful than they are ; and therefore the Apostle hath reason to say, “We deceive ourselves, and we make God a liar.” There are many deceivers and deceived ; but I believe there is more self-deceiving than deceiving of others. It is strange to think, how many Christians will be able to decipher the nature of some vices, and unbowel the evils of them, and espy the least appearance of them in another, and yet they cannot discern that in themselves, which others cannot but discern. They pour out a flood of eloquence against them, and yet they do not advert that they are accusing themselves in such discourses, though others, it may be, will easily perceive it.

“Who art thou, O man, who judgest another, and doest the same thing?” Consider this, that thou mayest learn to turn the edge of all thy censures and convictions against thyself; that thou mayest prevent all men’s judgments of thee, in judging thyself “the chief of sinners,” who hast the root of all sin in thee; and that so thou mayest anticipate the divine judgment too; for if we “judge ourselves,” we shall “not be judged.” Labour thou to know these evils that are incident to human nature, before others can know them, that is, in the root and fountain, before they come to the fruit and stream; to know sins in the first conceptions of them, before they come to such productions as are visible; and this shall preserve thee from much sin, and thou shalt not deceive thyself, nor dishonour God, in making him a liar.

When we do not measure ourselves by the perfect rule of God’s word, but parallel ourselves with other persons, who are still defective from the rule, and further from it than any one is from another, this is the ordinary method of self-love. But I pray you, what will that avail you to be unlike them, if you be more unlike your pattern? It may be, others will compare with these that are good; but it is with that which is worst in them, and not that which is best. How often do men reckon this way! Here is a good man, yet he is such and such, subject to such infirmities; and here self-love flatters itself, and by flattering deceives itself. My beloved, let us learn a more perfect rule, which may show all our imperfections: let our rule ascend, that our hearts may descend in humility; and the lower we be in ourselves, as God is higher in our account, so we are higher in God’s account, according to that standing rule, (*Matt.* xxiii. 12,) “Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.”



## SERMON V.



1 JOHN ii. 1.

*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.*

THE Gospel is an entire and uniform system; all the parts of it are interchangeably knit together; so that there can be no dividing of it, any more than of CHRIST's coat which was without seam. If you have it not altogether, you cannot have any part of it; for they are so knit together, that if ye disjoin them, you destroy them; and if they cease to be together, they cease altogether to be. I speak this, because there may be pretensions to some abstracted parts of Christianity;—one man pretends to faith in CHRIST, another to holiness and obedience. Now, if the first do not join the study of the second, and if the second do not lay down the first as the foundation, both of them embrace a shadow, because they separate those things which GOD hath joined, and which therefore have no being but in men's fancy, when they are not conjoined. He that would pretend to a righteousness of CHRIST without him, must withal study to have the righteousness of the law fulfilled within him; and he that endeavours to have holiness within, must go out of himself, to seek a righteousness without him, whereupon to build his peace and acceptance with GOD; or else neither of them hath truly any righteousness without to cover him, or holiness within to cleanse him. Now here the beloved Apostle shows us this divine contexture of the Gospel. The great design of the Gospel is, peace in pardon of sin, and in purity from sin: "These things I write unto you, that ye sin not." The Gospel is comprised in

commands and promises ; both make one web, and link in together. The immediate end of the command is, “that we sin not ;” but there is another thing always either added or understood ; “But if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the FATHER :” so the promise comes in as a subsidiary help to all the precepts. It is annexed to give security to a poor soul from despair ; and therefore the Apostle teacheth you a blessed art of construing all the commands and exhortations of the highest pitch, by supplying the full sense with this caution, “but if any man sin.” Doth that command, “Be ye holy as I am holy,” or “Be perfect as your heavenly FATHER ;” doth it, I say, discourage thee ? Then use the Apostle’s art ; add this caution to the command ; subjoin this exceptive, “but if any man” (that desires to be holy, and gives himself to this study) “fail often,” let him not despair, but know that “he hath an Advocate with the FATHER, even JESUS CHRIST the righteous,” who hath all that we want, and will not suffer any accusation to fasten upon us, as long as he lives “to make intercession for us.”

On the other hand, take a view of the promises of the Gospel. Though the immediate end of them is to give peace to troubled souls, yet certainly they have a further end, even purity from sin, as well as pardon of sin, cleansing from all sin, as well as covering of filthiness. “These things write I unto you, that ye sin not ;”—what things ? Consider what goes before, and what follows after, even the publication of “the word of life,” and “eternal life in Him,” the declaration of our fellowship with GOD in CHRIST, the offering of the blood of CHRIST, able to cleanse all sin, and the promise of pardon to the penitent confession of sin ; “all these things I write, that ye sin not :” so that this seems to be the ultimate end of the Gospel, unto which all tends : the promises are for peace, and peace is for purity ; the promises are for faith, and faith is for purifying the heart, and performing the precepts : all at length returns to this, from whence, while we swerved, all this misery came upon us.

In the beginning, man was created to glorify God, by obedience to his blessed will ; sin interposeth, and marreth the whole frame ; and from this hath a flood of misery flowed in upon us. The Gospel comes offering a Saviour, and forgiveness in him : Thus peace is purchased, pardon granted, and the soul restored to its primitive condition and state of subordination to God's will ; and so redemption ends where creation began, or rather in a more perfect frame of the same kind. The "Second ADAM" builds what the First ADAM broke down, and the "SON" re-creates what the "FATHER" in the beginning created ; yea, and with some addition. In this new edition of mankind, all seems new ; "new heavens and new earth ;" and that because the creature that was made old, and defiled with sin, is made new by grace. Now, hence you may learn the second part of this lesson which the Apostle teacheth us : as ye ought to correct as it were the precepts of the Gospel, by subjoining promises in this manner, so ye ought to direct promises towards the performance of his precepts, as their chief end. Whensoever you read it written, "The blood of CHRIST cleanseth from all sin ;" "If we confess, he is faithful to forgive our sins ;" "God so loved the world, that he gave his SON ;" "He that believeth hath everlasting life ;" then make up the entire sense and meaning, after this manner, "These things are written that we sin not." Is there a redemption from wrath published ? Is there reconciliation with God preached ? And are we besought to come and have the benefit of them ? Then supply within thine own heart, "These things are written, published, and preached, that we may not sin." Look to the furthest end of these things ; it is, "that we sin not." The end of things, the scope of writings, and the purpose of actions, is the very measure of them, and so the best interpreter of them. The scope of Scripture is by all accounted the very thread that will lead a man right in and out of the labyrinths that are in it : and so it is used as the rule of the interpretation in the parts of it. Now, my beloved in the LORD, take here the scope of the whole Scripture, the mark at which

all the Gospel aims, "These things I write unto you, that ye sin not."

"These things I write unto you, little children." To enforce this the more sweetly, he useth this affectionate compellation, "little children;" for, in all things, affection hath a mighty stroke, almost as much as reason. It is the most suitable way to prevail with the spirit of a man, to deal in love and tenderness with it; it insinuates more sweetly, and so can have less resistance, and therefore works more strongly.

O that there were such a spirit in them who preach the Gospel, such a fatherly affection, that they might call sinners from the ways of death! There is no subject in which a man may have more room for melting affections, nothing that will admit of such bowels of compassion as this,—the multitude of souls hastening to destruction, and so blindfolded that they cannot see it.

"These things I write unto you, that ye sin not." This is the design of the whole Gospel, the grand design, to destroy sin, and save the sinner. There is a treaty of peace made with the sinner, and CHRIST is the peace-maker: a tender of life and salvation is made to him, but there is no treaty, no capitulation or composition with sin; out it must go, first out of its dominion, then out of its habitation. It must first lose its power, and then its being in a believer; yea, this is one of the chief articles of our peace, not only required of us as our duty, that we should destroy that which cannot but destroy us, but also as the great promise upon his part, to "redeem us from all our iniquities, and purify us to himself, a people zealous of good works."

Let me say further, as "these things are written, that ye sin not," so all things are done, "that ye sin not." Take the whole work of Creation, of Providence, of Redemption; all of them speak one language, "that we sin not." "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge: there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." (*Psal.* xix. 2, 3.) And as in that

place their voice proclaims the glory, majesty, and goodness of God, so they, with the same sound, proclaim and declare, that we should not sin against such a God, so great, and so good. All that we see suggests this to our hearts : All that we hear whispers this to our ears, “ that we sin not : ” that “ he made us, and not we ourselves ; and we are the work of his hands : ” This speaks our absolute dependance on him, and therefore proclaims with a loud voice, that sin, which would loose us from this dependance upon his holy will, is a monstrous and unnatural thing. Take all his mercies towards us, whether general or particular ;—the transcendent abundance of his infinite goodness in the earth,—that river of his riches that runs through it to water every man, and bring supply to his doors,—that infinite variety of creatures that is in heaven and earth, all of them of equal birth-right with man, and yet by the law of our Maker, a yoke of subjection and service to man is imposed upon them, so that man is, in a manner, set in the centre of all, to the end that all the several qualifications and perfections that are in every creature may centre and meet together in him, and flow towards him. Look upon all his particular acts of care and favour towards thee ; consider his judgments upon the world, upon the nation, or thine own person ; put to thine ear, and hear,—this is the joint harmonious melody, this is the proclamation of all, “ that we sin not,” that we sin not against so good a God, and so great a God ; that were wickedness, this were madness. If he wound, it is “ that we sin not ; ” if he heal, it is “ that we sin not.” Doth he kill ? It is “ that we sin not : ” doth he make alive ? It is for the same end : doth he restrain our liberty, either by bondage, or sickness, or other afflictions ? why, he means “ that we sin not : ” doth he open again ? he means the same thing, “ that we sin no more, lest a worse thing befall us : ” doth he make many to fall in battle ? the voice of it is, that you who are left behind should “ sin no more : ” is there severity towards others, and towards you clemency ? O ! the loud noise of that is, “ Sin not.”

But let us return to the words. "That which is written of the word of life, that which was written from the beginning, and was manifested unto us," all that is written, "that we sin not:" For, saith the Apostle, "ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him is no sin;" yea, "for this very purpose," saith he, "that he might destroy the works of the Devil."

Now, is this the great business that drew the SON out of the FATHER's bosom, to destroy the arch-enemy and capital rebel, Sin, which, as to man, is a work of SATAN's, because it first entered into man by the Devil's suggestion? All that misery and ruin, all these works of darkness and death, that SATAN had by his malice and policy wrought upon and in poor mankind, JESUS was manifested in the flesh, without sin, to destroy; to take away sin out of our flesh, and to abolish and destroy SATAN's work, which he had builded upon the ruins of GOD's work, and to repair and renew that first blessed work of GOD in man, even his own image. And is the Prince of Life manifested from heaven, and come to unmake that work of SATAN, that he may rescue me from his tyranny? Then GOD forbid that I should help SATAN to build up that which my SAVIOUR is casting down, and to make a prison for myself, and cords to bind me in it for everlasting; rather let me be a "worker together with CHRIST." I resolve to wrestle with him, to pull down all the strong holds that SATAN keeps in my nature, and so to co-operate and consent to him, who is the avenger and asserter of my liberty.

Then consider the ultimate design of the Gospel, how it is inseparably linked into this, "that we sin not." We are called to "Fellowship with the FATHER and the Son;" and herein is his glory, and our happiness. Now, this proclaims with a loud voice, "that we sin not;" for, what can be more contrary to that design of union and communion with GOD, than to sin, which disunites the soul from GOD? Sin, you know, "is the transgression of his law;" and so, it is the very opposition of the creature's will to

the will of him that made it. Now, how do you imagine that this can consist with true friendship and fellowship, which looseth that conjunction of wills and affections which is the bond of true friendship. The conspiracy of our desires and delights with God's, this sweet coincidency, makes our communion. What communion then can there be with God, when that which his soul abhors is your delight, and his delight is not your desire? "What communion hath light with darkness?" Sin is darkness; all sin, but especially sin entertained; that is universal darkness over the soul; and this being interposed between God and the soul, breaks off communion, and eclipses that soul totally. Therefore, if you believe that you are called to Fellowship with God, consider, "these things are written, that ye sin not;" consider what baseness is in it, for one that hath such a noble design, to debase his soul so low as to serve sinful and fleshly lusts.

Shall I, who aspire so high as to Fellowship with God, degrade myself with the vilest servitude? Shall I conform myself to the world, seeing there is a glorious society to incorporate with, and the King of Kings to converse with daily? Alas, what are these worms that sit on thrones compared to him? But, far more, how base are these companions in iniquity; and what a vile society is it, like that of the bottomless pit, where devils are linked together in chains?

That declaration what God is, *ver.* 5, is expressly directed to this purpose, and applied, *ver.* 6: "God is light;" and therefore "sin not," for sin is darkness. "He is light," for purity and beauty of holiness, and perfection of knowledge, that "true light in which is no darkness," that unmixed light; therefore sin not, for that is work of the night, and of the darkness which proceeds from the blindness of your minds, and ignorance of your hearts, and it cannot but prepare you for these everlasting chains of darkness. Call God what you will, name all his names, and still you may find it written at every one of them, "Sin not." Is he "Light?" Then sin not. Is he "Life?" Then sin not; for sin will separate you from his light and

life. Is he "Love?" Then "sin not;" "God is Love," (saith ST. JOHN,) O then sin not against love. Hatred of any good thing is deformed, but the hatred of the beautiful image of the original Love is monstrous. Do you read, that "He is holy?" Then "sin not;" for this is most repugnant to his holiness. Is it written, that he is "great" and "powerful?" Then "sin not," for that were madness: it were an unspeakable folly and madness, to offend so great a God, that can so easily avenge himself; and it were abominable perverseness to sin against so good and gracious a God, who, though he may avenge himself, yet offers pardon and peace. Is he "just?" Then "sin not;" for "he will not acquit the wicked, nor hold them guiltless," who acquit themselves, and yet hold their sins. And is he "merciful?" Then "sin not," because he is ready to blot out thy guilt; wilt thou sin against mercy, that must save thee? Again, is it written, that "the blood of JESUS CHRIST cleanseth from all sin?" *That* is written, "that ye sin not."

It is true, it is written, because ye have sinned already, that ye may know how it may be pardoned. But, moreover, it is written, that ye sin no more; that so, more sin may be prevented. So this blood hath a two-fold virtue; to be the greatest encouragement to a soul troubled for sin, and the chief inducement for a soul not to sin. This medicine hath two notable virtues, restorative and preservative; to restore the bones that already are broken through sin, and to preserve our feet from further falling. It hath a healing virtue for these bruises that are in the soul; and besides, it is a sovereign preservative against the poison of sin and the world. What motive is like this? The SON of God shed his blood for our sins. O, how precious was the ransom! More precious than gold, or silver, and precious stones; because the redemption of the soul is so precious, that it would have ceased for ever without it.

Now, what soul can deliberately think of this, but he shall find the most vehement persuasion against sin? He cannot but behold the infinite evil that is in it, which re-



quired such an infinite recompense. Can a believing heart “crucify afresh the LORD of glory,” and, as it were, “trample under foot his blood?” Many speak of this blood, and think they apply it to the cleansing of their past sin; but it is rather, that they may sin with more liberty, as if the end of washing were nothing but to defile again. Certainly, this blood is not for such souls; not one word of comfort is in the word, not one drop of hope in the blood, to them who pretend to believe in CHRIST’S blood, and yet continue in sin, as fresh and lively as ever.

“And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the FATHER, JESUS CHRIST the righteous.”—It is the office of conscience to accuse a man in evil-doing: the most high GOD hath a deputy within every man’s breast, which not only is a witness, but a judge, to fasten an accusation, and pronounce a sentence upon him, according to the law of GOD; and while it is so, that man is accused in both courts, at the supreme tribunal, and in the lower house of a man’s own conscience. When man’s accuser is within him, and GOD his “righteous judge” above him, who can come in to plead such a man’s cause? A person self-condemned, who shall plead for his absolution? If he cannot but accuse himself, and stop his mouth, being guilty before GOD of the transgressions of all his law, then what place is there for an advocate to excuse him, or defend his cause? And who is it that can enter the lists with GOD, who, because he is the supreme judge, must be both judge and party? Where shall a “daysman be found to lay his hands on both,” and advocate the desperate cause of sinners?

Truly here we had been at an eternal stand, for any thing that the creation could imagine, had not the infinite grace and wisdom of GOD displayed themselves to mankind, in opening a door of hope to sinners. Behold, here is the provision made for lost souls; There is one able and “mighty to save;” a person who taketh the broken cause of sinners in hand, and makes justice to be for them,

and not against them : “ If any man sin, we have an Advocate.”

An Advocate’s office is to sue out the Client’s right, from principles of justice. Elsewhere CHRIST hath the office of a Judge ; here he is an Advocate for the party ; and both of these may have a comfortable consideration. “ The FATHER judgeth none, but hath committed all judgment to the SON.” (*John v. 22.*) And yet, here we have an Advocate with the FATHER, and that is, with the FATHER as Judge. These do not cross one another, but make out our abundant consolation ; that one entire office of our SAVIOUR is represented under these various notions suited to our capacity. A Judge he is ; yea, his tribunal is the supreme one, from which there is no appeal. It is true, the FATHER doth not wholly divest himself of judgment and authority ; but CHRIST is, as it were, substituted as his vicegerent, in the administration of the second covenant.

“ All things in heaven and earth are given to Him :” (*Matt. xi. 27 ; John xiii. 3 :*) and, therefore, whatever soul is aggrieved under the accusation of the law, hath liberty to appeal unto this newly erected tribunal, where CHRIST sits to dispense life, according to the terms of grace ; and he may be sure that the FATHER will not judge him according to the Law, if the SON absolve him in the Gospel.

Now, He who hath all judgment in his hand, is yet our Advocate in another consideration, as we consider GOD the FATHER sitting upon the tribunal of justice, and proceeding according to the tenor of his first law ; then CHRIST comes in with his advocacy for poor sinners, and maintains their cause, even from the principles of justice : He presents his satisfactory sacrifice, and pleads that we are not to be charged with that punishment which he hath suffered. Thus the salvation of believers is wonderfully secured ; for there is a sentence for it in the Court of the Gospel, pronounced by the SON.

What shall a soul then fear ? “ Who shall condemn ?

It is **CHRIST** that justifieth ;” for he is judge of life and death, and that is much ; but it is the **FATHER** that justifieth, and that is more. Whatsoever tribunal you be cited unto, you may be at ease. Is it the Gospel ? then the **SON** is Judge : Is it the Law ? then the **SON** is Advocate. He will not only give life himself, but see that his **FATHER** do it. Nay, before the matter shall fail, as he comes down from the throne to stand at the bar and plead for sinners, so he will not spare to degrade himself further, (if I may so say,) and of an Advocate will become a supplicant. And truly he ceased not in the days of his flesh to pray for us, “ with strong cries and tears ;” (*Heb. v.*;) and now he lives still to make intercession for us. He can turn from the plea of justice to the supplication of mercy ; and if justice will not help him, yet grace and favour will not disappoint him.

So then you may understand how it is partly an act of justice, and partly an act of mercy in **GOD**, to forgive sin to believers, though indeed mercy is the predominant ingredient, because love and grace were the very first rise of sending a Saviour and Redeemer. He freely sent his **SON**, and freely accepted him in our stead ; but once standing in our room, justice craves that no more be exacted of us, since He hath done the business himself.

A sinner stands accused in his own conscience, and before **GOD** : Therefore, to the end that we get no wrong, there is a twofold Advocate given us, one in the earth, in our consciences, another in the heavens with **GOD**. **CHRIST** is gone up to the highest tribunal, where the cause receives a definitive sentence, and there he manageth it above ; so that though **SATAN** should obtrude upon a poor soul a wrong sentence in its own conscience, and bring down a false and counterfeit act, as if it were extracted out of the register of heaven, yet there is no hazard above ; he dare not appear there, before the highest Court. When **CHRIST** was here, the Prince of this world was judged and cast out ; and so he will never once put in an accusation into heaven, because he knoweth that our faithful Advocate is

there, where nothing can pass without his knowledge and consent. And this is a great comfort, that all inferior sentences in thy perplexed conscience, which SATAN, through violence, hath imposed upon thee, are rescinded above in the highest Court, and shall not stand to thy prejudice, whoever thou be that forsakest sin, and comest to JESUS CHRIST.

But how doth CHRIST plead? Can he plead us *Not guilty*? Can he excuse or defend our sins? No, that is not the way; that accusation of the word against us is confessed, and all is undeniably clear; but he pleads, *Satisfied, though guilty*; he presents his satisfactory sacrifice, and the savour of that perfumes heaven, and pacifieth all. He shows GOD's bond, and discharge of the receipt of the sum of our debt; and thus is he cleared, and we are absolved. Therefore I desire you, whoever you are that are challenged for sin, if ye would have a solid way of satisfaction and peace to your consciences, own your guiltiness; do not plead *Not guilty*; do not excuse, or extenuate, but aggravate your guilt; nay, in this you may help SATAN; accuse yourselves and say, that you know more evil in yourselves than he doth, and open that before GOD; but in the mean time consider how it is managed above; plead thou also, *Satisfied by CHRIST, though guilty*; and so thou mayest say to thy accuser, If thou hast any thing to object against me, why I may not be saved, though a sinner, thou must go up to the highest tribunal; thou must come before my Judge and Advocate above; but, forasmuch as thou darest not appear there, it is but a lie, and a murdering lie.

Now, this is the way that the SPIRIT advocates for us in our consciences; (*John* xiv. xv. 26; )—Παράκλητος, here rendered "Advocate," there "Comforter:" both suit well, and may be conjoined in one, and given to both; for both are comfortable Advocates; CHRIST with the FATHER, and the SPIRIT with us. CHRIST is gone above for it, and he sent the SPIRIT in his stead. As GOD hath a deputy-judge in man, that is, man's conscience, so the SON, "our Advocate with GOD," hath a deputy-advocate to plead the

cause in our conscience : and this he doth, partly by opening the Scriptures to us, and making us understand the way of salvation in them ; partly by manifesting his own work, and God's gifts in us, by a superadded light of testimony ; and partly by comforting us against all outward and inward sorrows. Sometimes he pleads with the soul against SATAN, *Not guilty* ; for SATAN is a slanderous and false accuser, and cares not to calumniate stoutly, and he knoweth something will stick. He will not only object known sins, but his manner is, to cast a mist upon the eye of the soul, and darken all its graces ; and then he brings forth his process, that they have no grace, no faith, no love to God, no sorrow for sin : in such a case it is the SPIRIT's office to plead it to our consciences, that we are not totally guilty, as we are charged ; and this is not so much a clearing of ourselves, as a vindication of the free gifts of God, which lie under his aspersion. Indeed, if there be a great stress here, and if, for wise reasons, the SPIRIT forbears to plead this point ; I say, if you find this too hard for you to plead *Not guilty*, then my advice is, that ye suspend that question : yield it not wholly, but rather leave it entire, and do as if it were not. Suppose that article and point were gained against thee, what wouldest thou do next ? Certainly thou must say, I would then seek grace and faith from Him who giveth liberally ; I would then labour to receive CHRIST in the promises. I say, do that now, and thou takest a short and compendious way to win thy cause, and overcome SATAN ; let that be thy study, and he hath done with it.

But in any challenge about the transgression of the law, or desert of eternal wrath, the SPIRIT must not plead *Not guilty* ; for thou must confess that : but as far as SATAN aimeth at a further conclusion, to drive thee away from hope to despondency of spirit, so far the SPIRIT clears up unto the conscience, that this doth no ways follow from that confession of guiltiness ; since there is a SAVIOUR that hath satisfied for it, and invites all to come and accept Him for their LORD and SAVIOUR.

The strength of **CHRIST**'s advocacy for believers, consists partly in his qualification for the office, and partly in the ground and foundation of his cause. His qualification we have in this verse; the ground and foundation of his pleading in the next, "He is a propitiation for our sins;" and upon this very ground his advocacy is both just and effectual.

Every word holds out some fitness, and therefore drops consolation to a troubled soul. "With the **FATHER**," speaks the relation in which he and we stand to the Judge; he hath not to do with an austere Judge, who will adhere peremptorily to the letter of the law, for then we should be all undone. If there were not paternal affection and fatherly clemency in the Judge, if he were not so disposed as to make some candid interpretation upon it, and in some manner to relax the sentence as to our personal suffering, we could never stand before Him, nor needed any Advocate appear for us: but here is the great comfort, he is **CHRIST**'s Father, and our Father.

And, therefore, there is great hope that our Advocate **JESUS CHRIST** shall prevail in his suit for us, because He with whom he deals, the **FATHER**, loves him, and loves us, and will not stand upon strict terms of justice, but rather temper all with mercy. He will certainly hear his "well-beloved **SON**," for in Him "he is well pleased;" his soul rests in Him; and for his sake he adopts us to be his children; and therefore he will both hear him in our behalf, and our prayers too, for his name's sake.

But this is superadded to qualify our Advocate, He is the "**CHRIST**" of **GOD**, anointed for this very purpose, and so hath a fair and lawful calling to this office. He "takes not this honour to himself," but was called thereto of his **FATHER**. (*Heb. v. 4.*) As he did not make himself a Priest, so he did not intrude upon the Advocateship; but He that said, "Thou art my **SON**," called him to it. In this there is the greatest support for a sinking soul, to know that all this frame of the Gospel was contrived by **GOD** the **FATHER**, and that he is master-builder in it;

since it is so, there can nothing control or shake it, since it is the very will of God, with whom we have to do, that a Mediator should stand between him and us : And since he hath such a mind to clear poor souls, that he freely chooseth and giveth them an able Advocate, it is a great token that he hath a mind to save as many as come to him, and that he is ready to pardon, when he prepares so fit an Advocate for us, and hath not left us alone to plead our own cause. Yea, he is so qualified for this, that he is called “JESUS, the SAVIOUR;” he is such an advocate, that he saves all for whom he pleads. The best Advocate may lose the cause, but he is the Advocate and the SAVIOUR, that never fell short in his undertaking for any believing soul. Be their sins ever so heinous, their accusation ever so just, their accuser ever so powerful, yet they who put their cause in his hand, who flee in hither for refuge, being weary of the bondage of sin and Satan, are sure that their cause cannot miscarry.

But there is another personal qualification needful, or all would be in vain, “JESUS the RIGHTEOUS.” If he were not righteous in himself, he had need of an advocate for himself, and might not plead for sinners ; but he is “righteous and holy,” “no guile found in his mouth,” “without sin,” an unblameable and unspotted High Priest, and such an Advocate too. (*Heb. vii. 26.*) As this perfected his sacrifice, that he offered not for his own sins, neither needed he so to do, so this completes his advocateship, that he needs not plead for himself. If then the law cannot attach our SAVIOUR, can lay no claim to him, or charge against him, then certainly he stands in a good capacity to plead for us before the FATHER, and to sue out a pardon for us, though guilty ; for if the just was delivered for the unjust, and the righteous suffered for the unrighteous, much more is it consistent with the justice of the FATHER, to deliver and save the unrighteous and unjust sinner, for the righteous Advocate’s sake.

Verse 2. “And he is the propitiation for our sins.”—

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H

Here is the strength of CHRIST's plea, and the ground of his advocacy, that "he is the propitiation." The Advocate is the Priest, and the Priest is the Sacrifice, and such efficacy this sacrifice hath, that the propitiatory-sacrifice may be called the very propitiation and pacification for sin. Here is the marrow of the Gospel, and these are the breasts of consolation, which any poor sinner might draw by faith : but truly, it comes not out, but by drawing, and there is nothing fit for that, but the heart. The well of salvation in the Word is deep, and many of you have nothing to draw with ; you want the bucket that should be let down ; and therefore you go away empty. You come full of other cares, and desires, and delights ; no empty room in your hearts for this, no longings and thirstings after the righteousness of God ; and therefore you return as you came, empty of all true refreshment. O that we could draw it forth to you, and then drop it into your hearts, and make it descend into your consciences !

In these words, you may consider more distinctly who this is, and then for whom he is made a sacrifice, and withal the efficacy of this sacrifice, and its sufficiency. Who this is, is pointed out as with the finger, "HE is," that is, JESUS CHRIST the righteous. The Apostle demonstrates him as a remarkable person, as the Baptist doth, "Behold the LAMB of GOD which taketh away the sin of the world."

"He is" a "propitiation," and that "for our sins ;" a strange combination of wonders ! Between the persons mentioned, *him* and *us*, there is such an infinite distance, that it is wonderful how the one descends to the room of the other, to become a sacrifice for us. O that we could express this to our own hearts, with all the emphasis that it hath ; He "the LORD," and we the servants ; He "the KING," and we the poor beggars ; He "the Brightness of his FATHER's Glory," and we the shame and ignominy of the whole creation ; He counting "it no robbery to be equal with GOD, and being in the form of GOD," and we



not equal to the worst of creatures, because of sin, and being in the form of devils. Had it been a holy and righteous man for sinners, it had been a strange exchange; but He is not only holy and harmless, but “higher than the heavens.” O what a vast descent was this, from heaven to earth, from a LORD to a servant, from an eternal spirit to mortal flesh, from GOD to creatures; and to descend thus far for such persons! While we were enemies, and might have expected a commissioner from heaven with vengeance against us, behold how the mysterious design of love opens itself to the world, “in sending his own SON for us:” and this is exceedingly aggravated from the absolute freedom of it,—that there was nothing to pre-engage him to it, but infinite impediments of his affection, and many difficulties to his power; and then, no advantage was to be expected from such creatures, notwithstanding such an undertaking for them.

Now, herein is the strongest support of faith, and the greatest incentive to love and obedience. I say, the strongest support of faith; for, a soul apprehending the greatness and heinousness of sins, and the inviolableness of GOD’s righteousness, with the purity of his holiness, can hardly be persuaded, that any thing can compensate that infinite wrong which is done to his Majesty. But all this difficulty will vanish at the bright appearance of this “Sun of Righteousness,” at the solid consideration of the glorious excellency of him who was given a ransom for us: herein the soul may be satisfied, when he considers what a person hath undertaken it, even JESUS the righteous, the only SON of GOD, in whom his soul delighteth, whose glorious and divine Majesty puts the stamp of infinite worth upon all his sufferings, and raiseth the dignity of the sacrifice beyond the sufferings of all creatures. Let this once be established in thy heart, that such a one, so beloved of GOD, and equal to GOD, is the propitiation for our sins, and that GOD hath sent “his only-begotten SON,” for this very business; then, there is the clearest demonstration

of the love of God, and of the worth of the ransom. What difficulty can be supposed in actually pardoning thy sins, when his love hath overcome infinitely greater difficulties, by sending one, his only Son, to procure pardon. (*John iii.*) Certainly, it cannot but be the very delight of his heart to forgive sins, since "he spared not his Son" to purchase it; since he hath had such an everlasting design of love, which broke out in CHRIST's coming. And then, such a person he is, that the merit of his sufferings cannot but be a sufficient compensation to justice, because he is one above all, of infinite highness, and therefore his lowness hath an infinite worth in it; of infinite fulness, and therefore his emptiness is of infinite price; of infinite glory, and so his shame is equivalent to the shame and malediction of all mankind. So then, whatsoever thou apprehendest of thy own sins, or God's holiness, which seemeth to render thy pardon difficult, lay but in the balance with that, first the free and rich expression of the infinite love of God, in sending such a one for a ransom; and, surely, that speaks as much to his readiness and willingness, as if a voice spake it just now from heaven: and then, to take away all scruple, lay the infinite worth of his person, who is "the propitiation," with thy sins, and it will certainly outweigh them; so that thou mayest be fully quieted and satisfied on that point, that it is as easy for him to pardon, as for thee to confess sin, and ask pardon; nay, that he is more ready to give it thee, than thou to ask.

In the next place, I desire you to look upon this, as the greatest incentive of affection. O how should it inflame your hearts to consider, that such an one became a sacrifice for our sins; to think that Angels have not such a word to comfort themselves with; the innumerable companies of Angels, who left their stations, have not such glad tidings to report one to another; they cannot say, "He is the propitiation for our sins." This is the wonderful mystery, which the blessed "Angels desire to look into;" they gaze upon it, and fix the eyes of their admiration upon "God

manifested in the flesh.” How should this endear him to our souls, and his will to our hearts, “who hath so loved us, and given himself for us.” Hath he given himself for us, and should we deny ourselves to Him, especially when we consider what an infinite disparity is between the worth, and difference in the advantage of it? He gave his blessed self a sacrifice; he offered himself to death for us, not to purchase any thing to himself, but life to us: And what is it he requires, but your base and unworthy self,—to offer up your lusts and sins in a sacrifice by mortification, and your hearts and affections in a thank-offering? In this your own greatest gain lies too; for this is truly to find and save yourselves, thus to give up yourselves to him.





**EXTRACTS**

FROM

**THE WORKS**

OF

**SIR MATTHEW HALE,**

*Lord Chief Justice of England:*

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

**SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE.**





THE  
**L I F E**  
OF  
**SIR MATTHEW HALE,**  
*Lord Chief Justice of England.*

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**MATTHEW HALE** was born at Alderley, in Gloucestershire, on the 1st of November, 1609. His grandfather was **ROBERT HALE**, an eminent clothier in Wotton-under-Edge, in that county, where he and his ancestors had lived for many descents, and in which they had given several parcels of land for the use of the poor, which are enjoyed by them to this day. This **ROBERT** acquired an estate of ten thousand pounds, which he divided almost equally amongst his five sons; besides the portions he gave to his daughters, from whom a numerous posterity has sprung. His second son was **ROBERT HALE**, a Barrister of Lincoln's Inn; he married **JOAN**, the daughter of **MATTHEW POYNTZ**, of Alderley, Esq., who was descended from the noble family of **POYNTZ**, of Acton: Of this marriage, there was no other issue but this one son. His grandfather by his mother's side was his godfather, and gave him his own name at his baptism. His father was a man of that strictness of conscience, that he gave over the practice of the law, because he could not understand the reason of giving colour in pleadings, which, as he thought, was to tell a lie; and this, with some other things commonly practised, seemed to him contrary to that exactness of truth and justice which became a Christian, so that he withdrew himself from the Inns of Court, to live on his estate in the country. But as the care he had to save

his soul made him abandon a profession in which he might have raised his family much higher, so his charity to his poor neighbours made him not only deal his alms largely among them while he lived, but at his death he left (out of his small estate, which was £100. a year) £20 a year to the poor of Wotton; which his son confirmed to them with some addition, and with this regulation, that it should be distributed among such poor house-keepers as did not receive the alms of the parish.

Thus he was descended rather from a good, than a noble family; and yet what was wanting in the insignificant titles of high birth and noble blood was more than made up in the true worth of his ancestors. But he was soon deprived of the happiness of his parents' care and instruction, for he lost his mother before he was three years of age, and his father died before he was five; so early was he cast on the Providence of God. Yet that unhappiness was in a great measure made up to him: for after some opposition made by Mr. THOMAS POYNTZ, his uncle by his mother's side, he was committed to the care of ANTHONY KINGSCOT, of Kingscot, Esq., who was his next kinsman, after his uncles, by his mother's side.

Great care was taken of his education; for his guardian intended to bring him up to be a Divine, and, being inclined to the way of those then called Puritans, put him to some schools that were taught by them, and in the seventeenth year of his age sent him to Magdalen-Hall in Oxford, where OBADIAH SEDGWICK was his tutor. He was an extraordinary proficient at school, and for some time at Oxford. But the stage-players coming thither, he was so much corrupted by seeing many plays, that he almost wholly forsook his studies.

The corruption of a young man's mind in one particular, generally draws on very many more. So he, being now taken off from his studies, and from the gravity of his deportment, which was formerly eminent in him far beyond his years, set himself to many of the vanities incident to youth, but still preserved a great probity of mind. He loved fine



clothes, and delighted much in company; and being of a strong robust body, he was a great master in all those exercises that required much strength. He also learned to fence, in which he became so expert, that he worsted many of the masters of those arts: but as he was exercising himself in them, an instance appeared, which gave some hopes of better things. One of his masters told him he could teach him no more, for he was now better at his own trade than himself was. This MR. HALE looked on as flattery; so to make the master discover himself, he promised him the house he lived in, (for he was his tenant,) if he could hit him a blow on the head, and bade him do his best, for he would be as good as his word. So after a little engagement, his master, being really superior to him, hit him on the head; and he performed his promise, for he gave him the house freely, and was not unwilling at that rate to learn to distinguish flattery from plain truth.

He now was so taken up with martial matters, that, instead of going on in his design of being a scholar, or a Divine, he resolved to be a soldier; and his tutor SEDGWICK going into the Low Countries, as Chaplain to the renowned LORD VERE, he resolved to go along with him, and to serve in the PRINCE of ORANGE's army; but a happy stop was put to this resolution. He was engaged in a suit of law with SIR WILLIAM WHITMORE, who laid claim to some part of his estate; and his guardian being a man of a retired temper, and not made for business, he was forced to leave the University, after he had been three years in it, and go to London to solicit his own business. Serjeant GLANVILL, who had been recommended to him as his Counsellor, observing in him a clear apprehension of things, and a solid judgment, and a great fitness for the study of the law, took pains to persuade him to forsake his thoughts of being a soldier, and to apply himself to the study of the law: And this had so good an effect on him, that on the 8th of November, 1629, when he was past the twentieth year of his age, he was admitted into Lincoln's-Inn; and being then deeply sensible how much time he had lost, and that idle things had over-run his mind, he resolved to redeem the

time he had wasted, and followed his studies with a diligence that scarcely could be believed. He studied for many years at the rate of sixteen hours a day: he threw aside all fine clothes, and betook himself to a plain fashion, which he continued to use to his dying day.

But since the honour of reclaiming him from idleness is due to the memory of that eminent lawyer Serjeant GLANVILL, I shall mention one passage respecting the Serjeant which ought never to be forgotten. His father had a fair estate, which he intended to settle on his elder brother; but he being a vicious young man, and there appearing no hopes of his recovery, he settled it upon the Serjeant, who was his second son. Upon his death, his eldest son finding that what he had before looked on as the mere threatening of an angry father, was now but too certain, became melancholy; and that by degrees wrought so great a change on him, that what his father could not prevail in while he lived, was now effected by the severity of his last will. His brother, observing this, called him with many of his friends together to a feast, and after other dishes had been served up, he ordered one that was covered to be set before his brother, and desired him to uncover it; which he doing, the company was surprised to find it full of writings. So he told them that he was now about to do what his father would have done, if he had lived to see that happy change, which they now all saw in his brother: and therefore he freely restored to him the whole estate.

MR. HALE did not at first break off from keeping company with some evil people, till a sad accident drove him from it. He, with some other young students, being invited to be merry out of town, one of them called for so much wine, that, notwithstanding all MR. HALE could do to prevent it, he went on in his excess till he fell down as dead before them. All that were present were not a little affrighted, and did what they could to bring him to himself again: this particularly affected MR. HALE, who went into another room, and shutting the door, fell on his knees, and prayed earnestly to God, both for his friend, that he might be restored to life again, and that himself might be forgiven

for giving countenance to such excess ; and he made a vow to God, that he would never again keep company in that manner, nor drink a health while he lived : His friend recovered, and he most religiously observed his vow, to his dying day.

This wrought an entire change in him. Now he forsook all vain company, and divided himself between the duties of religion, and the studies of his profession. In the former he was so regular, that for six and thirty years he never once failed going to church on the Lord's-day : this observation he made when an ague first interrupted that constant course ; and he reflected on it, as an acknowledgment of God's great goodness to him, in so long a continuance of his health.

He took a strict account of his time, of which the reader will best judge, by the scheme he drew up for a Diary, which I shall insert as copied from the original : it is set down in the same simplicity in which he wrote it for his own private use.

#### “ MORNING.

“ I. To lift up the heart to God in thankfulness for renewing my life.

“ II. To renew my covenant with God in CHRIST :  
1. By renewed acts of faith receiving CHRIST, and rejoicing in the height of that relation. 2. Resolution of being one of his people, doing him allegiance.

“ III. Adoration and prayer.

“ IV. Setting a watch over my own infirmities and passions, over the snares laid in our way. *Perimus licitis.*

#### “ DAY EMPLOYMENT.

“ There must be an employment of two kinds :—

“ I. Our ordinary calling, to serve God in it. It is a service to CHRIST, though never so mean. (*Col. iii.*) Here *faithfulness, diligence, cheerfulness.* Not to overlay myself with more business than I can bear.

“ II. Our spiritual employments ; mingle somewhat of God's immediate service in this day.

“ IF ALONE.

“ I. Beware of wandering, vain, impure thoughts; fly from thyself rather than entertain these.

“ II. Let thy solitary thoughts be profitable; view the evidences of thy salvation, the state of thy soul, the coming of CHRIST, thy own mortality.

“ COMPANY.

“ Do good to them. Use GOD’s name reverently. Beware of leaving an ill example. Receive good from them, if more knowing.

“ EVENING.

“ Cast up the accounts of the day. If ought amiss, beg pardon. Gather resolution of more vigilance. If well, bless the mercy and grace of GOD that hath supported thee.”

NOY, the Attorney-General, being then one of the greatest men of the profession, took early notice of him, called often for him, and directed him in his study, and grew to have such friendship for him, that he came to be called young NOY. Passing from the extreme of vanity in his apparel to that of neglecting himself too much, he was once taken, when there was a press for the KING’s service, as a fit person for it; for he was a strong and well-built man: but some that knew him coming by, and giving notice who he was, the press-men let him go. This made him return to more decency in his clothes, but never to any superfluity.

Once as he was buying some cloth for a new suit, the draper, with whom he differed about the price, told him that he should have it for nothing, if he would promise him a hundred pounds when he came to be Lord Chief Justice of England; to which he answered, that he could not with a good conscience wear any man’s cloth, unless he payed for it; so he satisfied the draper, and carried away the cloth.

While he was thus improving himself in the study of the Law, he not only kept the hours of the Hall constantly in

term-time, but seldom put himself out of Commons in vacation-time, and continued then to follow his studies with unwearied diligence; and not being satisfied with the books written about it, and being unwilling to take things upon trust, he was very diligent in searching all records. He therefore made divers collections out of the books he had read, and, mixing them with his own observations, digested them into a common-place book. This he did with so much industry and judgment, that an eminent Judge of the King's-Bench borrowed it of him when he was Lord Chief Baron: he unwillingly lent it, because it had been written by him before he was called to the Bar, and had never been thoroughly revised by him since that time; only such alterations as had been made in the Law by subsequent statutes and judgments, were added by him as they had happened: the Judge having perused it said, that though it was composed by him so early, he did not think any Lawyer in England could do it better, except he himself would set about it again.

He was soon found out by that great and learned Antiquary MR. SELDEN, who, though much superior to him in years, yet came to have such an esteem for him, and for MR. VAUGHAN, who was afterwards Lord Chief Justice of the Common-Pleas, that as he continued in a close friendship with them while he lived, so he made them, at his death, two of his four Executors. It was this acquaintance which first set MR. HALE on a more enlarged pursuit of learning, which he had before confined to his own profession.

He set himself much to the study of the Roman Law; and though he liked the way of judicature in England by Juries much better than that of the Civil Law, where so much was trusted to the Judge; yet he often said, that the true grounds and reasons of law were so well delivered in the *Digests*, that a man could never understand law as a science so well as by seeking it there, and therefore lamented much that it was so little studied in England.

He looked on readiness in Arithmetic as a thing which might be useful to him in his own employment, and acquired it to such a degree, that he would often on the sudden,

and afterwards on the Bench, resolve very hard questions, which had puzzled the best accountants. He rested not here, but studied the Algebra, both *Speciosa* and *Numerosa*, and went through all the other mathematical sciences, and made a great collection of very excellent instruments, sparing no cost to have them as exact as art could make them. He was also very conversant in philosophical learning, and in all the curious experiments of this age; and had the new books, written on those subjects, sent from all parts, which he both read and examined critically. But indeed it might seem scarcely credible, that a man so much employed, and of so severe a temper of mind, could find leisure to read, observe, and write, so much of these subjects as he did. He called them his diversions, for he often said, that when he was weary with the study of the Law or Divinity, he used to recreate himself with Philosophy or the Mathematics; to this he added great skill in Physic, Anatomy, and Surgery: and he used to say, "No man could be absolutely a master in any profession, without having some skill in other sciences." Besides the satisfaction he had in the knowledge of these things, he made use of them often in his employments. In some examinations he has put such questions to Physicians, or Surgeons, that they have professed that the College of Physicians could not have done it more exactly. To this he added great researches into Ancient History, and particularly into the roughest and least delightful part of it, Chronology. He was well acquainted with the writings of the ancient Greek Philosophers; but want of occasion to use it wore out his knowledge of the Greek Tongue: and though he never studied the Hebrew Tongue, yet by his frequent conversation with SELDEN, he understood the most curious things in the Rabbinical learning.

But he made the study of Divinity the chief of all others; to which he not only directed every thing else, but also arrived at that pitch in it, that those who have read what he has written on these subjects will think, that they must have had most of his time and thoughts. It may seem incredible, that one man, in no great compass of

years, should have acquired such a variety of knowledge. But as his parts were quick, and his apprehensions lively, his memory great, and his judgment strong ; so his industry was indefatigable. He rose always betimes in the morning ; was never idle ; and scarcely ever held any discourse about news, except with some few in whom he confided entirely. He entered into no correspondence by letters, except about necessary business or matters of learning, and spent very little time in eating or drinking ; for as he never went to public feasts, so he gave no entertainments but to the poor, and followed our SAVIOUR's direction (of feasting none but these) literally : and in eating and drinking he observed not only great plainness and moderation, but lived so philosophically, that he always ended his meal with an appetite ; so that he lost little time at it, (that being the only portion which he grudged himself,) and was disposed to any exercise of his mind, to which he thought fit to apply himself, immediately after he had dined. By these means he gained much time, that is otherwise unprofitably wasted.

He had also an admirable equality in the temper of his mind, which disposed him for whatever studies he thought fit ; and some very uneasy things, under which he lay for many years, did rather engage him to, than distract him from his studies.

When he was called to the Bar, and began to make a figure in the world, the late unhappy wars broke out, in which it was no easy thing for a man to preserve his integrity, and to live free from great danger and trouble. He had read the life of POMPONIVS ATTICUS ; and, having observed, that he had passed through a time of as much distraction as ever was in any age or state, free from any considerable danger, he set him as a pattern to himself : and observing, that besides those virtues which are necessary to all men, and at all times, there were two things that chiefly preserved ATTICUS : the one his engaging in no faction, and meddling in no public business ; the other his constantly relieving those that were lowest, which was

ascribed by such as prevailed to the generosity of his temper, and procured him much kindness from those on whom he had exercised his bounty, when it came to their turn to govern ; he resolved to guide himself by these rules as much as was possible.

He not only avoided all public employment, but the very talking of news, and was always both favourable and charitable to those who were depressed, and was sure never to provoke any in particular, by censuring or reflecting on their actions ; for many that have conversed much with him have said, that they never heard him once speak ill of any person.

He was employed in his practice by all the King's party : He was assigned Counsel to the Earl of STAFFORD, and Archbishop LAUD, and afterwards to the King himself, when brought to the infamous pageantry of a mock-trial, and offered to plead for him with all the courage that so glorious a cause ought to have inspired him with ; but he was not suffered to appear, because the King refusing, as he had good reason, to submit to the Court, it was pretended none could be admitted to speak for him. He was also Counsel for the Duke of HAMILTON, the Earl of HOLLAND, and the Lord CAPEL. Afterwards also being Counsel for the Lord CRAVEN, he pleaded with that force of argument, that the then Attorney-General threatened him for appearing against the Government ; to whom he answered, "He was pleading in defence of those laws, which they declared they would maintain and preserve, and he was doing his duty to his Client, so that he was not to be daunted with threatenings."

Upon all these occasions he discharged himself with so much learning, fidelity, and courage, that he came to be generally employed for all that party. Nor was he satisfied to appear for their just defence in the way of his profession, but he also relieved them often in their necessities ; which he did in a way that was no less prudent than charitable, considering the dangers of that time : for he often deposited considerable sums in the hands of a gentleman of the King's



party, who knew their necessities well, and was to distribute his charity according to his own discretion, without either letting them know from whence it came, or giving him an account to whom he had given it.

CROMWELL, seeing him possessed of so much practice; and one of the most eminent men of the law, who was not at all afraid of doing his duty in critical times, resolved to raise him to the Bench.

MR. HALE saw well enough the snare laid for him; and though he did not much consider the prejudice it would be to himself, to exchange the easy and safe profits he had by his practice for a Judge's place in the Common-Pleas, which he was required to accept, yet he did deliberate more on the lawfulness of taking a commission from usurpers; but having considered well this, he saw, "That it being absolutely necessary to have justice and property kept up at all times, it was no sin to take a commission from usurpers, if he made no declaration of his acknowledging their authority;" which he never did. He was much urged to accept of it by some eminent men of his own profession, who were of the King's party, as SIR ORLANDO BRIDGEMAN, and Sir GEOFFREY PALMER; and was also satisfied concerning the lawfulness of it, by the resolution of some famous Divines, in particular DR. SHELDON, and DR. HENCHMAN, who were afterwards promoted to the sees of Canterbury and London.

To these were added the importunities of all his friends, who thought that, in a time of so much danger and oppression, it might be no small security to the nation, to have a man of his integrity and abilities on the Bench. And the usurpers themselves held him in so much estimation, that they were glad to have him give a countenance to their Courts; and, by promoting one that was known to have different principles from them, they affected the reputation of honouring men of eminent virtues, of what persuasion soever they might be, in relation to public matters.

But he had greater scruples concerning the putting

offenders to death by that commission; since he thought the sword of justice belonged only to the lawful Prince, and it seemed not warrantable to proceed to a capital sentence by an authority derived from usurpers. Yet for some time after he was made a Judge, when he went the Circuit, he did sit on the Crown side, and judged criminals: but having considered farther, he came to think that it was at least better not to do it; and so, after the second or third Circuit, he refused to sit any more on the Crown side, and told plainly the reason. And indeed he had so carried himself in some trials, that they were not unwilling that he should withdraw from meddling farther in them; of which I shall give some instances.

Not long after he was made a Judge, which was in the year 1653, when he went the Circuit, a trial was brought before him at Lincoln, concerning the murder of one of the townsmen, who had been of the King's party, and was killed by a soldier of the garrison there. He was in the fields with a fowling-piece on his shoulder; which the soldier seeing, came to him, and said, it was contrary to an order which the Protector had made, "That none who had been of the King's party should carry arms;" and so he would have forced it from him: but as the other did not regard the order, so, being stronger than the soldier, he threw him down, and having beat him, he left him. The soldier went into the town, and told one of his fellow-soldiers how he had been used, and got him to go with him, and lie in wait for the man, that he might be revenged on him. They both watched his coming to town, and one of them went to him to demand his gun; which he refusing, the soldier struck at him; and as they were struggling, the other came behind, and ran his sword into his body; of which wound he presently died. It was in the time of the Assizes; so they were both tried. Against the one there was no evidence of forethought felony, so he was only found guilty of manslaughter; but the other was found guilty of murder. And though Colonel WHALLEY, who commanded the garrison, came into Court, and urged,

“that the man was killed only for disobeying the Protector’s order, and that the soldier was but doing his duty;” yet the Judge regarded both his reasons and threatenings very little; and therefore he not only gave sentence against him, but ordered the execution to be so suddenly done, that it might not be possible to procure a reprieve.

Another occasion was given him of showing both his justice and courage, when he was in another Circuit. He understood that the Protector had ordered a jury to be returned for a trial, in which he was more than ordinarily concerned. Upon this information, he examined the Sheriff about it, who knew nothing of it, for he said he referred all such things to the Under-Sheriff; and having next asked the Under-Sheriff concerning it, he found the jury had been returned by order from CROMWELL; upon which he showed the Statute, that all juries ought to be returned by the Sheriff, or his lawful officer: and this not being done according to law, he dismissed the jury, and would not try the cause. Upon this the Protector was highly displeased with him, and at his return from the Circuit, he told him in anger, that “he was not fit to be a Judge;” to which all the answer he made was, “that it was very true.”

When PENRUDDOCK’S trial was brought on, there was a special Messenger sent to him, requiring him to assist at it. It was in vacation-time, and he was at his country-house at Alderley. He plainly refused to go, and said, “the four terms, and two circuits, were enough, and the little interval that was between was little enough for his private affairs.” He thought it was not necessary to speak more clearly; but if he had been urged to it, he would not have been afraid of doing it.

He was at that time chosen a Member of Parliament, (for there being then no House of Lords, Judges might be chosen to sit in the House of Commons;) and he went to it, with a design to obstruct the wicked projects then on foot, by two parties who had very different ends. On the one hand, some designed they knew not what, being resolved to pull down a standing Ministry, the law and pro-

perty of England, and all the ancient rules of this Government, and to set up in its room a scheme, which they called the Kingdom of CHRIST, or of his Saints. Others, taking advantages from the apprehensions, which all the sober men of the nation felt, lest they should fall under the tyranny of a distracted sort of people, intended to improve that opportunity to raise their own fortunes and families. Amidst these, Judge HALE steered a middle course; for as he would engage for neither side, so he, with a great many more worthy men, came to Parliament more out of a design to hinder mischief, than to do much good; wisely foreseeing, that the inclinations for the Royal Family were daily growing so much, that, in time, the disorders then in agitation would ferment to that happy resolution, in which they determined in May, 1660. All that could be then done, was to oppose the ill designs of both parties, the enthusiasts as well as the usurpers. Among the other extravagant motions made in this Parliament, one was, to destroy all the Records in the Tower, and to settle the nation on a new foundation. He took this province to himself, to show the madness of this proposition, the injustice of it, and the mischiefs that would follow it; and did it with such clearness and strength of reason, as not only satisfied all sober persons, but stopped even the mouths of the frantic people themselves.

Thus he continued administering justice till the Protector died: but then he both refused the mournings that were sent to him and his servants for the funeral, and likewise to accept of the new Commission that was offered him by RICHARD; and when the rest of the Judges urged it upon him, he rejected all their importunities, and said, "he could act no longer under such authority."

He lived a private man till the Parliament met that called home the King, to which he was returned Knight of the shire for the county of Gloucester. It appeared at that time how much he was beloved and esteemed in his neighbourhood; for though another, who stood in competition with him, had spent near a thousand pounds to procure

votes, (a great sum to be employed that way in those days,) and he had been at no cost, and was so far from soliciting it, that he had stood out long against those who pressed him to appear, and did not promise to appear till three days before the election, yet he was preferred. He was brought thither almost by violence, by the Lord BERKLEY, who bore all the charge on the day of his Election. And whereas, by the writ, the Knight of a shire must be *Miles gladio cinctus*, and he had no sword, that noble Lord girt him with his own sword during the election; but he was soon weary of it, for the embroidery of the belt did not suit the plainness of his clothes; and indeed the election did not hold long; for as soon as ever he came into the field, he was chosen by much the greater number.

In that Parliament, he bore his share in the happy period then put to the confusions which threatened the utter ruin of the nation; which, contrary to the expectations of the most sanguine, settled in so serene a manner, that those who had formerly built so much on their success, calling it an answer from heaven to their solemn appeals to the Providence of God, were now not a little confounded to see all this turned against themselves, in an instance much more extraordinary than any of those were, upon which they had built so much. His great prudence and excellent temper led him to think, that the sooner an act of indemnity were passed, and the fuller it were of favour, it would sooner settle the nation, and quiet the minds of the people; and therefore he applied himself with a particular care to the framing and carrying it on: in which it was visible he had no concern of his own, but merely his love of the public.

Soon after, when the Courts in Westminster-Hall came to be settled, he was made Lord Chief Baron: and when the EARL of CLARENDON (then Lord Chancellor) delivered him his Commission, in the speech he made, according to the custom on such occasions, he expressed his esteem of him in a very singular manner, telling him, among other things, "that if the King could have found out an honester and fitter man for that employment, he would not have

advanced him to it; and that he had therefore preferred him, because he knew none that deserved it so well." It is usual for persons so promoted to be knighted; but he desired to avoid that honour, and therefore for a considerable time declined all opportunities of waiting on the King; which the Lord Chancellor observing, sent for him upon business one day, when the King was at his house, and told his Majesty there was his modest Chief Baron; upon which, he was unexpectedly knighted.

He continued eleven years in that place, managing the Court with singular justice. It was observed by the whole nation, how much he raised the reputation and practice of it: and those that held places and offices in it can all declare, not only the impartiality of his justice, but his generosity, his vast diligence, and his great exactness in trials. This gave occasion to the only complaint that ever was made against him; "that he did not dispatch matters quick enough;" but the great care which he used, to put suits to a final end, as it made him slower in deciding them, so it had this good effect, that causes tried before him were seldom, if ever, tried again.

Nor did his administration of justice lie only in that Court. He was one of the principal Judges that sat in Clifford's-Inn, about settling the difference between landlord and tenant, after the dreadful fire of London. He was the first who offered his service to the City, for accommodating all the differences that might have risen about the re-building of it, in which he behaved himself to the satisfaction of all persons; so that the sudden and quiet building of the City, which is justly to be reckoned one of the wonders of the age, is in no small measure due to the great care, which he and SIR ORLANDO BRIDGEMAN (then Lord Chief Justice of the Common-Pleas) used, and to the judgment they showed in that affair. He first, by way of scheme, contrived the rules upon which he and the rest proceeded afterwards; in which his readiness at arithmetic, and his skill in architecture, were of great use to him.

He would never receive private addresses or recommenda-

tions from the greatest persons in any matter in which justice was concerned. One of the first Peers of England went once to his chamber, and told him, "that having a suit to be tried before him, he was desirous then to acquaint him with it, that he might the better understand it, when it should come to be heard in Court." Upon this the Lord Chief Baron interrupted him, and said, "he did not deal fairly in coming to his chamber about such affairs; for he never received any information of causes but in open Court;" so he would not suffer him to go on. Whereupon his Grace (for he was a Duke) went away not a little dissatisfied, and complained of it to the King, as a rudeness that was not to be endured. But his Majesty bade him content himself that he was no worse used, and said, "he verily believed he would have used himself no better, if he had gone to solicit him in any of his own causes."

Another passage fell out in one of his Circuits, which was somewhat censured as unreasonable strictness; but it flowed from his exact adherence to the rules which he had prescribed to himself. A gentleman, who had a trial at the assizes, sent him a buck for his table; so when he heard his name, he asked, "if he was the same person that had sent him venison;" and finding that he was the same, he told him, "he could not suffer the trial to go on, till he had paid him for his buck." To this the gentleman answered, "that he never sold his venison, and that he had done nothing to him, which he did not do to every Judge that had gone that Circuit," which was confirmed by several gentlemen then present: but all would not do; he would not suffer the trial to go on, till he had paid for the present; upon which the gentleman withdrew the record. And at Salisbury, the Dean and Chapter having, according to the custom, presented him with six sugar-loaves in his Circuit, he made his servants pay for the sugar before he would try their cause.

It was not so easy for him to resist the importunities of the poor, for whom his compassion wrought more powerfully than his regard to wealth and greatness; yet when justice was concerned, even that did not turn him out of

the way. There was one that had been put out of a place for some ill behaviour, who urged the Lord Chief Baron to set his hand to a certificate, in order to restore him to it, or provide him with another: but he told him plainly, "his fault was such, that he could not do it;" the man pressed him vehemently, and fell down on his knees, and begged it of him with many tears; but finding that could not prevail, he said, "he should be utterly ruined if he did it not; and he should curse him for it every day." But this having no effect, he then broke out into all the reproachful words, that passion and despair could suggest: to which all the answer the Lord Chief Baron made, was, "that he could bear his reproaches, but he could not set his hand to his certificate;" so he gave him a sum of money, and sent him away.

But now he was to go on, after his pattern ATTICUS, still to relieve them that were lowest: so besides great charities to the Non-conformists, who were then, as he thought, too hardly used; he took great care to guard them, as far as lay in his power, from the severities which some designed against them, and discouraged those who were inclined to stretch the laws too much against them. He lamented the differences that were raised in this Church very much, and, according to the impartiality of his justice, blamed some things on both sides, which I shall set down with the same freedom that he spake them. He thought many of the Non-conformists had merited highly in the business of the King's Restoration, and at least deserved that the terms of conformity should not have been made stricter than they were before the war. There was not then that dreadful prospect of Popery, which has appeared since. But that which afflicted him most was, that he saw that the heats and contentions, which followed upon those different parties and interests, did take people off from the indispensable things of Religion, and slackened the zeal of (otherwise) good men for the substance of it, so much being spent about external and indifferent things. It also gave advantages to Atheists, to treat the most sacred points of our



holy faith as ridiculous, when they saw the Professors of it contend so fiercely, and with such bitterness, about lesser matters. He was much offended at all those books that were written to expose the contrary sect to scorn and contempt: he thought such writers wounded the Christian Religion, through the sides of those who differed from them; while a sort of lewd people, who had assumed to themselves the title of wits, took up from both hands what they had said, to make both ridiculous, and thence persuade the world to laugh at both, and at all religion for their sakes. But as he lamented the proceedings against the Non-conformists; so he declared himself always of the Church of England, and said that those of the separation were good men, but that they had narrow souls, who would break the peace of the Church about such inconsiderable matters.

He scarcely ever meddled in state-affairs; yet upon a proposition set on foot by the Lord Keeper BRIDGEMAN, for a comprehension of the more moderate Dissenters, and a limited indulgence towards such as could not be brought within the comprehension, he dispensed with his maxim of avoiding to engage in matters of state. There were several meetings upon that occasion. The Divine of the Church of England, who appeared most for it, was DR. WILKINS, afterwards promoted to the Bishopric of Chester, a man of as great a mind, as true a judgment, as eminent virtues, and as good a soul, as any I ever knew. He, being determined as well by his excellent temper, as by his foresight and prudence, by which he early perceived the great prejudice which religion received by those divisions, set about that project with the magnanimity peculiar to himself; for though he was much censured by many of his own side, and seconded by very few, yet he pushed it as far as he could. After several conferences with two of the most eminent Presbyterian Divines, heads were agreed on, some abatements were to be made, and explanations were to be accepted of. The particulars of that project being thus concerted, they were brought to the Lord Chief Baron, who put them in the form of a bill, to be presented to the next session of Parliament.

But two parties appeared vigorously against the design ; the one was composed of some zealous Clergymen, who thought it below the dignity of the Church to alter laws, and change settlements, for the sake of some whom they esteemed schismatics : and they wrought upon the greater part of the House of Commons, so that they passed a vote against receiving any bill for that effect.

There were others who opposed it upon very different ends : they designed to shelter the Papists from the execution of the law, and saw clearly that nothing could bring in Popery so well as a toleration. But to tolerate Popery barefaced, would have startled the nation too much ; so it was necessary to hinder all propositions for union, since the keeping up of the differences was the best colour they could find for getting the toleration to pass, only as a slackening of the laws against Dissenters, whose numbers and wealth made it adviseable to have some regard to them ; and under this pretence Popery might have crept in more covered, and less regarded. These counsels being acceptable to some concealed Papists then in power, as has since appeared too evidently, the whole project for comprehension was let fall ; and those who had set it on foot came to be looked on with an evil eye, as secret favourers of the Dissenters, underminers of the Church, and every thing else which jealousy and distaste could cast on them.

But upon this occasion, the Lord Chief Baron and Dr. WILKINS came to contract a firm and familiar friendship ; and the Lord Chief Baron having much business, and little time to spare, did, to enjoy the other the more, what he had scarcely ever done before,—he went sometimes to dine with him. And though he lived in great friendship with some eminent Clergymen, as Dr. WARD, BISHOP of SALISBURY ; Dr. BARLOW, BISHOP of LINCOLN ; Dr. BARROW, late Master of Trinity College ; Dr. TILLOTSON, DEAN of CANTERBURY ; and Dr. STILLINGFLEET, DEAN of ST. PAUL'S ; (men so well known, and so much esteemed, that it was no wonder the Lord Chief Baron valued their conversation ; ) yet there was an intimacy in his converse with BISHOP WILKINS, that was singular to him

alone. He had, during the late wars, lived in a long and entire friendship with the Apostolical Primate of Ireland, Archbishop USHER. Their curious searches into antiquity, and the sympathy of both their tempers, led them to a great agreement almost in every thing. He held also frequent conversation with MR. BAXTER, who was his neighbour at Acton, on whom he looked as a person of great devotion, and of a very quick apprehension.

He looked with great sorrow on the impiety of the age; and so he set himself to oppose it, not only by the shining example of his own life, but by engaging in a cause that could not fall into better hands. The occasion which first led him to write, was this: he was a strict observer of the LORD's Day, in which, besides his constancy in the public worship of GOD, he used to call all his family together, and repeat to them the heads of the Sermons, with some additions of his own, which he fitted for their capacities and circumstances; and that being done, he had a custom of shutting himself up for two or three hours, which he either spent in secret devotions, or on such profitable meditations as did then occur to his thoughts. He wrote them with the same simplicity with which he formed them in his mind, without any art, or so much as a thought of having them published: he never corrected them, but laid them aside, when he had finished them, having intended only to fix and preserve his own reflections in them; so that he used no sort of care to polish them, or make the first draught more perfect than when they fell from his pen. These fell into the hands of a very worthy person; and he judging, as well he might, that the communicating of them to the world would be a public service, printed them, a little before the author's death.

In them there appears a true spirit of religion, mixed with serious and fervent devotion; and perhaps with the more advantage, because the style wants some correction, which shows that they were the genuine productions of an excellent mind, entertaining itself in secret with such contemplations. The style is clear and masculine, in a

due temper between flatness and affectation, in which he expresses his thoughts both easily and decently.

On the 18th of May, 1671, he was promoted to be Lord Chief Justice of England. All people applauded this choice, and thought their liberties could not be better deposited than in the hands of one, who, as he understood them well, had likewise all the justice and courage which so sacred a trust required. One thing was much observed and commended in him, that when there was a great inequality in the ability and learning of the Counsellors who were to plead one against another, he thought it became him as the Judge to supply that; so he would enforce what the weaker Counsel managed but indifferently, and not suffer the more learned to carry the business by the advantage they had over the others, in their quickness and skill in law, and readiness in pleading, till all things were cleared, in which the merits and strength of the ill-defended cause lay.

He was not satisfied barely to give his judgment in causes; but did, especially in all intricate ones, give such an account of the reasons that prevailed with him, that the Counsel did not only acquiesce in his authority, but were so convinced by his reasons, that I have heard many profess, that he brought them often to change their opinions: so that his giving of judgment was really a learned lecture upon that point of law; and, which was yet more, the parties themselves, though interest does too commonly corrupt the judgment, were generally satisfied with the justice of his decisions, even when they were made against them. His impartial justice, and great diligence, drew the chief practice after him, into whatsoever Court he came. Since, though the Courts of the Common-Pleas, the Exchequer, and the King's-Bench, are appointed for the trial of causes of different natures, yet it is easy to bring most causes into any of them, as the Counsel or Attorneys please; so, as he had drawn the business much after him both in the Common-Pleas and the Exchequer, it now followed him into the King's-Bench; and many causes

that were pending in the Exchequer, and not determined, were let fall there, and brought again before him in the Court to which he was now removed. And here did he spend the rest of his public life. But about four years and a half after this advancement, he, who had hitherto enjoyed a firm and vigorous health, to which his great temperance, and the equality of his mind, did not a little conduce, was on a sudden brought very low by an inflammation in his midriff, which in two days' time broke the constitution of his health to such a degree, that he never recovered it. He became so asthmatical, that with great difficulty he could fetch his breath; and this terminated in a dropsy, of which he afterwards died. He understood physic so well, that, considering his age, he concluded his distemper must carry him off in a little time; and therefore he resolved to have some of the last months of his life to himself, that, being freed of all worldly cares, he might be preparing for his change. He was also so much disabled in his body, that he could hardly, though supported by his servants, walk through Westminster-Hall, or endure the toil of business. He had been a long time wearied with the distractions which his employment had brought on him, and his profession was become ungrateful to him. He loved to apply himself wholly to better purposes, as will appear by the following paper which he wrote on this subject.

“First,—If I consider the business of my profession, whether as an Advocate or as a Judge, I acknowledge, by the institution of Almighty God, and the dispensation of his Providence, that I am bound to industry and fidelity in it: And as it is an act of obedience unto his will, it carries with it some things of religious duty, and I may and do take comfort in it, and expect a reward of my obedience to him, and the good that I do to mankind therein, from the bounty, and beneficence, and promise of Almighty God. But this I must say concerning these employments, considered simply in themselves, that they are very full of cares, anxieties, and perturbations.

“ Secondly,—That though they are beneficial to others, yet they are of the least benefit to him that is employed in them.

“ Thirdly,—That they necessarily involve the party, whose office it is, in great dangers, difficulties, and calumnies.

“ Fourthly,—That they only serve for the meridian of this life; which is short and uncertain.

“ Fifthly,—That though it be my duty faithfully to serve in them, while I am called to them, and till I am duly called from them, yet they are great consumers of that little time we have here, which, as it seems to me, might be better spent in a pious and contemplative life, and a due provision for eternity. I do not know a better temporal employment than MARTHA had, in testifying her love and duty to our SAVIOUR, by making provision for him; yet our LORD tells her, that there was only “ one thing needful,” and MARY had chosen “ the better part.”

By this the reader will see, that he continued in this station upon no other consideration, but that, being set in it by the Providence of GOD, he judged he could not abandon that post which was assigned him, without preferring his own inclination to the choice which GOD hath made for him; but now that same Providence having, by this great distemper, disengaged him from the obligation of holding a place which he was no longer able to discharge, he resolved to resign it. This was no sooner surmised abroad, than it drew upon him the importunities of all his friends, and the clamour of the whole town, to divert him from it: but all was to no purpose; there was but one argument that could move him, which was, “ that he was obliged to continue in the employment in which GOD had put him for the good of the public.” But to this he had such an answer, that even those who were most concerned at his withdrawing could not but see, that the reasons inducing him to it were too strong; so he made application to his Majesty for his Writ of Ease, which the King was very unwilling to grant him, and offered to let him hold his place

still, he doing what business he could in his chamber ; but he said, that he could not with a good conscience continue in it, since he was no longer able to discharge the duty belonging to it.

But yet such was the general satisfaction which all the kingdom received by his excellent administration of justice, that the King, though he could not well deny his request, yet deferred the granting of it as long as it was possible : nor could the Lord Chancellor be prevailed with to move the King to hasten his discharge, though the Chief Justice often pressed him to it.

At last, having wearied himself, and all his friends, with his importunate desires, and growing sensibly weaker in body, he did, upon the 12th day of February, 1675-6, go before a Master in Chancery, with a little parchment-deed drawn by himself, and written all with his own hand, and there sealed and delivered it, and acknowledged it to be enrolled ; and afterwards he brought the original deed to the Lord Chancellor, and did formally surrender his office in these words :—

*Omnibus CHRISTI fidelibus ad quos præsens scriptura pervenerit, MATTHEUS HALE, Miles, Capitalis Justiciarius Domini Regis ad Placita coram ipso Rege tenenda assignatus, salutem in Domino sempiternam. Noveritis me præfatum MATTHEUM HALE, Militem, jam senem factum, et variis corporis mei senilis morbis et infirmitatibus dirè laborantem et adhuc detentum, hâc chartâ meâ resignare et sursum reddere Serenissimo Domino nostro CAROLO Secundo, DEI gratiâ Angliæ, Scotiæ, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ Regi, Fidei Defensori, &c., predictum officium Capitalis Justiciarii ad Placita coram ipso Rege tenenda, humillimè petens quod hoc scriptum irrotaletur de recordo. In cujus rei testimonium huic chartæ meæ resignationis sigillum meum apposui.*

He had the day before surrendered to the King in person, who parted from him with great grace, wishing him most heartily the return of his health ; and assuring him, “ that he would still look upon him as one of his

Judges, and have recourse to his advice when his health would permit, and in the mean time would continue his pension during his life."

The good man thought this bounty too great, and an ill precedent; and therefore wrote a letter to the Lord Treasurer, earnestly desiring that his pension might be only during pleasure; but the King would grant it for life, and make it payable quarterly. And yet for a whole month together, he would not suffer his servant to sue out his patent for his pension; and when the first payment was received, he ordered a great part of it to be devoted to charitable uses, and said, he intended that most of it should be so employed as long as it was paid to him.

As soon as he was discharged from his great place, he returned home with as much cheerfulness as his want of health would admit of, being now eased of a burden he had been of late groaning under.

Having now attained to that privacy which he had no less seriously than piously wished for, he called all his servants that had belonged to his office together, and told them that he had now laid down his place, and so their employments were at an end: upon that he advised them to seek for themselves, and gave to some of them very considerable presents, and to every one of them a token, and so dismissed all those that were not his domestics. He was discharged the 15th of February, 1675-6, and lived till the Christmas following; but all the while was in so ill a state of health, that there was no hope of his recovery. He continued still to retire often, both for his devotions and studies; and, as long as he could, went constantly to his closet; and when his infirmities increased on him, so that he was not able to go thither himself, he made his servants carry him thither in a chair. At last, as the winter came on, he saw, with great joy, his deliverance approaching; for, besides his being weary of the world, and his longings for the blessedness of another state, his pains increased on him so much, that no patience inferior to his could have borne them without great uneasiness of mind; yet he ex-



pressed to the last such submission to the will of God, and so equal a temper under them, that it was visible then what mighty effects his Christianity had on him, in supporting him under such a heavy load. He could not lie down in bed above a year before his death, by reason of the asthma; but sat, rather than lay in it.

He was attended in his sickness by a pious and worthy Divine, MR EVAN GRIFFITH, Minister of the parish; and it was observed, that, in all the extremities of his pain, whenever he prayed by him, he forbore all complaints or groans, but, with his hands and eyes lifted up, was fixed in his devotions. Not long before his death, the Minister told him, that the Sacrament was to be given on the following Sunday at church; and as he believed he could not come and partake with the rest, he would therefore give it to him in his own house: but he answered, "No; his heavenly Father had prepared a feast for him, and he would go to his Father's house to partake of it." So he made himself be carried thither in his chair, where he received the Sacrament on his knees, with great devotion; which it may be supposed was the greater, because he apprehended it was to be his last. He had some secret and unaccountable presages of his death; for he said, that if he did not die on such a day, (the 25th of November,) he believed he should live a month longer, and he died that very day month. He continued to enjoy the free use of his reason to the last moment, which he had often and earnestly prayed for during his sickness: and when his voice was so sunk, that he could not be heard, they perceived, by the almost constant lifting up of his eyes and hands, that he was still aspiring towards that blessed state, of which he was now speedily to be possessed.

Christmas-day, which he had often spent in spiritual joy, proved the day of his deliverance; for between two and three in the afternoon, he breathed out his pious soul. His end was peace; he had no struggling, nor seemed to be in any pangs in his last moments. He was buried on the 4th of January, MR. GRIFFITH preaching the funeral

Sermon ; his text was, (*Isa. lvii. 1.*) “ The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart : and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.”

He was interred in the church-yard of Alderley, among his ancestors. He did not much approve of burying in churches, and used to say, “ The churches were for the living, and the church-yard for the dead.” His monument was like himself, decent and plain ; the tomb-stone was black marble, and the sides were black and white marble, upon which he himself had ordered this bare and humble inscription to be made :—

*Hic inhumatur corpus*  
MATTHEI HALE, MILITIS ;  
ROBERTI HALE, et JOANNÆ, uxoris ejus,  
*Filii unici ;*  
*Nati in hac Parochiâ de Alderley,*  
*Primo die Novembris, Anno DOM. MDCIX ;*  
*Denati vero ibidem vicesimo-quinto*  
*Die Decembris, Anno DOM. MDCLXXVI,*  
*Ætatis suæ, LXVII.*

He had a soul enlarged and raised above the mean appetite of loving money. He did not take the profits that he might have had by his practice ; for in common cases, when those who came to ask his counsel gave him a pound, he used to give back the half, and so made ten shillings his fee in ordinary matters, that did not require much time and study. If he saw a cause was unjust, he would meddle no further in it, than to give his advice that it was so : if the parties, after that, would go on, they were to seek another Counsellor ; he would assist none in acts of injustice.

He pleaded with the same sincerity that he used in the other parts of his life, and was accustomed to say, “ It was the greatest dishonour of which a man was capable, that for a little money he was to be hired to say or do otherwise than he thought.”

When he was a Practitioner, differences were often referred to him, which he settled, but would accept of no

reward for his pains, though offered by both parties together, after the agreement was made ; for he said, "In those cases he was made a Judge, and a Judge ought to take no money." If they told him, "He lost much of his time in considering their business, and so ought to be acknowledged for it ;" his answer was, "Can I spend my time better, than to make people friends ? Must I have no time allowed me to do good in ?"

He was naturally of a quick temper ; yet by much practice on himself, he subdued that to such a degree, that he would never run suddenly into any conclusion concerning any matter of importance. *Festina lentè* was his beloved motto, which he ordered to be engraven on the head of his staff ; and was often heard to say, "that he had observed many witty men run into great errors, because they did not give themselves time to think ; but the heat of imagination making some notions appear in good colours to them, they, without staying till that cooled, were violently led by the impulses it made on them ; whereas calm and slow men, who pass for dull in the common estimation, could search after truth, and find it out, as with more deliberation, so with greater certainty."

He laid aside for the poor the tenth penny of all he got, and took great care to be well informed of proper objects for his charities ; and after he was a Judge, many of the perquisites of his place, as his dividend of the rule and box-money, were sent by him to the gaols, to discharge poor prisoners, who never knew from whose hands their relief came. It is also a custom for the Marshal of the King's Bench to present the Judges of that Court with a piece of plate for a new-year's gift, that for the Chief Justice being larger than the rest : this he intended to have refused, but the other Judges told him it belonged to his office, and the refusing it would be a prejudice to his successors ; so he was persuaded to take it : but he sent word to the Marshal, "that instead of plate, he should bring him the value of it in money ;" and when he received it, he immediately sent it to the prisons, for the relief and discharge of the poor there.

He usually invited his poor neighbours to dine with him, and made them sit at table with himself; and if any of them were sick, so that they could not come, he would send meat warm to them from his table: nor did he relieve only the poor in his own parish, but sent supplies to the neighbouring parishes, as there was occasion for it; and he treated them with all the tenderness and familiarity that became one, who considered that they were of the same nature with himself, and were reduced to no other necessities but such as he himself might be brought to. But for common beggars, if any of these came to him, as he was in his walks, when he lived in the country, he would ask such as were capable of working, "Why they went about so idly?" If they answered, "It was because they could find no work," he often sent them to some field, to gather all the stones in it, and lay them on a heap, and then would pay them liberally for their pains: this being done, he used to send his carts, and caused them to be carried to such places of the highway as needed mending.

But when he was in town, he dealt his charities very liberally, even among the street-beggars; and when some told him, "That he thereby encouraged idleness, and that most of those were notorious cheats," he used to answer, "That he believed most of them were such; but among them were some that were great objects of charity, and pressed with grievous necessities; and that he had rather give his alms to twenty, who might perhaps be rogues, than that one of the other sort should perish for want of that small relief which he gave them."

Another instance of his justice and goodness was, that when he found bad money had been put into his hands, he would never suffer it to be vented again; for he thought it was no excuse for him to put false money into other people's hands, because some had put it into his. A great heap of this he had gathered together: for many had so far abused his goodness, as to mix base money among the fees that were given him. It is probable that he intended to have destroyed it; but some thieves, who had observed it,

broke into his chamber and stole it, thinking they had got a prize ; which he used to tell with some pleasure, imagining how they found themselves deceived, when they perceived what sort of booty they had fallen on.

After he was made a Judge, he would needs pay more for every purchase he made than it was worth : if it had been but a horse he was to buy, he would have out-bid the price. And when some represented to him, that he made ill bargains, he said, "It became Judges to pay more for what they bought, than the true value ; that so those with whom they dealt might not think they had any right to their favour, by having sold such things to them at an easy rate."

Having thus mastered things without him, his next study was to overcome his own inclinations. He was, as he said himself, naturally passionate ; I add "as he said himself," for it appeared by no other evidence, save that sometimes his colour would rise a little ; but he so governed himself, that those who lived long about him have told me they never saw him disordered with anger, though he met with some trials which the nature of man is as little able to bear as any whatsoever. There was one who did him a great injury, which it is not necessary to mention, and who afterwards came to him for his advice in the settlement of his estate : he gave it very frankly to him, but would accept of no fee for it ; and thereby showed both that he could forgive as a Christian, and that he had the soul of a gentleman in him, not to take money of one that had wronged him so heinously. And when he was asked by one, how he could use a man so kindly, who had wronged him so much, his answer was, "He thanked God he had learned to forget injuries." And besides the great temper he expressed in all his public employments, in his family he was a very gentle master : he was tender of all his servants ; he never turned any away, except they were so faulty, that there was no hope of reclaiming them : when any of them had been a long time out of the way, or neglected any part of their duty, he would not see them at their first coming home, and some-

turn them loose on his grounds, and put them only to easy work, such as going to market, and the like. He used old dogs also with the same care: his shepherd having one that was become blind with age, he intended to have killed him; but the Judge coming to hear of it, made one of his servants bring him home, and fed him till he died: and he was scarcely ever seen more angry than with one of his servants for neglecting a bird that he kept, which died for want of food.

He was a great encourager of all young persons, whom he saw following their books diligently; to whom he used to give directions concerning the method of their study, with a humanity and sweetness which wrought much on all that came near him: and in a smiling, pleasant way, he would admonish them, if he saw any thing amiss in them.

He was very free and communicative in his discourse, which he most commonly fixed on some good and useful subject; and loved, for an hour or two at night, to be visited by some of his friends. He neither said nor did any thing with affectation, but used a simplicity, which was both natural to himself, and very easy to others: and though he never studied the modes of civility or court-breeding, yet he knew not what it was to be rude or harsh with any, except he were impertinently addressed in matters of justice; then he would raise his voice a little, and so shake off those importunities.

In his furniture, and the service of his table, and in his way of living, he liked the old plainness so well, that, as he would set up none of the new fashions, so he rather affected a coarseness in the use of the old ones. He was always of an equal temper, rather cheerful than merry. Many wondered to see the evenness of his deportment, in some very sad passages of his life.

Having lost one of his sons, the manner of whose death had some grievous circumstances in it, and one of his friends coming to see and condole with him on the occasion, he said, "These were the effects of living long; such must look to see many sad and unacceptable things:" and having

said that, he went to other discourses with his ordinary freedom of mind ; for though he had a temper so tender, that sad things were apt to make deep impressions upon him, yet the regard which he had to the Providence of God, and the just estimate which he made of external things, did to admiration maintain the tranquillity of his mind, and gave no occasion to melancholy to corrupt his spirit. He had also a deep sense of God on his mind, and this did above all other considerations preserve his quiet. And indeed that was so well established, that no accidents, how sudden soever, were observed to discompose him.

In the year 1666, an opinion did run through the nation, that the end of the world would come that year. This had spread mightily among the people ; and Judge HALE going that year the Western Circuit, it happened that, as he was on the Bench at the Assizes, a most terrible storm fell out very unexpectedly, accompanied with dreadful flashes of lightning, and claps of thunder, upon which a whisper or a rumour ran through the crowd, that now was the world to end, and the day of judgment to begin ; and at this there followed a general consternation in the whole assembly, and all men forgot the business they were met about, and betook themselves to their prayers : this adding to the horror raised by the storm, looked very dismal ; insomuch that my author, a man of no ordinary resolution, confessed it made an impression on himself. But he told me, “ that he did observe the Judge was not a whit affected, and was going on with the business of the Court in his ordinary manner.”

He looked upon Equity as a part of the Common Law, and one of the grounds of it ; and therefore, as near as he could, he did always reduce it to certain rules and principles, that men might study it as a science, and not think the administration of it had any thing arbitrary in it. Thus eminent was this man in every station ; and into what Court soever he was called, he quickly made it appear, that he deserved the chief seat there.

As great a Lawyer as he was, he would never suffer the

strictness of law to prevail against conscience ; as great a Chancellor as he was, he would make use of all the niceties and subtilties in law, when it tended to support right and equity. But nothing was more admirable in him than his patience : He did not affect the reputation of quickness and dispatch, by a hasty and captious hearing of the Counsel : He would bear with the meanest, and gave every man his full scope, thinking it much better to lose time than patience. In summing up an evidence to a Jury, he would always require the Bar to interrupt him if he did mistake, and to put him in mind of it, if he did forget the least circumstance. Some Judges have been disturbed at this as a rudeness, which he always looked upon as a service and respect done to him.

Having thus far pursued his history and character, in the public and exemplary parts of his life, without interrupting the thread of the relation with what was private and domestic, I shall conclude with a short account of these.

He was twice married : his first wife was ANNE, daughter to SIR HENRY MOOR, of Faly, in Berkshire, grandchild to SIR FRANCIS MOOR, Serjeant at Law : by her he had ten children ; the first four died young, the other six lived to be all married ; and he outlived them all, except his eldest daughter, and his youngest son.

His second wife was ANNE, the daughter of MR. JOSEPH BISHOP, of Faly, in Berkshire, by whom he had no children. He gives her a great character in his Will, as a most dutiful, faithful, and loving wife ; and therefore trusted the bringing up of his grandchildren to her care, and appointed her his joint-executrix, to whom he added SIR ROBERT JENKINSON, and MR. GIBBON.





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**CONTEMPLATIONS,**

**MORAL AND DIVINE:**

**BY SIR MATTHEW HALE.**

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## PREFACE.

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It was the custom of Judge HALE, for many years, every LORD's day in the afternoon, after evening-sermon, to employ his thoughts upon several subjects of divine contemplation. And as things came into his thoughts, so he put them into writing; which he did for these two reasons: 1. That he might the better fix his thoughts, and keep them from diversion and wandering; 2. That they might remain, and not be lost by forgetfulness or other interventions.

And as this was the occasion and manner of his writing them, so this was all that he intended in them, unless to communicate them to his children, or some particular friends in private: but for publishing them, he had not the least thoughts of any such thing; nor did he ever revise them for that purpose, or even read over some of them since he wrote them. Yet these writings do not obscurely speak their Author, being a lively representation of his soul, and of that learning, wisdom, piety, and virtue, which were so eminent and conspicuous in him; particularly that of "The Great Audit," which one may look upon as his very picture, wherein, representing the Good Steward passing his account, it was impossible for him not to give a lively representation of himself.

And though these writings never underwent the last hand of the Author, and therefore, in respect of that perfection which he could have given to them, be not so complete as they might have been ; yet if we consider them in themselves, they will be found to be such as may not only pass in the crowd, but such as are of no common strain.

The subjects of them, indeed, are common themes, yet such as are of the greatest concernment. But the matter of his Meditations upon these subjects is not common : for his most extempore writings have a certain genius and energy in them, much above the common rate of writers. And the style is suitable to the matter,—significant, perspicuous, and manly ; his words are spirit and life, and carry evidence and demonstration with them, moral and experimental demonstration.

And if we take these writings altogether, and weigh them duly and candidly, we may therein no less observe the excellence of their Author, especially considering in what manner they were written, than in his more elaborate works ; and being written and published in this manner, they do more evidently demonstrate his virtuous and pious principles, than if they had been designed to be published, and had been published by himself ; which perhaps may render them not less acceptable to some Readers.

# CONTEMPLATIONS,

## MORAL AND DIVINE.

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### OF THE FEAR OF GOD, THAT IT IS TRUE WISDOM.

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JOB xxviii. 28.

*And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom ; and to depart from evil is understanding.*

THE great pre-eminence which man hath over beasts is his reason ; and the great pre-eminence which one man hath over another is wisdom : though all men have ordinarily the privilege of reason, yet all men have not the habit of wisdom. The greatest commendation which we can ordinarily give to a man is, that he is a wise man ; and the greatest reproach that can be to a man, and that which is worst resented, is to be called a fool : and yet as much as the reputation of wisdom is valued, and the reputation of folly is resented, the generality of mankind are in truth very fools, and make it the great part of their business to be so ; and many that pretend to seek after wisdom, either mistake the thing, or mistake the way to attain it. Commonly those that are the greatest pretenders to wisdom, place it in some little narrow concern, not in its true latitude. And hence it is, that one esteems it the only wisdom to be a wise politician ; another, to be a wise naturalist ; another, a wise acquirer of wealth : and all these are wisdoms in their kind ; and the world perchance would be much better than

it is, if these kind of wisdoms were more in fashion than they are: but these are but partial wisdoms, not the general wisdom which alone makes a man truly wise.

This excellent man **JOB**, after a diligent search (in the speech of this chapter) after wisdom, what it is, and where to be found, doth at length make these two conclusions. 1. That the true root of wisdom, who therefore best knew where it was to be found, is none other but Almighty **GOD**: "**GOD** understandeth the way thereof, and knoweth the place thereof." (Ver. 23.) And, 2. As **HE** alone best knew it, so he best knew how to prescribe the means to attain it. "To man he said, To fear **GOD**, that is wisdom;" that is, it is the proper and adequate wisdom, suitable to human nature: and we need not doubt but it is so; because **HE**, who best knew, prescribed it to man. And consonant to this, **DAVID**, a wise King, and **SOLOMON**, the wisest of men, affirm, "The fear of the **LORD** is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have they that do his commandments." (*Psalms* cxi. 10.) "The fear of the **LORD** is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding." (*Prov.* ix. 10.) And hence it is that the wise man, who had the greatest measure of wisdom of any mere man since the creation of **ADAM**; who had as great experience and knowledge of all things and persons; who made it his business to search, not only into wisdom, but into madness and folly; who had the greatest opportunity of wealth and power to make the exactest inquiry therein; this wise, and inquisitive, and experienced man, in all his writings, styles the man fearing **GOD**, the only wise man, and the person that neglects this, the only fool and madman.

To clear this, I shall show these two things; I. What it is to fear **GOD**; II. That this fear of **GOD** is the best wisdom, and makes a man really a wise man.

I. Touching the first of these,—fear is an affection that is much diversified, according to those objects by which it is moved. I shall mention these four:—

1. Fear of despondency; which ariseth from the fear of

some great danger that is unavoidable, or at least so apprehended ; and this is not the fear that is here commended.

2. Fear of terror ; which is upon the sense of some great danger, which, though possibly it may be avoided, yet carries with it a great probability ; as the fear of mariners in a storm, or the fear that befalls a man in some time or place of great confusion or visible calamity. And this kind of fear of GOD is sometimes useful to bring men to repentance after some great sin or apostasy ; yet this is not that fear that is here (at least principally) meant, but these two that follow.

3. A fear of reverence ; and this fear is raised principally upon the sense of some object full of glory, majesty, and greatness, though there is no cause to expect any hurt from the person or thing thus feared. Thus a subject bears a reverential fear to his Prince, from the sense of his majesty and grandeur ; and thus, much more, the majesty and greatness of Almighty GOD excite reverence and awfulness. “Will ye not fear me, saith the LORD ? Will ye not tremble at my presence ?” (*Jer.* v. 22.) “Who would not fear thee, O King of nations !” (*Jer.* x. 7.)

4. A fear of caution or watchfulness : this is that which the wise man commends ; “Blessed is the man that feareth always.” (*Prov.* xxviii. 14.) And this fear of caution is a due care not to displease that person from whom we enjoy or hope for good. And these two, the fear of reverence, and the fear of caution, are the principal ingredients in this fear of GOD which is true wisdom.

Now this fear ariseth from true apprehensions concerning GOD ; and those seem to be principally these three :—

1. A true and deep sense of the being of GOD, namely, that there is a most excellent and perfect Being, the Maker of all things. But this is not enough to constitute this fear ; for EPICURUS and LUCIAN did believe that there was a GOD, yet were without the fear of him.

2. A true and deep sense, knowledge, and consideration of the attributes of GOD. And although all the attributes of GOD are but so many expressions and declarations of his



perfection and excellency, and therefore all contribute to advance the fear of reverence; yet there be some attributes, that seem in a more special manner to raise, as well the fear of reverence, as that of caution, namely,

(1.) The *majesty* and *glory* of God, at which the very Angels of heaven, who are confirmed in an unchangeable estate of happiness, feel an inward, and express an outward reverence. (2.) But majesty and glory without power are not perfect; therefore the sense and knowledge of the almighty *power* of God are a great ground of our fear: He doth whatsoever he pleaseth; all things had their being from Him, and have their dependance on him. (3.) The deep knowledge of the *goodness* of God, and that goodness not only immanent in himself, but communicative; and from this communicative goodness of God all things had their actual being, and from him they do enjoy it. These are the noblest excitors of the noblest fear, a fear springing from love, and that love fixing upon the immanent goodness of God, which is lovely and perfect, and also upon his communicative goodness, as he is our benefactor; and wherever there is this love, there is this fear both of reverence and caution. We cannot but honour and reverence, and be careful to please, whatsoever we thus love. (4.) A deep sense, knowledge, and consideration of the divine *omniscience*. If there were all the other motives of fear imaginable, yet if this were wanting, the fear of God would be in a great measure abated; for what availeth reverence or caution, if he to whom it is intended do not know it? And what damage can be sustained by a neglect of that fear, if God know it not? But the all-knowing God searcheth the very thoughts, and knoweth the heart, and all the actions of our lives: "Not a word in our tongue but he heareth it, and he knows the thoughts afar off." (5.) A deep sense of the *holiness* and *purity* of God, which must needs cause in him an abhorrence of whatsoever is sinful. (6.) Lastly, A sense of the *justice* of God, who will most certainly distribute rewards to obedience, and to the fear of his name, but punishments to the disobedient,

and to those who have no fear of him before their eyes. The deep sense of these attributes of the divine perfection excites both the fear of reverence,—and the fear of caution, or fear of offending, either by commission of what may displease God, or by omission of what is pleasing to him.

3. But although this knowledge of God may justly excite a fear both of reverence and caution, yet without the knowledge of something else, that fear will be extravagant and disorderly. If a man know that God is just, and will reward obedience and punish disobedience; yet if he knows not what he would have done or omitted, he will indeed fear to displease him, but he will not know how to please, or to obey him: therefore besides the former there must be a knowledge of the will of God in things to be done or omitted. We have an excellent transcript of the divine will in the Holy Scriptures; which therefore a man that fears God will study, and observe, and practise. And the very fear of God, arising upon the sense of his being and attributes, will make that man very solicitous to know the will of God, and how he will be worshipped and served, and what he would have to be done or not to be done. And therefore since the glorious God hath so far condescended, as by his Providence to send us a transcript of his mind and will, such a person will be very thankful for it, very studious of it, much delighted in it, very curious to observe it, because it is the rule and direction how he may obey, and consequently please, that great God whom he fears: this word he believes and prizes as his great Charter; and in this word he finds much to excite, and regulate, and direct his fear of God: he sees examples of the divine justice against the offenders of his law, of the divine bounty in rewarding obedience to it; threatenings on one hand, promises on the other; greater manifestation of the divine goodness in the redemption of mankind by CHRIST JESUS, and therefore greater obligations, as well to fear as to love such a benefactor.

II. And thus far I have treated of the kinds of the fear of God. Now let us see how it doth appear that this fearing man is the wise man, and how the fear of God discovers

itself to be the true, and best, and only wisdom. This will appear in these considerations following.

1. Many learned men, considering the great similitude of reason in brutes, have declined to define a man by his reason, and define him rather by his religion; because in this they find no similitude between men and brute beasts: for man is the only visible creature that expresseth any inclination to religion, or any exercise of it. I do not stand to justify this opinion in all particulars; only these things are most certain: (1.) that only the human nature seems to have any sense of any regular religion upon it; (2.) that the sense of a Deity, and religion resulting from it, is the great ennobling of the human nature; (3.) that take away the fear of God, and all sense and use of religion fall to the ground. So that the fear of God is the great foundation of religion, and consequently the great ennobling of human nature.

2. Justice is of two kinds: (1.) *distributive*, which is the justice of a Magistrate or Judge distributing rewards and punishments to every man according to the merits of his cause: (2.) *commutative*, which is in all dealings between persons; as dealing honestly, keeping promises, and using plainness, sincerity, and truth, in all a man sayeth or doeth. Both these kinds of justice are effects of excellent wisdom; without these, states, and societies, and persons, fall into disorder, confusion, and dissolution; and therefore those very men who have not this justice, yet value those who have it, and use it. Now the fear of God is that which begetteth and improveth both these kinds of justice. Hence it was that MOSES, in his choice of Judges, directs that they should be "men fearing God and hating covetousness." JEHOSEPHAT, in his charge to the Judges, thought this the best expedient to contain them within the bounds of justice, to put them in remembrance before whom, and for whom, they were to judge. And some of the very Heathens themselves were used to set an empty chair in the place of judicature, as an emblem of the presence of God, the invisible, and yet all-seeing God, as present in the Courts of Justice, observing all that Judges do; and

this they esteemed an excellent means to keep Judges to their duty. And as in distributive justice, the fear of God is a great means to keep and improve it ; so in commutative justice, the fear of God gives a secret and powerful law to a man to observe it. And hence it is that JOSEPH could give no greater assurance to his Brethren of his just dealing with them than this ; “ This do, for I fear God.” (*Gen.* xlii. 18.) And on the other side, ABRAHAM could have no greater cause of suspicion of unjust dealing from the people with whom he conversed, than this, that they wanted the fear of God ; “ Because I thought the fear of God was not in this place.” (*Gen.* xx. 11.) The sense of the greatness, and majesty, and power, and justice, and all-seeing presence and command of Almighty God, lays a greater engagement upon a heart fearing God to deal justly, than all the terrors of death itself.

3. Sincerity, uprightness, integrity, and honesty, are certainly true and real wisdom. Let any man observe it while he will : a hypocrite, or dissembler, or double-hearted man, though he may shuffle for a while, yet at the long run he is discovered and disappointed ; when a plain, sincere, honest man holds it out to the last ; so that the proverb is most true, “ Honesty is the best policy.” Now the great privilege of the fear of God is, that it makes the heart sincere and upright, and that will certainly make the words and actions so : for he is under the sense of the inspection of that God, who searches the heart ; and therefore he does not lie, nor dissemble, nor flatter, nor prevaricate ; because he knows that the pure, all-seeing, righteous God, who loves truth and integrity, and hates lying and dissimulation, sees and observes him, and knows his thoughts, words, and actions. It is true, that vain-glory, and ostentation, and design, may at many times render the outward actions specious and fair, when the heart runs quite another way, and would frame the actions accordingly, if those ends and designs were not in the way ; but the fear of God begins with the heart, and purifies and rectifies it ; and from the heart thus rectified, grows a conformity in the life, the words, and the actions.

4. The great occasion and reasons of the folly of mankind are, (1.) The unruliness of the sensual appetites: hence grow intemperance and excess in eating and drinking, and unlawful and exorbitant lusts; and these exhaust the estate, consume the health, debase the mind, and render men unfit for business; (2.) The exorbitancy and irregularity of the passions;—as excessive love of things that are either not lovely, or not deserving of so much love; excess of anger, which degenerates into malice and revenge; excess of joy in trivial, inconsiderable matters; excess of fear, where there is either no cause for fear, or not cause for so much fear: and these exorbitancies of passions betray the succours of reason, break out into vain, imprudent actions, and fill the world with much of that folly and disorder which are every where observable. (3.) Pride, vain-glory, ambition of honour and power, envy, covetousness, and the like, are so many sicknesses, and cankers, and rotten ulcers in the mind: as they raise most of those storms and tempests that are abroad in the world, so they disease and disorder the mind wherein they are, make men's lives a torment to themselves, put them upon foolish and frantic actions, and render them perfect madmen, and without understanding; and their folly is so much the more incurable, because, like some kind of frantic men, they think themselves wise men, and applaud themselves. Now, as we are truly told that the first degree and step of wisdom is to put off folly;

..... *Sapientia prima est,*  
*Stultitiâ caruisse; .....*

so it is the method of the fear of God, the beginning of all true wisdom, to disburthen a man of these foundations of folly: it gives a law to the sensitive appetite, brings it into subjection, and keeps it within the bounds of reason, and of those directions which the wise God hath prescribed: it keeps it under discipline and rule: it directs the passions to their proper objects, and keeps them within their due measures, such as become a man who lives in the sight and observation of the God of glory, majesty, and holiness: it cures those diseases of the mind by this great preservative

and cathartic, the fear of GOD. If pride or vain-glory begin to bud in the soul, and he considers that the GOD whom he fears resists the proud ; this fear puts a man in remembrance of the glorious majesty of the most glorious GOD ; for what is a poor worm, that he should be proud and vain-glorious in the presence of that mighty GOD ? If ambition and covetousness begin to appear, this fear of GOD presently reminds a man, that the mighty GOD hath prohibited them ; that he hath presented unto us things of greater moment for our desires than worldly wealth or honour ; that we are all of his household, and must content ourselves with that portion which he allots to us, without pressing beyond the measure of sobriety, or dependance upon or submission unto him. If revenge stir in our hearts, this fear of GOD checks it, by telling a man that he usurps GOD's prerogative, who hath reserved vengeance to himself as part of his own sovereignty. If envy begin in our hearts, this fear of GOD crusheth it, by reminding us that the mighty GOD prohibits it, and that He is the Sovereign LORD and dispenser of all things ; if he hath given me little, I ought to be contented ; if he hath given another more, yet why should my eye be evil, because his eye is good ? Thus the fear of the LORD walks through the soul, and pulls up those roots of folly that infect, disorder, and befool it.

5. Another great cause of folly in the world, is inadvertence, inconsiderateness, precipitancy, and over-hastiness in speeches and actions. If men had the patience many times to pause but so long in actions and speeches, as might serve to repeat the Creed or LORD's Prayer, many follies would be avoided that do much mischief, both to the parties themselves, and others : and therefore, inadvertence and precipitancy in things of great moment, and which require much deliberation, must necessarily be a very great folly, because the consequence of miscarriage in them is of greater moment. Now the fear of the LORD of heaven and earth, being actually present upon the soul, is the greatest motive in the world to consideration and attention, touching things to be done and said. When a man is to do any thing, or to speak, in the presence of a great earthly Prince, the very

awe of that Prince will give him much consideration touching what he saith or doth, especially to see that it be conformable to those laws and edicts which this Prince hath made. Now the great God of heaven and earth hath, in his Holy Word, given us laws and rules touching our words and actions; and what we are to say and do is to be said and done in no less a presence, than the presence of the ever-glorious God, who strictly eyes and observes every man in the world, with the very same advertence as if there were nothing else for him to observe: and certainly there cannot be imagined a greater engagement to advertence, and attention, and consideration than this. And therefore, if the action or speech be of any moment, a man who fears God will consider, (1.) Is this lawful to be done or not? If it be not, how should I do this great evil, and sin against God? (2.) But if it be lawful, yet is it fit? is it convenient? is it seasonable? If not, then I will not do it; for it becomes not that presence before which I live. (3.) Again, if the thing be lawful and fit, yet I will consider how it is to be done; what are the circumstances most suitable to the honour of that great God before whom I stand. And this advertence and consideration do not only qualify my actions and words with wisdom in contemplation of the duty I owe to God, but afford an excellent opportunity, at very many times, by giving pause and deliberation, to discover many human ingredients of wisdom requisite to the choice of actions and words, and the manner of doing them: so that besides the advantage of consideration and advertence, in relation to ALMIGHTY GOD, there is super-added this advantage for opportunity thereby of human prudential considerations, which otherwise, by haste and precipitance in actions or words, would be lost; and it habituates the mind to a temper of caution, and advertence, and consideration, in matters as well of smaller as of greater moment, and so makes a wise, attentive, and considerate man.

6. The fear of God is certainly the greatest wisdom, because it renders the mind of a man full of tranquillity in all conditions; for he looks up to the great LORD of the

heavens and earth, considers what he commands, remembers that he observes and eyes all men, and knows that his Providence governs all things ; and this keeps him still even, and without any considerable alteration, whatever his condition is. Is he rich, prosperous, great ? Still he continues safe, because he continues humble, watchful, and advertent lest he should be deceived and transported ; and he is careful to be the more thankful, and the more watchful, because the command of **GOD**, and the nature of his condition, require it. Is he poor, neglected, and unsuccessful ? Still he remains patient, humble, contented, thankful, and dependant upon the **GOD** he fears. And surely every one must needs agree, that such a man is a wiser man than he who is ever changed and transported with his condition ; who, if he be rich or powerful, is vain, proud, insolent ; and if he be poor, low, despised, is dispirited, heartless, discontented, and tortured ; and all for want of the fear of **ALMIGHTY GOD**, which, being once put into the heart, like the tree put by **MOSES** into the waters, cures the disorder and uneasiness of all conditions.

7. But besides all this, there is yet a secret, but a most certain truth, which highly improveth that wisdom which the fear of the **LORD** bringeth, and that is this, That those who truly fear **GOD** have a secret guidance from a higher wisdom than what is barely human ; namely, from the **SPIRIT** of Truth, which doth really and truly, but secretly, prevent and direct them. And let no man think that this is a piece of fanaticism. Any man who truly fears **ALMIGHTY GOD**, relies upon him, and calls upon him for his guidance and direction, hath it, as really as the son hath the direction of his father ; and though the voice be not audible, nor the direction perceptible to sense, yet it is as real as if a man heard the voice saying, “ This is the way, walk in it.” This secret direction of **GOD** is principally seen in matters relating to the good of the soul ; but it may also be found in the momentous concerns of this life, which a man who fears **GOD** shall often, if not at all times, find. Besides this direction, a man, fearing **GOD**, shall find his blessing upon him. It is true, that the portion of a man



fearing GOD is not in this life; oftentimes he meets with crosses, afflictions, and troubles in it; his portion is that of a higher and more excellent state; yet hath he also a blessing in this life, even in relation to his temporal condition: for either his honest intentions are blessed with success; or if they be not, yet even his disappointments are a blessing; for they make him more humble, less esteeming this present world, and setting his heart upon a better: for it is an everlasting truth, that "all things shall work together for good to them that love and fear GOD;" (*Rom.* viii. 28;) and therefore certainly such a man is the wisest man.

8. Yet further; it is one of the greatest evidences of wisdom to provide for the future, and to provide those things for the future that are of the greatest importance. Upon this account the Wise Man (*Prov.* xxx. 25) admires the wisdom of the ant, that provides his meat in the summer; and we see the folly of children and prodigals in this, that they have no prospect how they shall subsist hereafter. Now the wisdom of a man who feareth GOD discovereth itself in this, that it lays up a safe store for the future, and that in respect of these three kinds of futurities; (1.) For the future part of his life: (2.) For the future evil days: (3.) For the future life that is to take place after this short uncertain life.

(1.) In respect of the future time of his life. It is true, our lives in this world are but short at best, and together with that shortness they are very uncertain. But yet the man fearing GOD makes a safe provision for that future portion of life, how short or how long soever it be. By a constant walking in the fear of GOD he transmits unto the future part of his life a quiet, serene, and fair conscience, and avoids those evil fruits which a sinful life produceth, even in the after time of a man's life. The hurts we receive in youth are many times more painful in age, than when we at first received them. If we sow evil seeds in the time of our youth, it may be that they may lie five, ten, or more years before they come up to a full crop, and possibly then we may taste the fruit of these evil ways. All this inconvenience a man fearing GOD prevents, and instead

thereof reaps a pleasing and comfortable fruit of his walk in the fear of God, namely, a quiet conscience, and an even, settled, peaceable soul.—But besides this, by this means he keeps his interest in, and peace with ALMIGHTY God, and makes sure of the best friend in the world for the after-time of his life, to whom he is sure to have access at all times, and upon all occasions, with comfort and acceptance; for it is an infallible truth, that God ALMIGHTY never forsakes any that forsake not him first.

(2.) The second futurity is the future evil day, which will most certainly overtake every man; either the day of feeble and decrepit age, or the day of sickness, or the day of death; and against all those the true fear of God makes a safe and excellent provision: so that although he may not avoid them, he may have a comfortable passage through them; and in the midst of all these black clouds, the witness of a good conscience, and the evidence of the divine favour, will shine into the soul like a bright sun with comfort. This will be a cordial under the faintness of old age, a relief under the pains of sickness, and the cure of the fear of death itself, which to such a soul will be only a passage to a life that will be free from all pains and infirmities, a life of glory and immortality.

(3.) The third futurity is the state after death. Most certain it is that such a state there will be; that it is but of two kinds, a state of everlasting happiness, or a state of everlasting misery; and that all men in the world belong to one of these two states. And it is most true, that they who fear God, and obey him through JESUS CHRIST, shall be partakers of that everlasting state of blessedness: on the other side, they that reject the fear of God shall, without true repentance, be in a state of everlasting misery. Now herein the greatest wisdom of a man appears, that he duly provides against this: all other wisdom of men, either to get learning, wealth, honour, power, all the wisdom of statesmen and politicians, in comparison of this wisdom, is vain and trivial. And this is the wisdom which the fear of God teacheth.—It provides against the

greatest of evils, everlasting misery : And it provides for an everlasting state of blessedness and happiness, of glory and immortality ; a state of that happiness and glory which exceed expression and apprehension ; for “ eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath laid up for them that love him.”

And now, for the conclusion of this whole matter, let us make a short comparison between the persons that fear not God, and those that fear Him ; and then let any man judge who is the fool, and who is the wise man. A man hath but a short certain time in this life, which, in comparison of eternity, is less than a moment. The great God of heaven assures us, that there is a state of immortality after this life, of never-dying misery, or of endless glory, and tells us, “ If you fear me, and obey my easy commands, you shall infallibly attain everlasting life and happiness, and, even in this present life, shall have the influence and presence of my favour, to support, direct, and bless you : On the other side, if ye refuse my fear, and persist impenitently in it, your portion shall be everlasting misery.” And now, everlasting life, and everlasting death, being set before the children of men, there are a sort of men who choose to reject his fear, that they may enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, those pleasures which are fading, which leave behind them a sting, and which make even that very life they enjoy to be a life only of discomfort and unhappiness. Again, there are a sort of men who consider this great proposal, and choose the fear of ALMIGHTY God, and with it eternal life, and obey God : and in the practice of this fear they enjoy his favour, and presence, and love ; and after this life spent, whether it be long or short, and whether their death be lingering or sudden, are sure, the moment after death, to enjoy an immortal life of glory and happiness.

Judge then, which of these is the truly wise man, and whether this be not a truth beyond dispute : “ The fear of God, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.”

## OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST CRUCIFIED.



1 COR. ii. 2.

*For I determined not to know any thing among you, save  
JESUS CHRIST, and Him crucified.*

As the understanding is the highest faculty of the reasonable creature ; so knowledge is the noblest act of that faculty, without which, it is without its proper end and employ, and the whole man is without a due guidance and direction. And as knowledge is the proper business of that great faculty, so the value of that knowledge is according to the subject about which it is exercised. According to the various values and degrees of the things to be known, there ariseth a diversity of the value of that knowledge ; that which is of a thing more needful, useful, and precious, must needs be a more noble, useful, and precious knowledge.

Many excellent understandings have been conversant about some truths, which are of no moment, whether known or not ; as concerning the precise time of this or that passage in such a profane history, the criticism of this or that Latin word, and the like ; which though by accident they may be of use, when relating to some other matter of moment, yet in themselves have little value, because of little use. Others have spent their thoughts in acquiring knowledge in some special piece of nature ; the fabric of the eye ; the progression of generation in an egg ; the relation and proportion of numbers, weights, and lines ; the generations of metals : and these, as they discover the wisdom of the great Creator, or relate to public

use, have great worth in them ; but in themselves, they are not of such worth, as truths of either a higher, or more useful, or durable nature.

With an eye to this, as once our Saviour, in relation of things to be done, pronounced one thing only necessary ; (*Luke x. 42* ;) so the Apostle, among many things to be known, fixeth one thing as necessary, CHRIST JESUS and Him crucified.

In his words there are three steps :

I. *Not to know any thing.* Not as if all other knowledge were condemned : MOSES's learning was not charged upon him as a sin ; PAUL's learning was not condemned, but useful to him. To be knowing in our calling, in the dispositions of persons, in the laws under which we live, in the modest and sober inquiries of nature and arts, is not only not condemned, but commended, and tends to the setting forth of the glory of the GOD of wisdom. Even the discretion of the husbandman GOD owns as his : "For his GOD doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him." (*Isa. xxviii. 26* :) But we must determine to know nothing in comparison of that other knowledge of CHRIST JESUS. As the Apostle counted what things were gain to be loss for CHRIST, (*Phil. iii. 7*,) so we are to esteem that knowledge of other things, otherwise excellent, useful, and admirable, to be yet but folly, and vile, in comparison of the knowledge of CHRIST. And this requires :

1. A true and right estimate of the value of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS above other knowledge ; and consequently an infinite preference thereof before all other knowledge : for the knowledge of CHRIST excels most knowledge in all the ensuing particulars, but excels all knowledge in some, and those of most concernment.

(1.) In the certainty of it. Most other knowledges are either such as we take in by our sense and experience ; and therein, though it is true that the gross part of our knowledge, which is nearest to our sense, hath somewhat of certainty in it, yet when we come to collect that knowledge into general conclusions, or to make deductions and deter-

minations from them, then we fail, and hence arise the differences between many Philosophers. The knowledge which we draw from sense is but very narrow, if it is stayed there : for the forms of things, the matter, or substance, which is the subject of nature, are not easily perceptible by sense : we see the colour, and the figure, and the variations of that, but we do from thence only make conjectures concerning the forms, substances, and matter. And as to that knowledge which we receive by tradition, whether historical or doctrinal ; the former depends upon the credit of the relator, which commonly depends upon another's credit, and so vanisheth into much uncertainty, unless the authors be very authentic and eye-witnesses : and as to matters doctrinal, still that depends upon the opinion of a man, it may be, deduced upon weak convictions, crossed by persons of as great judgment, and so breeds uncertainty and dissatisfaction in the knowledge.—But in the knowledge of CHRIST, we have greater certainty than can be found in any of all these.

First, A constant tradition and reception by millions, before he came, that the Messiah was to come ; and since he came, that in truth he is come.

Secondly, The apostles, evangelists, and disciples, who were purposely chosen to be witnesses of CHRIST, his miracles, doctrine, suffering, and resurrection.

Thirdly, The miracles he did, which are witnessed to us by a greater consent of testimony, than any one part of any history of the like antiquity.

Fourthly, The purity of his doctrine, which was never attained to by the Philosophers, and which none ever could, in the least measure, impeach or blame.

Fifthly, The prophecies, a most undeniable argument ; for it is not capable of any fraud or imposture.

Sixthly, The wonderful prevalence which the knowledge of CHRIST had upon the world ; and this not only in fact, but confirmed with a prophecy, that it should be so.

Seventhly, The admirable concordance and symmetry, which this mystery of CHRIST makes in the whole method

of the proceeding of **GOD** in the world, as will be easily observable upon the collation of these things together :— the Creation ; the Fall ; the Law ; the state of the Jews ; the immortality of the soul ; the necessity of a satisfaction for sin ; the types and sacrifices ; the prophecies ; the rejection of the Jews ; the calling of the Gentiles ; the progress of the Gospel to the newly discovered parts of the world successively as discovered. A due collection being made of all these considerations, it will appear that the doctrine of **CHRIST JESUS** and him crucified, is that which makes the dispensation of **GOD** towards the children of men to be all of a piece, one thing in order to another, and **CHRIST** the Mediator, in whom **GOD** hath gathered together all things in one, (Eph. i. 10,) or made it as one system, body, and fabric.

Eighthly. Besides the undeniable prophecies, there bears testimony to this truth the secret and powerful witness of the **SPIRIT** of **GOD**, convincing the soul of the truth of **CHRIST** beyond all the moral persuasions in the world, and beyond the conviction of demonstration, and leading it to believe, to rest upon, and to assert it, even unto the loss of life and all things.

(2.) As the knowledge of **CHRIST** excels in the certainty, so in the plainness and easiness of the truth. The most excellent subjects of other knowledge have long windings, before a man can come at them ; and are of so much difficulty and abstruseness, that as every brain is not fit for the acquiring of them, so much labour is required in the best of judgments, to attain but a competent measure of them : witness the studies of Arithmetic, Geometry, Natural Philosophy, Metaphysics, &c., wherein great labour hath been taken to our hands, to make the passages more easy, and yet still they are full of difficulty. But in this knowledge it is otherwise : as it is a knowledge fitted for universal use, the bringing of mankind to **GOD**, so it is fitted with an universal convenience for that use,—easy, plain, and familiar.

It pleased **GOD** to choose a doctrine of easy acquisition, 1. That no flesh should glory in his sight ; 2. That the way to salvation, being a common thing propounded

to all mankind, might be difficult to none. Believe, and thy sins be forgiven. Believe, and thou shalt be saved. Believe, and thou shalt be raised up to glory. "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the SON, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." (*John* vi. 40.)

(3.) As the knowledge of CHRIST excels in the certainty and plainness, so in the sublimity and loftiness of the subject. For the subject of this knowledge is of the highest consideration:—ALMIGHTY GOD; the dispensation of his counsel touching man, in reference to his everlasting condition; the true measure of just and unjust; the pure will of GOD; the SON of GOD, and his miraculous incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension; the great covenant between the eternal GOD and fallen man, made, sealed, and confirmed in CHRIST; the means of the discharge and satisfaction of the breach of the law of GOD; and the state of the soul after death in blessedness or misery. These and many such things as these are the subject of that knowledge which is revealed in the knowledge of CHRIST; so that their very matter speaks them to be of a most high nature, such as never fell under the discovery, or even the disquisition, of the wisest Philosophers, and such as the very angels of heaven desire to look into, (1 *Pet.* i. 12,) beholding with admiration that manifold wisdom of GOD, which is revealed unto us, poor worms, in CHRIST JESUS.

(4.) As the matters are wonderful, high, and sublime, so they are of singular use. There are many pieces of learning in the world that are conversant about high subjects; as, that part of Natural Philosophy concerning the heaven, and the soul, and the abstruser parts of the Mathematics. But as the knowledge of the subject is scarcely accessible, so, when it is known, there is no more use of it. But here is the privilege of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS, that as it is of eminence and height, so it is of use and convenience, and that in the highest measure: as it is a pearl for beauty, so it is for value. This knowledge is of universal use and convenience. In reference to this life: Am I in want, in



contempt, in prison, in banishment, in sickness, in death? This knowledge gives me patience, cheerfulness, and resignation of myself to his will, who hath sealed my peace with him, and favour from him, in the great Covenant of his Son: and I can live upon this, though I were ready to starve; for I am assured that if it be for my good and the glory of his name, I shall be delivered; if not, I can be content, provided that my jewel, the peace of God, and my own conscience, by the blood of CHRIST, be safe. Am I in wealth, honour, power, greatness, esteem in the world? This knowledge teacheth me humility, as knowing from whom I received it; fidelity, as knowing to whom I must account for it; watchfulness, as knowing that the honour of my LORD is concerned in my carriage, and that the higher my employment is, the more obnoxious I am to temptation from without, from them that watch for my halting, and from within, by a deceitful heart. And in all it teacheth me not to over-value it, nor to value myself the more by it or for it; because the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS presents me with a continual object of a higher value, the prize of the high calling of God in CHRIST: it teacheth me to look upon the glory of the world as rust, in comparison of the great God.—And as in reference to my temporal condition, this knowledge of CHRIST is of singular use, so it guides me in the management of all relations. First, to God: it presents him unto me full of majesty, yet full of love; which teacheth me reverence, and yet access with boldness, love, and obedience. Secondly, to man: it produceth justice, giving every man his due, for so the knowledge of CHRIST teacheth me; “Do as ye would be done by;” mercy, to forgive; compassion, to pity; liberality, to relieve; sobriety, in the use of creatures, and yet comfort in the enjoyment of them; a right use of the world, and yet a contempt of it.—It makes death not terrible, because it is a sure passage to life. Here I find a way to get all my sins pardoned, whereas without this, all the world cannot contrive a satisfaction for one. I find a way to obtain such a righteous-

ness of GOD in CHRIST. Here I find the means, and the only means, to avoid the terror of the judgment of the great day; everlasting life unto all eternity, with the blessed GOD, and our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and all the blessed Angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. Thus this knowledge is useful for this life, and that which is to come, and that in the highest degree; which all other knowledge comes short of.

(5.) The knowledge of CHRIST excels in the duration of it. Many subjects of knowledge there are, wherein by time, or at least by death, our knowledge proves useless, or our labour therein unprofitable. For instance, a study to be very exact in Natural Philosophy, the mixtures of qualities, elements, and a thousand such inquiries: Of what use will this be, when the world, with the works thereof, shall be burned up? Or if it should not, what great benefit would this be to a separate soul, which doubtless shall either know much more therein, without any pains, and so the labour here be lost, or it shall be such a knowledge as will be useless to it? And so, for the studies of policy, methods of war, mechanical experiments, languages, laws, customs, histories; all these, within one minute after death, will be as useless as the knowledge of a tailor or shoe-maker: they are all dated for the convenience of this life, and with it they vanish. But here is the advantage which this knowledge hath; as it serves for this life, so it serves for that to come; the higher measure thereof I attain here, the greater measure of glory shall I have hereafter. As the more knowledge I have of the mystery of CHRIST here, the greater is my admiration of the wisdom, and goodness, and love of GOD; the greater my joy and complacency, and delight in that sight and sense, and the more is my soul carried out in love, and praise, and obedience unto him;—so, in the life to come, that knowledge shall improve, and consequently the sense of the wisdom, mercy, and love of GOD, and the flame of love, and praise, and delight, and joy in him, shall increase unto all eternity.

2. As the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS and him crucified,

thus excels all other knowledge, and so in comparison thereof all other knowledge is as nothing; so the soul being rightly convinced thereof, sets a higher price upon that knowledge, than upon all other; it prizeth it highly, in itself, and in others; reckons all other knowledge without it but a curious ignorance, and contents itself abundantly in this.

3. Because that which is of most concernment requires my greatest diligence to attain it, I am greedy to spend more time in attaining this; and I will rob other studies of the time which might conduce to the knowledge of them, rather than those studies should consume that time which should be allotted to this. My time is part of that talent, which my Maker hath put into my hand, and for which he will at the great day demand an account; and if I have spent that talent in unprofitable employments, or in less profitable than I should, my arrear is so much the greater: if I have consumed my time in studying my preferment, honour, or wealth, or in studying how to please myself, which I might have spent in the study of the mystery of CHRIST, I have committed two follies at once:—First, I have lost my talent of time and opportunity, for which I am accountable, as mispent:—Secondly, I have lost that advantage which I had in my hand to improve my interest in God, and favour from him, and love to him; and though I have done so much, as may perchance preserve the main, yet I have omitted so much as might have increased my stock of grace and glory; my talent might have gained ten, and at most it hath gained but two. And surely when death comes, the most comfortable hours, which can return to our memories, will be those we spent in improving the experimental knowledge of CHRIST JESUS, and him crucified.

4. Consequently, where this knowledge and the other knowledge of an inferior rate cross one another, it is the best wisdom to side with this, and to deny the other; to become a fool that one may be wise.

II. Thus much concerning the first consideration; “I determined not to know any thing,” *viz.* nothing in comparison of this knowledge of CHRIST, nothing rather

than that ; “ *save CHRIST JESUS.*” And truly well might the Apostle make all other knowledge give place to this : first, for the excellency of it ; secondly, for the compass of it ; for though it be so excellent, that a small dram of it is sufficient to save a soul, yet it is so large, that when the best knowledge hath gone as far as it can, yet there is still something beyond. One consideration of it, even the love of God, hath a breadth, and length, and depth, and height, passing knowledge. (*Eph. iii. 18, 19.*) And yet there are other depths and heights in it than this ; so that well might the Apostle conclude, “ Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh.” We shall here consider,

1. The wonderful *Wisdom* of God in the redemption of mankind by CHRIST JESUS ; and it is manifested in these particulars among others.

(1.) Though he made man the most eminent of all his visible creatures, for a most eminent manifestation of his power and glory, and did foresee that he would fall ; yet he did provide, from eternity, a means whereby he might be restored to the honour and glory of his creature, and his creature to blessedness and the vision of his Creator.

(2.) He so ordered the means of man’s redemption, that a greater glory came even by that redemption, than if man had never fallen, and a greater benefit to mankind. For the latter, it is apparent, that if there had been no Mediator sent, the least sin which any of the sons of men had committed would have been inexorably fatal to them, without any means of pardon : and as ADAM, though in his full liberty, was misled by temptation, so might he have been, or any of his posterity, though he had stood that shock ; which now is admirably provided against, by the satisfaction of CHRIST JESUS. And as thus it is better with the children of men, so the glory of God is wonderfully advanced by it : for if man had stood in his innocence, God would have had only the glory of his justice in rewarding him ; or, if he had fallen, the glory of his justice in punishing him :

but there would have been no room for that glorious attribute of his mercy in forgiving, without violation to his purity, truth, and justice; that glorious attribute by which he so often proclaimeth himself: "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." (*Exod.* xxxiv. 6.)

(3.) He so wonderfully ordered the redemption of man, that all his attributes were preserved inviolable:—his truth; "the day thou eatest thou shalt die:" his justice, yet his mercy; his love to his creature, yet his hatred to sin: his Son shall die to satisfy his truth and justice; yet the sinner shall live, to satisfy his mercy: the sin shall be punished, to justify his purity; yet his creature shall be saved, to manifest his goodness. And thus his wisdom over-ruled sin, the worst of evils, to the improvement of his glory, and the good of his creature.

(4.) His wisdom is manifested in this, that, by the redemption of man, all the ways of his administration, before the coming of CHRIST, do now appear to be excellently ordered to the redemption of man, and to the making it more effectual. The giving a severe and yet a most just law, shows us the wretchedness of our condition: our inability to fulfil what was just in God to require, shows us the necessity of a SAVIOUR, drives us to him, makes this city of refuge grateful and acceptable, and makes us set a value upon that mercy, which so opportunely provided a sacrifice for us in the blood of CHRIST, and a righteousness for us in the merits of CHRIST, and a Mediator for us in the intercession of CHRIST. And by this means, also, all those sacrifices, and ceremonies, and observations, enjoined in the Levitical Law, which carried not in themselves a clear reason of their institution, are now rendered significant.

(5.) The wisdom of God is magnified in this, in fulfilling the prophecies respecting the sending of the Messiah, to make satisfaction for the sins of mankind, against all the oppositions

and contingencies which, without an over-ruling guidance, might have disappointed it. And this is done in such perfection, that not one circumstance of time, place, person, or concomitants, have failed in it : and so all bear witness to the infinite truth, power, and wisdom of God in bringing about his counsels in their perfection, touching this great business of the redemption of man, which was the very end why he was created and placed upon the earth ; and in managing the craft and malice of Satan, to bring about that greatest blessing, besides, and above, and against the intention of the instrument.

(6.) The unsearchable wisdom of God is manifested in his providing such a Mediator as was fit for so great a work. Had all the world consulted that God must suffer, it had been impossible ; and had all the world contrived that any man, or all the men in the world, should have been a satisfactory sacrifice for any one sin, it had been deficient. Here is then the wonderful counsel of the most high God : God and man shall be conjoined in one person ; that as man he might become a sacrifice for sin, and that as God he might give a value to the sacrifice. And this is that great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh.

2. Consider we next the wonderful *Love* of God to mankind : (1.) In thinking upon poor sinful creatures, to contrive a way for rescuing us from that curse which we had justly deserved. (2.) In thinking of us for our good, when we sought it not, and thought not of it. (3.) In so thinking of us when we were enemies against God, and against his very being. (4.) In thinking of us not only for a pardon, but in order to provide for us a state of glory and blessedness. (5.) In thus thinking of us when that end was not to be obtained, saving his truth and justice, without a miraculous Mediator, consisting of the divine and human nature united in one person, in the person of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Here were love and goodness sufficient to conquer our hearts with admiration and astonishment.

But yet it rests not here. As “ God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoso-

ever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," so the only-begotten SON of GOD was not behind in this wonderful love. No sooner (as we may with reverence say) was the counsel of the FATHER propounded for the sending of his SON, but presently the SON saith, "Lo, I come." And now we will consider upon what terms he must come, or else the redemption of mankind must be lost for ever. (1.) He must come and empty himself of his glory, and of his personal majesty, and take our nature; he must go through the infirmities of infancy and childhood. (2.) And not only must he undergo this abasement, but he must undergo the condition of a low birth, be born of a poor virgin in a stable, and laid in a manger, under the reputation of a Carpenter's son. (3.) And not only thus, but as soon as he is born, he must use the care of his mother to escape away for his life to Egypt. (4.) And when grown up, he must undergo the form of a servant, and become a poor Carpenter, to work for his living, without any patrimony, or so much as a house to cover him. (5.) He must come abroad into the world, to exercise the ministry, still poor, despised of his own countrymen, and of those that were of reputation for learning and piety, scandalized under the name of an impostor, a wine-bibber, a friend to publicans and sinners, a worker by the Devil, mad, and possessed with a Devil. These and the like were his entertainments in the world; and, which is more, he was often put to escape for his life: in fine, what the Prophet predicted concerning him was fulfilled to the uttermost: "He was despised, and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." (*Isa. liii. 3.*) And all this befell the eternal SON of GOD under the veil of our flesh: and all this was voluntarily undertaken, and cheerfully undergone, even for the sake of his enemies, and of those very people from whom he received these indignities.

III. But all these were but like small conflicts preparatory to the main battle. We therefore come to the third consideration: CHRIST JESUS, *and Him Crucified*. As CHRIST JESUS is the most worthy subject of all knowledge, so CHRIST JESUS under this consideration, *as Crucified*, is

that which is fullest of wonder, admiration, and love : and therefore let us now take a survey of **CHRIST JESUS** Crucified. As that is the highest manifestation of his love, so it is the life of the text ; **CHRIST** above all other knowledge, and **CHRIST** Crucified above all other knowledge of **CHRIST**.

The knowledge of **CHRIST** Crucified will appear to be the most excellent, if we consider these particulars : (I.) Who it was that suffered : (II.) What he suffered : (III.) From whom : (IV.) How he suffered : (V.) For whom he suffered : (VI.) Why, and upon what motive : (VII.) For what end he suffered : (VIII.) What are the fruits and benefits that accrue by that suffering. All these considerations are included in this one subject ; *CHRIST JESUS and Him Crucified*.

(I.) Who it was that suffered. It was the eternal **SON** of **GOD**, clothed in our flesh ; **GOD** and man united in one person ; his manhood giving him a capacity of suffering, and his Godhead giving a value to that suffering ; and each nature united in one person to make a complete Redeemer ; “the Heir of all things ;” “the Prince of life ;” “the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world ;” as touching his divine nature, “**GOD** over all blessed for ever ;” and as touching his human nature, “full of grace and truth ;” in both, “the beloved **SON**” of the eternal **GOD**, “in whom” he proclaimed himself “well pleased.” (*Matt.* iii. 17.) But could no other person be found, who might suffer for the sins of man, but the **SON** of **GOD** ? Or if the business of our salvation must be transacted by him alone, could it not be without suffering, and such suffering as this ? No. As there was no other name given under heaven, by which we might be saved, and as there was none found besides, in the compass of the whole world, that could expiate for one sin of man, but it must be the arm of the **ALMIGHTY** that must bring salvation ; (*Isa.* lxiii. 5 ;) so if the blessed **SON** of **GOD** will become the Captain of our Salvation, he must be made perfect by suffering. (*Heb.* ii. 10.) And if he will stand in the stead of man, he must bear the wrath of his **FATHER** : if he will become sin for man, though he knew no sin, he must become a curse for



man. And doubtless this great mystery of the person that suffered, cannot but be a very high and excellent subject of knowledge;—so full of wonder and astonishment, that the Angels gaze into it. This therefore is the first consideration that advanceth the excellency of this knowledge; the person that suffered.

(II.) What he suffered. Though all the course of his life was a continual suffering, and the preamble unto his death; yet this was the completion of all, and the tide and waves of his sufferings did still rise higher and higher, till it arrived at this.—The several steps unto the Cross began from his birth; but the more immediate ones began with the preparation for the Passover.

The Council held by the Chief Priests and Scribes, for the crucifying of our SAVIOUR, was two days before the Passover. (*Matt. xxvi. 2; Mark xiv. i.*) This was the first step to Mount Calvary: and doubtless it was no small addition to our SAVIOUR's passion, that it was hatched in the Council of the Chief Priests and Scribes, the then external visible church, the husbandman of the vineyard. But this is not all: as the visible church of the Jews is the conclave where this design is formed, so JUDAS, a member of the visible church of CHRIST, one of the Twelve, is the instrument to effect it: he contracts with them for thirty pieces of silver, to betray his Master unto them. And surely this could not but be a great grief to our SAVIOUR, that one of his select Apostles should turn apostate.

Upon the day of eating the Passover, our SAVIOUR and his Disciples keep the Passover together in Jerusalem; and there the two memorials of our SAVIOUR's passion meet;—that of the Passover instituted by GOD, on the Israelites going out of Egypt; and the bread and wine after supper, instituted by our SAVIOUR, to succeed in the place of the former: and each did questionless make a deep impression upon our SAVIOUR, in which he anticipated his passion, and in a lively manner represented to him that breaking and pouring out of his blood and soul, which he was suddenly to suffer. And doubtless here began a great

measure of our SAVIOUR's passion, in the apprehension of that imminent storm which he was speedily to undergo. From the supper they go together to the Mount of Olives, and there he acquaints his Disciples of a speedy and sorrowful parting which they must have; the Shepherd is to be smitten that night, and the sheep to be scattered. And as he foresaw JUDAS's treachery, so he foresees PETER's infirmity; the storm should be so violent, that PETER himself, the most resolute Apostle, shall deny his Master that night, and deny him thrice; and, surely, the foresight of the distraction that should befall his poor Disciples could not but add much to their tender Master's affliction.

And now let us follow our blessed LORD from the Mount of Olives into the Garden, with the love and wonder becoming such an entertainment of our thoughts. The time which he chose for this retirement was the dead time of the night; a season which might the more contribute to the strength of that sadness, which the apprehension of his imminent passion must occasion. The place which he chose was a solitary garden, where nothing might interrupt or divert his sorrow and fear. And to make both the time and place the more opportune for his agony, he leaves the rest of his Disciples, and takes with him only PETER and the two sons of ZEBEDEE. To these he imparts the beginning of his sorrow, that they might be witnesses of it,—"My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;" but yet commands their distance; "Tarry ye here, and watch with me: and he went a little farther." "Watch with me:" The confusion of his soul was so great, that the only SON of GOD distrusts his own human ability to bear it; and yet his submission to this terrible conflict was so willing, that he leaves those whom he had appointed to watch with him; "He went a little farther." The three Disciples had doubtless a sympathy with their Master's sorrow; and yet their excess of love and grief did not keep their eyes waking, notwithstanding it was the last request of their sorrowful Master: "the Disciples slept." (*Matt.* xxvi. 40.) And thus every circumstance of time, place, and persons, con-

tribute to a sad opportunity for this most terrible conflict. And now the mighty God puts his SON to grief; loads him with our sorrows; withdraws and hides from him the light of his countenance; interposes a thick and black cloud between the Divinity and the human nature; darts into his soul the sad and sharp manifestations of his wrath; overwhelms his spirit with one wave after another; sends into him the most exquisite apprehensions of those severe sufferings which he was the next day to undergo; begins to make his soul an offering for sin; and heightens his sorrow, confusion, and astonishment, unto the uttermost. In sum, the mighty God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, who knows the way into the soul, and how to fill it with the most black astonishment, and sorrow, was pleased at this time to eclipse the manifestation of his light and love to his only SON; to throw into him as sad and amazing apprehensions of his wrath, as were consistent with the human nature to bear; and to fortify and strengthen his sense of it, and sorrow for and under it, unto the uttermost, that so his grief, and sorrow, and confusion of soul, might be full. And thus the arm of the mighty God was bruising the soul of his only SON. (*Isa. liii. 5.*) And certainly the extremity of this agony within must needs be very great, if we consider the strange effects it had without: 1. Consider that pathetic description which our SAVIOUR himself makes of it, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;"—(*Matt. xxvi. 38;*) sorrowful, exceeding sorrowful, sorrowful unto death; and the expressions of the Evangelists, "He began to be sorrowful, and very heavy;" (*Matt. xxvi. 37;*) "He began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy." (*Mark xiv. 33.*) It was such a sorrow as brought with it amazement and astonishment. 2. Again, consider that strange request to his three Disciples, "Tarry ye and watch with me;" as if he feared that the sorrow would overwhelm him. 3. Again, consider his prayer, and the manner of it; "He fell on his face and prayed;" (*Matt. xxvi. 39;*) and what was the thing he prayed for? "FATHER, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" or, "Abba, FATHER, all

things are possible unto thee ; take away this cup from me.” (*Mark* xiv. 36.) Although this was the very end for which he came into the world, the cup which in former times he reached after, and was straitened till it were fulfilled ; yet such a representation of it is now made to his soul, that although he submits, saying, “Not my will but thine be done,” yet his nature shrinks and starts at it : and he engageth Almighty God, as much as was possible, to mitigate the severity of that wrath which he was now to grapple with ; first, upon the account of his omnipotency ; “all things are possible to thee ;” secondly, upon the account of his relation ; “Abba, FATHER :”—as though he had said, “It is not a stranger that importunes thee ; it is thy SON ; that SON in whom thou didst proclaim thyself well pleased ; that SON whom thou hearest always ; it is he that begs of thee, and begs of thee a dispensation from that which he most declines, because he most loves thee,—the terrible, unsupportable hiding of thy face from me.” And this was not one single request, but thrice repeated, and that with more earnestness : “And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words ;” (*Mark* xiv. 39 ;) “And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly.” (*Luke* xxii. 44.) Certainly, that impression upon his soul, which caused him to deprecate that for which he was born, to deprecate it so often, and so earnestly, must needs be a sorrow and apprehension of a very terrible and exceeding extremity.

4. Such was the weight of his sorrow and confusion of soul, that, exceeding the strength of his human nature, it was ready to dissolve the union between his body and soul ; insomuch that, to add farther strength unto him, and capacity to undergo the measure of it, an Angel from heaven is sent, not merely to comfort, but to strengthen him ; to add a farther degree of strength to his human nature, to bear the weight of that wrath, which had literally made his soul sorrowful unto death, had it not been strengthened by the ministration of an Angel. (*Luke* xxii. 43.) But this assistance of the Angel, as it did not allay the sorrow of his soul, so neither did it intermit his importunity to be

delivered from the thing he felt and feared, but did only support and strengthen him to bear a greater burden of it. And as the measure of his strength was increased, so was the burden which he must undergo; for after this, he prayed, again more earnestly the third time. The supply of his strength was succeeded with an addition of sorrow, and the increase of his sorrow was followed with the greater importunity; "he prayed with strong crying and tears." "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." (*Luke* xxii. 44.) This was his third address to his Father. And here was the highest pitch of our SAVIOUR's passion in the Garden. His soul was in an agony, in the greatest concussion, confusion, and extremity of sorrow, fear, anguish, and astonishment, that could be consistent with the purity of his nature, and the inseparable union which it had with the divine; insomuch that the confusion and distraction of his soul, and the struggling and grappling of his soul with it, did make such an impression upon his body, that the like was never seen before or since. The season of the year was cold; so it appears from *John* xxviii. 18: "The servants and officers had made a fire of coals, for it was cold." And the season of the time was cold; it was, as near as we may guess, about midnight; for it appears that they came with lanterns and torches when they apprehended him; and he was brought to the High-Priest's Hall, a little before cock-crowing, after some time had been spent in his examination. (*Matt.* xxvi. 57.) And yet for all this, such is the agony of our SAVIOUR's soul, that in this cold season it puts his body in a sweat, a sweat of blood, great drops of blood, drops of blood falling down to the ground; and certainly it was no light conflict within, that caused such an unheard-of symptom without. Certainly the storm in the soul of CHRIST must be very terrible, that his blood could no longer abide the sense of it, but started out in a sweat of blood, and such a sweat as was scarce consistent with the ordinary constitution of human nature. And during this

time, even from the eating of the Passover until this third address to his FATHER was over, the suffering of our SAVIOUR lay principally, if not only, in his soul. Almighty God was wounding his spirit, and making his soul an offering for sin: and though the distinct manner of this bruising of our SAVIOUR's soul cannot be apprehended by us; yet surely thus much we may conclude concerning it: (1.) "He was made sin for us, that knew no sin." (2 *Cor.* v. 21.) He stood under the imputation of all our sins; for "the LORD laid upon him the iniquity of us all." (*Isa.* liii. 6.) (2.) And consequently he was under the imputation of all the guilt of those sins, and stood, in relation to God, the righteous Judge, under the very same obligation to whatsoever punishment the very persons of the offenders were: and this obligation to the punishment could not but work the same effects in our SAVIOUR, as it must do in the sinner; (desperation and sin excepted;) to wit, a sad apprehension of the wrath of God against him. The purity and justice of God, which hath nothing that it hates but sin, must pursue sin wherever it finds it: and as, when it finds sin personally in a man, the wrath of God will abide there so long as sin abides there; so when it finds the same sin assumed by our LORD, and bound as it were to him, as the wood was to ISAAC, when he was laid upon the altar, the wrath of God could not but be incumbent upon him, till that sin that lay upon him were discharged. For as our LORD was pleased to be our representative in bearing our sins, and to stand in our stead, so all these affections of his soul did bear the same conformity, as if acted by us: as he put on the person of the sinner, so he puts on the same sorrow, the same shame, the same fear, the same trembling, under the apprehension of the wrath of his FATHER, that we must have done: and as imputed sin drew with it the obligation to punishment, so it did, by consequence, raise all these storms in the soul of CHRIST, which it would have done in the person of the sinner, sin only excepted. (3.) As he stood under the sin and guilt of our nature, to wit, a necessity of death, and of undergoing

the wrath of God for that sin whose punishment he had undertaken ;—the former, the dissolution of his body and soul by a most accursed death ; and the latter the suffering of his soul ;—this latter he is now under ; God is pleased to inflict upon him all the manifestations of his wrath, and to fling into his soul the sharpest representations of his displeasure that might possibly befall him under that imputed guilt, considering the dignity of his person. And surely this was more terrible to our SAVIOUR than all his corporal sufferings were : Under all those, there was not one word, no perturbation at all, but “as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth :” But the sense of the displeasure of his FATHER, and the impressions which that makes upon his soul, those he cannot bear without sorrow, even unto death,—without most importunate addresses to be delivered from them, and a most strange concussion and agony upon his soul and body under the sense of them. And the actual manifestation of the wrath of God upon his SON consisted in these two things principally :—first, in filling his soul with strange and violent fears and terrors, insomuch that he was in an amazement and consternation of spirit : the Passion-Psalm renders it, “My heart is like wax ; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.” (*Psalms* xxii. 14.) The God of the spirits of all flesh, who knows how to grind and bruise the spirit, did bruise and melt his soul within him with terrors, fears, and sad apprehensions of worse to follow. It consisted, secondly, in a sensible withdrawing, by hasty and swift degrees, of the light of the presence and favour of God. He is sorrowful and troubled, and he goes to his FATHER to desire that it may pass from him, but has no answer : he goes again, but yet no answer : under the pressure and extremity, he goes again the third time with more earnestness and agony, with a sweat of blood ; yet it cannot be ; and this was a terrible condition, that the light of the countenance of the FATHER is removed from his SON,—his only SON, in whom he was well pleased,—his SON whom he heard always. When he comes to the FATHER, with the greatest

reverence, with the greatest importunity, once, and again, and a third time, filled within with fears, and covered without with blood, and yet no answer; but all light and access with favour intercepted, with nothing but blackness and silence! Certainly this was a terrible cup: yet thus it was with our SAVIOUR; the light of the favour of God, like the sun in an eclipse, from the very institution of the Sacrament, began to be covered one degree after another; and in the third address to the FATHER in the garden, it was even quite gone. But at that great hour, when our SAVIOUR cried, "My GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken me!"—then both lights, that greater light of the favour of God to his only SON, together with the light of the sun, seemed to be under a total eclipse; and this was that which bruised the soul of our SAVIOUR, and made it an offering for sin; and this it was which wrung drops of blood from our SAVIOUR's body, before the thorns, or whips, or the nails, or the spear, had torn his veins.

And now after this third application for deliverance from this terrible cup of the wrath of God, he returns to his miserable comforters, the three Disciples; and he finds them for the third time asleep. These very three were once the witnesses of a glorious transfiguration of our SAVIOUR on the mount, and in an ecstasy of joy and fear fell on their faces. Now they are to be witnesses of a sad transfiguration of their LORD, under an agony and sweat of blood; and under an ecstasy of sorrow they are not able to watch with their LORD one hour. Our SAVIOUR calls them; but while they were scarce awakened, they are roused by a louder alarm: "While he yet spake, lo, JUDAS, one of the Twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves from the chief priests, with lanterns and torches." (*Matt. xxvi. 47.*) And though this was little in comparison of the storm that was in our SAVIOUR's soul; yet such an appearance at such a time of the night, and to a person under such a sad condition, could not but be terrible to flesh and blood; especially, if we consider the circumstances that attended it. 1. An Apostle, one of



the Twelve, he it is that conducts this guard ; one that had been witness of all his miracles, heard all his sermons, and was acquainted with all his retirements ; he, whose feet his Master with love and tenderness had washed, who within a few hours before had supped with him, at that supper of solemnity and love, the Passover ; this is he who is at the head of this crew. Certainly this had it in an aggravation of sorrow to our blessed SAVIOUR. 2. The manner of it : he betrays him with a kiss ; an emblem of homage and love is made use of to be the signal of scorn, as well as villany. 3. The carriage of his Disciples, full of rashness, and yet of cowardice :—it was rash ; they strike a servant of the High Priest, and cut off his ear ; which, had not the meekness and mercy of our SAVIOUR prevented, might have added a blemish to the innocence of his suffering ; he rebukes the rashness of his disciples, and cures the wound of his enemy : again, it was cowardly ; “ Then all the disciples forsook him and fled ; ” (*Matt. xxvi. 50* ; ) and PETER himself, who just before had professed his love to his Master, follows, but afar off, in the posture and profession of a stranger and a spectator. So soon was the love and honour of a Master, deserved by so much love, and purity, and miracles, lost in the souls of the very Disciples !

After this, he is brought to the High Priest's, the solemn assembly of the then visible church of the Jews, in the persons of the greatest reverence and esteem among them, the Chief Priests, Scribes, and Elders ; before them accused, and convicted of those crimes that might render him odious to Jews, Romans, and all good men ; by them pronounced worthy of death ; and after this, exposed to the basest usage of the basest of their retinue : the servants spit on him, buffet him, and expose him to scorn, saying, “ Prophecy unto us, thou CHRIST, who is he that smote thee ? ”—injuries less tolerable than death to an ingenuous nature. And add to all the rest, PETER, instead of reproving the insolence of the abjects, and bearing a part with his Master in his injuries, thrice denied him, and that with an oath and cursing : so far was he from owning his

Master in his adversity, that he denied that he knew him ; and this in the very presence of our SAVIOUR : “ And the LORD turned and looked upon PETER.” (*Luke* xxii. 61.) Certainly that look, as it carried a secret message of reprehension, so also of much sorrow in our LORD ; as if he should have said, “ Ah, PETER, canst thou see thy SAVIOUR so used, and wilt thou not own me ? Or if thou wilt not, yet must thou needs deny me, deny me thrice, deny me with oaths, and with execrations ? The unkindness of a disciple, and such a disciple, who has been privy to my glory in my transfiguration, and to my agony in the Garden, cuts me deeper than the scorns and derisions of these abjects. But this is not all ; this apostasy of thine, and these execrations, will lie upon me anon, and add to that unsupportable burden that I am under ; the thorns, and the whips, and the nails, from which I must suffer, will be the more envenomed by these sins of thine ; and thou castest more gall into that bitter cup, of which I am drinking, than all the malice of mine enemies could do. Though thou goest out, and weepest bitterly, yet these sins of thine would stick unto thy soul to eternity, if I should not bear them for thee ; they cost thee some tears, but they must cost me my blood.”

The next morning the Chief Priests and Elders held a second consultation, as soon as it was day. Their malice was so solicitous, that they rise before the morning-sun ; and after they had again examined him, and in that Council charged him with blasphemy, the Council and the whole multitude lead him bound to PILATE, and there accuse him ; and, to make their accusation the more gracious, charge him with sedition against the Romans : but though he had no other advocate but silence and innocence, (for he answered them nothing,) the Judge acquits him ; “ I find no fault in him ;” (*Luke* xxiii. 4 ;) and yet, to shift his hands of the employment, and to gratify an adversary, he sends him to HEROD, and his accusers follow him thither also. The Chief Priests and Scribes vehemently accuse him : HEROD, when he had satisfied his

curiosity in the sight of **JESUS**, to add scorn, exposeth him to the derision of his rude soldiers, and clothes him in a gorgeous robe, and remands him to **PILATE**. Thus in triumph he is sent from place to place : first to **ANNAS** ; then to **CAIAPHAS** ; then carried before the Council of the Priests ; then sent into the High Priest's Hall ; then remanded before the Council ; then sent bound to **PILATE**, and from thence to **HEROD**, and from him back again to **PILATE** ; and in all those translations from place to place, exposed to new scorns, derisions, and contempts.

At his return to **PILATE**, he again the second time declares, that neither he nor **HEROD** found any thing worthy of death in him ; and yet, to gratify the Jews, he offers to have Him scourged, whom he pronounceth innocent ; yet, to avoid the gross injustice of a sentence of death, offers to release him, to observe their custom ; but this could not satisfy them. To preserve their custom, and yet to fulfil their malice, they choose the reprieve of **BARABBAS**, a murderer, and importune the crucifying of the innocent **JESUS** ; and now the third time, **PILATE** pronounceth him innocent, (*Luke xxiii. 22,*) and yet delivers him over to be crucified. The executioners did it to the uttermost ; and, to add pain and scorn to his scourging, put upon him a crown of thorns ; and in this disguise and contempt, he brings him forth, and shows him to his prosecutors ; “ Behold the man ; ” (*John xix. 5 ;*) as if he should have said, “ You Jews, that have accused this man, must know that I find no fault in him ; yet to satisfy your importunity, I have delivered him over to the severest and vilest punishment, next unto death, scourging and scorn ; here he is, see what a spectacle he is ; let this satisfy your envy.” But all this will not serve ; nothing below the vilest of deaths can satisfy them ; all cry out, “ Crucify him : ” and when the Judge yet professeth that he finds nothing worthy of death, they impose a law of their own ; “ We have a law ; and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the SON of GOD.” But when this made the Judge more cautious, they engage him, upon his fidelity to **CÆSAR** his

master : “ He that maketh himself a King, speaketh against CÆSAR.”

But all this was not enough, till at length the importunity of the priests and people prevailed ; and PILATE, who had been before warned by the monition of his wife, and had these several times pronounced him innocent, yet against the conviction of his conscience, to satisfy the Jews, gave sentence that it should be as they required, (*Luke* xxiii. 24,) and delivered him over to that cursed and servile death of crucifixion. And yet the malice and envy of his persecutors are not satisfied ; but, after his judgment, they pursue the execution of it with as great scorn and cruelty as they had before used in obtaining it. His crown of thorns is upon his head ; a purple robe upon his body ; the blood of his scourging and thorns covers all his visage ; a reed is in his right hand ; the base and insolent multitude, with spittings, and strokes, and reproaches, abuse him till his cross be ready ; and then the purple robe is taken off, and he is conducted to the place of his execution. And, to add torment to his shame, our blessed LORD,—wearied with an agony, and with long watching in the night before, and, from the time of his apprehension, hurried from place to place, and his blood and spirits spent with the scourging, and thorns, and blows, and, which is more than all this, a soul within laden with the weight of sorrow, and with the burden of the wrath of God which did drink up his spirits,—is yet fain, in this condition, to bear his burdensome cross towards the place of his execution, till he can carry it no longer, but even faints under it, when SIMON of Cyrene is compelled to bear it to the place.

When he comes to the place of execution, he is stripped naked, (his clothes being afterwards divided by lot among the soldiers,) and his naked body stretched upon the cross, to the uttermost extension of it ; and, at the uttermost extension which the cruel executioners could make of our SAVIOUR’S body, his hands and his feet are nailed to that cross, by great nails driven through those tender parts full of

nerves and arteries, and most exquisitely sensible of pain. And in this condition the cross, with our SAVIOUR'S body, is raised up in the view of all; and that, even in this his execution, the ignominy of his death might have a farther accession of scorn and reproach, he is placed between two thieves, who were crucified with him, with an inscription of derision upon his cross, in all the most universal languages in the world, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin;—the people and Priests standing by, and, even to a letter, assuming those very gestures and words, which were so many hundreds of years before predicted in the Passion-Psalm, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him, if he will have him." Yea, one of those very thieves, who was even dying as a malefactor, was yet filled with such a devilish spirit, that he upbraids and derides him.

And now our SAVIOUR is under the torments and shame of this cursed execution. But though these sufferings of his body were very grievous, insomuch that it could not but extremely afflict him; yet it is strange to see how little he was transported under them. In all his contumelies, reproaches, and accusations, scarcely a word was answered: He answered them nothing to all his abusings, strokes, crown of thorns, or tearing of his body with scourging; but, "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." (*Isa. liii. 7.*) In all his rackings upon the cross, and the nailing of his limbs to it, and the anguish which for the space of six hours, from the third hour, wherein he was crucified, (*Mark xv. 25.*) until the ninth hour, wherein he gave up the ghost, (*Matt. xxvii. 46, 50.*) there was not a word of complaint; but he refused those very supplies which were usually given to suppress the violence of the pain,—vinegar and myrrh.

But when we come to the afflictions of his soul, they were of a higher dimension than in the Garden, when no other storm was upon him but what was within him. He falls down upon his face and prays; and again; and a third time; and is amazed, and sorrowful to death; and sweats drops of blood: and, doubtless, while he was under the

reproachings, and buffetings, and whippings, and thorns, he was not without a terrible and confused sadness and heaviness within, which though they did not mitigate the torments of his body, yet did infinitely exceed them. The soul is most exquisitely sensible, and it is that which feels the pains inflicted upon the body. Certainly therefore the wound of the spirit itself, the fountain of sense, must needs be exceedingly grievous. And hence it was, that though all the injuries and torments of our SAVIOUR could scarcely wring a complaint from him, yet the weight of that wrath that lay upon his soul, now made an offering for sin, did wring from him such bitter and terrible cries, that one might wonder that they should proceed from Him who was one with the FATHER: "My GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken me?" (*Matt. xxvii. 46.*) "From the sixth hour to the ninth, darkness was over all the land;" such a darkness as bred an astonishment even in strangers and in other countries. But the darkness of the world, though a suitable dress for the time wherein the SON of GOD must die, and the Sun of Righteousness be eclipsed, was yet nothing in comparison of that dismal shadow which covered our SAVIOUR's soul during all that time. About the ninth hour, our SAVIOUR cried that bitter cry, "My GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken me?"—manifesting the depth of his sorrow, and the perfect sense he had of it. "Why hast thou forsaken me?" More could not have been suffered, or been said; every word carries in it an accent of horror. "*THOU*, that art the great GOD, from whom, and in whom, every thing hath its being and comfort; surely if in thy presence is fulness of joy, in thy withdrawals must be fulness of horror and confusion; and yet it is *Thou* that hast forsaken me. *Forsaken*: Hadst thou never been with me, as I had not known the blessedness of thy fruition, so I could not have measured the extremity of my loss: the excess of the happiness which I had in thy presence, adds to the excess of my misery in suffering thy absence. *Forsaken* me: Not withdrawn thyself to a distance, but forsaken me, and forsaken me at such a time

as this, when I stand more in need of thy presence than ever ; when I am forsaken by my countrymen, my kindred, my disciples ; then to be forsaken by thee, when I am under the shame and pains of a cruel and a cursed death, under the scorns and derisions of those that hate me, under the weight and pressure of all the sins of the world, under the strugglings with terrors in my soul, sent from thy mighty hand, under the visible approach of Death, the King of Terrors, under a veil of darkness without, and the seeming triumph of the powers of darkness within,—then to be forsaken, and forsaken of thee, whom only I had left to be my support ! Forsaken *me* : It is not a stranger that thou forsakest ; it is thy SON, thy only SON, in whom thou didst heretofore proclaim thyself well-pleased ; that SON, who, though thou forsakest Him, yet forgets not his duty unto thee, nor dependance upon thee ; but still lays hold on thee : and though thou still shakest me off, yet I must still call upon thee, with the humble confidence of “ My God, My God.” *Why hast thou forsaken me?* To be forsaken, and to be forsaken of God, of my God, of him that is not only my God, but my FATHER, and that at such a time, and yet not to know why ! ”

O blessed SAVIOUR, the Prophets who spake by thy own SPIRIT did tell thee why : and that very Psalm, out of which thou takest this bitter cry, doth tell thee why ! Didst thou not choose even that which thou now groanest under, and wast not thou willing to put thy soul in our souls’ stead, and to bear the sin of those which are now thy burden ? Certainly we may with all humility and reverence conceive, that, at the time of this bitter cry, our SAVIOUR’S soul was, for the present, overshadowed with so much astonishment, that it did for the present overpower and cover the distinct sense of the reason of it.

This cry was about the ninth hour, a little before his death : and having fulfilled one prophecy in this cry, contained in the very words of *Psalm* xxii., he fulfils another ; he saith, “ I thirst.” (*John* xix. 28.) And presently they give him vinegar to drink. And between this and his death, there

intervene these passages : 1. His proclaiming to the world, that the work of our Redemption was finished. 2. A second cry with a loud voice. (*Matt. xxvii. 50.*) The words of his second cry are not expressed ; only both Evangelists, MATTHEW and LUKE, testify that it was a cry with a loud voice, to evidence to the world that in the very article of his giving up the ghost, the strength of nature was not fully spent. 3. The comfortable resignation of his soul into the hands of his FATHER ; “ FATHER, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” (*Luke xxiii. 46.*) And although but even now the black storm was upon his soul, which made him cry out with that loud and bitter cry, yet the cloud is over, and with comfort he delivers up his soul into the hands of that GOD, who, as he thought, but even now, had forsaken him.

It is more than probable, that that bitter cry was uttered at the very height of all his pains, and when he had proclaimed, “ It is finished ;” though they were all wrapped up in a very small time, about the end of the ninth hour, yet now there remained no more but for him to give up his spirit, which he instantly thereupon did : “ He bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.”

Now the things wonderfully observable in the death of our SAVIOUR are many.

1. *It was a voluntary delivering up of his spirit.* This is that which he said, “ No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down : I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again : this commandment have I received of my FATHER.” And truly this voluntary delivering up of his soul was almost as great an evidence of his Divinity, as his resuming it : so that this very delivering up of his soul convinced the Centurion ; “ When he saw that he so cried, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the SON of GOD.” (*Mark xv. 39.*) Now that he thus voluntarily gave up his spirit, is evident : (1.) By the strength of nature which was yet upon him in the very article of his death, “ He cried with a loud voice.” (2.) Because the thieves, who were cru-



cified at the same time, died not till there was a farther violence used by breaking their legs ; but he expired, to prevent the violence of the soldiers, and to fulfil the type and prophecy, “ Not a bone of him shall be broken.”

(3.) Because the suddenness of his death caused admiration in those who well knew the lingering course of such a death ;—in the Centurion ; (*Mark xv. 39*;) and in PILATE ; (*Mark xv. 44*;) which might probably be the cause for which the insolent soldier, to secure the assurance of his death, pierced his side with a spear, and thereby fulfilled another Scripture which he never thought of. (*John xix. 37*.)

2. The *wonderful occurrences* which accompanied our SAVIOUR’S death were very many and considerable.

(1.) A strange and particular fulfilment of the prophecies and types which were concerning it, and the individual circumstances which attended it :—The time of his death so exactly predicted by DANIEL : The parallel circumstances with the Paschal Lamb ; in the nature of him,—a lamb without spot ; in the time of his delivery over to death,—at the feast of the Passover, and in the very evening wherein the Passover was to be eaten ; and in the manner of his oblation, not a bone to be broken : Again, the manner of his death, by piercing his hands and his feet : The very words used by him : The words used of him : The crucifying of him between malefactors : The whippings, the dividing of his garments, and casting lots upon his vesture : The thirst of our SAVIOUR upon the cross, and the giving him vinegar and gall.

(2.) A strange and miraculous concussion of nature, giving testimony to the wonderful dissolution of our SAVIOUR’S body and soul. There was darkness from the sixth hour until the ninth hour. It is observable, that in the night wherein he was born, by a miraculous light, the night became as day ; (*Luke ii. 9*;) but at his death, a miraculous darkness turned the day into night for three hours. (*Matt. xxvii. 45*.) At his birth, a new star was the lamp

and guide unto the place of birth ; but at his death the sun in the firmament was masked with darkness, and yielded not his light, while the Lord of Life was passing under the veil of death. Again, another prodigy which accompanied the death of CHRIST was an earthquake, which rent the rocks, and opened the graves, and struck amazement into the Centurion who was watching him. When our SAVIOUR was entering into the earth by death, the earth trembled ; and so it did when he was coming out of it by his resurrection.

(3.) Again, the graves were opened, and “ the dead bodies of the saints arose.” As the touch of the bones of ELISHA caused a kind of resurrection, (2 *Kings* xiii. 21,) so our SAVIOUR’S body, newly fallen to the earth, did give a kind of particular resurrection to the saints’ bodies ; in order to testify by his death, that he had healed the deadliness of the grave, and that the satisfaction of sin was accomplished, when death, the wages of sin, was thus conquered.

(4.) Again, “ the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.” The veil was that which divided the Most Holy Place from the rest of the tabernacle. (*Exod.* xxvi. 33.) And in that Most Holy Place were contained the mysterious types, the ark of the covenant, and the mercy-seat ; and within this veil the High Priest only entered once a year, when he made an atonement for the people, and for the tabernacle. At our SAVIOUR’S death, this veil was rent from the top to the bottom ; and it imported divers great mysteries :

First, That now our great High Priest was entering into the Most Holy Place, with his own blood, having thereby made atonement for us. (*Heb.* ix. 12.)

Secondly, That the means, whereby he entered into the Most Holy Place was by the rending of his humanity, or of his soul from his body, typified by the rending of that veil ; and therefore his flesh, that is, his whole human nature, was the veil : “ Consecrated through the veil, that is, his flesh.” (*Heb.* x. 20.)

Thirdly, That now by the death of CHRIST all those dark mysteries veiled up formerly in the Most Holy Place, the ark of the covenant, and the mercy-seat, are rendered open. CHRIST is the Mediator of the covenant, and the seat of mercy and acceptation unto all believers, founded and seated upon him: and thereby that life and immortality which were wrapt up in the mysteries of the Old Covenant, but which yet those mysteries veiled, are now brought to light through the Gospel, (2 *Tim.* i. 10,) and the vail is rent in twain.

Fourthly, That now the use of the Ceremonial Law is at an end. The greatest and most sacred mystery of the tabernacle, and indeed of the whole ceremonial law, was this which was within the vail, the Most Holy Place, wherein were the most holy and reverend mysteries, the ark and the mercy-seat; but now the vail is rent, the use abolished, the body of CHRIST, typified by the temple, separated, and so the use of the other temple, tabernacle, and the holy places, vessels, and instruments thereof, ceased.

Fifthly, That now the kingdom of heaven, the Most Holy Place, is open unto all believers. CHRIST our High Priest is entered in with his own blood, and hath not closed the vail after him, but rent it in sunder, and made and left a passage for all believers to follow him, with our prayers and access to the glorious God, and hereafter in our persons: "Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of JESUS, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; let us draw near with a true heart." (*Heb.* x. 19, 20, 22.)

And now that we have gone with our LORD unto his Death, we shall follow him to his Grave. JOSEPH of Arimathea, has an honourable mention by all four Evangelists; "a rich man," and "JESUS's disciple;" (*Matt.* xxvii. 57;) "an honourable counsellor, who waited for the Kingdom of God;" (*Mark* xv. 43;) "a good man, and a just, who had not consented to the counsel of the Jews, and waited for the Kingdom of God;" (*Luke* xxiii. 50;) "a disciple of CHRIST, but secretly, for fear of the Jews;" (*John* xix. 38.)

This man manifested his faith and love to his Master, when he was in the lowest condition; went to PILATE boldly, and begged his SAVIOUR'S body; wrapped it in a clean linen cloth; laid it in a tomb provided for himself, hewed out of a rock; and rolled a great stone upon the door of the sepulchre. And as by his death with the malefactors, so by his burial in the rich man's sepulchre, he fulfilled both parts of the prophecy: "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." (*Isa. liii. 9.*) The Chief Priests continued their malice and jealousy, even against the dead body of our SAVIOUR; and, to secure themselves against the suspicion of his resurrection on the third day, they take order for making the sepulchre sure, till the third day was past; they seal the stone, and set a watch. (*Matt. xxvii. 60.*) And it is very observable, how the almighty counsel of God made use of the very malice and jealousy of these people, for the confirming of his own truth, of CHRIST'S resurrection, and of our faith. Their malicious and curious industry, to prevent the possibility of a fictitious resurrection, abundantly evince the reality of our SAVIOUR'S death and his true resurrection. He was laid in the grave on the evening of the day wherein he suffered; a stone was rolled upon the mouth of the grave, such as required considerable strength to remove it, insomuch that the women, who came on the first day of the week to embalm the body, were in a great difficulty how it should be removed, for it was a great stone; (*Mark xvi. 3;*) and this stone was sealed: (*Matt. xxvii. 60 :*) and, as if all this were too little, and the bonds of death and the grave were too weak, they added a watch of soldiers to secure the body.

And here we leave for a while our SAVIOUR'S body interred with spices in a new sepulchre, wherein never before any lay, hewn out of a rock in the garden. As in the garden, death at first laid hold of the first ADAM, so in the garden the second ADAM undergoes the state of death, and gains the victory over the grave: his body rests in the grave, and his soul in Paradise; for so he witnesseth of himself, "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

(*Luke* xxiii. 43.) For at the instant of his dissolution our satisfaction was made ; and the work of our redemption, so far as it depended upon his suffering, was finished : so that had it not been for a proof of the reality of his death, and of the power and reality of his resurrection, and for the fulfilling of the decree of God, manifested in the Scriptures, he might have re-assumed life the instant after death : for the debt to the justice of God was fully satisfied ; and his continuance in the grave until the third day, was not by the power of death, which he vanquished in the instant of his dissolution, but a voluntary subjecting of himself unto that state, for the strengthening of our faith, and the fulfilling of the Scriptures.

And now we come to the consideration of the Resurrection of our LORD ; by which he was declared to be the SON of God with power, and by which the completeness of our redemption by him is abundantly manifested. He chose that time to die, when the passover was slain,—that time wherein ADAM was created,—the sixth day of the week at even. He chose that time for his body to rest in the grave, and for his soul to rest in Paradise, wherein his FATHER rested from all the great work of the Creation,—the seventh day of the week. And he chose that day to rise again, which his FATHER chose to begin the Creation,—the first day of the week ; that the same day might bear the inscription of the creation and of the restitution of the world ; and that as in that day the LORD GOD brought light out of darkness, so this light, the light which lighteth every man that comes into the world, should arise from the land of darkness, the grave : “ This is the day that the LORD hath made ; let us be glad and rejoice therein.” The time of the day wherein our LORD arose, was very early in the morning, as it began to dawn ; (*Matt.* xxviii. 1 ; ) while it was yet dark, or scarcely full light. (*John* xx. 1.) And the manner of it was full of astonishment. An Angel from heaven comes down to draw the curtain of our SAVIOUR’S grave, and with an earthquake rolls away the stone that covered it ; the keepers, who had watchfully observed the

command of their commanders, were stricken with astonishment, and became as dead. (*Matt.* xxviii. 2—4.) Our LORD, who had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again, re-assumes his body, which, though it had tasted death, yet had not seen corruption, and ariseth, and thereby proclaimeth the completion of our redemption. When our LORD raised up LAZARUS, he came forth from the grave bound hand and foot with grave-clothes. (*John* xi. 44.) Though he was for the present rescued from death by the power of CHRIST, yet he must still be a subject to it : he is revived, but yet riseth with the bonds of death about him ; he must die again. But when our LORD riseth, he shakes off his grave-clothes ;—the linen that wrapped his body in one place, and the linen that bound his head in another. Our LORD being risen, dieth no more ; death hath no power over him.

And thus we have considered, in the history of CHRIST's passion and resurrection, the first and second general topics ; Who it was that suffered ; and What it was he suffered. The third consideration follows.

(III.) From whom he suffered all these things ; the consideration of which doth highly advance the sufferings of CHRIST.

1. He suffered this from the hands of his own FATHER ; it was he who bruised him, put him to grief, and made his soul an offering for sin. (*Isa.* liii. 49.) It was he who reached out to him this bitter cup : “The cup which my FATHER hath given me, shall I not drink ?” (*John* xviii. 11.) It was he, who bound that burden so close upon him, which made him sweat great drops of blood in the garden, and who, though thrice importuned for a dispensation from it, yet would not grant it. It was he, who, when the extremity of pain and sorrow lay upon him, to add thereunto, withdrew the sense of his presence from him, which wrung from him that bitter cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?” The injuries of an enemy are easily borne, but the forsakings of a father are intolerable.

2. The immediate instruments and contrivers of his sufferings were such as had a nearness of relation to him ; people of the same nation, and his kinsmen according to

the flesh; the seed of ABRAHAM; people of his own religion; who worshipped the same GOD, acknowledged the same Scriptures; the visible Church of GOD, and chief representatives of that Church, most eminent in place, reputation, and pretence of holiness, the Chief Priests, and Elders, and Scribes; people whom he never had injured in his life; but whom he had obliged with many miraculous cures, heavenly instructions, and proofs of the tenderest and dearest love and compassion. That very Jerusalem, which he wept over, and would have gathered as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, now seeks the destruction of him who came to save its inhabitants; and they, in that vile competition between their REDEEMER and a murderer, chose rather to save a malefactor, and to deliver to death their innocent and merciful SAVIOUR. These were they who, beyond the examples even of common humanity, pursued their Kinsman, their Benefactor, their Redeemer, with such bitterness, and malice, and scorn, and cruelty, that as it seemed barbarous to the heathen Judge, so it hath out-gone the practice of heathenish tyrants.

(IV.) Let us consider How he suffered all these things; for this doth infinitely advance the excellence and value of his suffering.

1. He suffered innocently: "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth: yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him. He made him to be sin for us who knew no sin." (*Isa. liii. 9; 2 Cor. v. 21.*) The companions of his suffering justify him: "We indeed justly, but this man hath done nothing amiss." (*Luke xxiii. 41.*) JUDAS who betrayed him, justified him: "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." (*Matt. xxvii. 4.*) His Judge acquits him; and in a signal testimony of his judgment, "He took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person." (*Matt. xxvii. 24.*) And this innocence of our SAVIOUR was not only a negative innocence, an absence of guilt, but a positive innocence: he suffered who had not only done no ill, but who had done nothing but good: he healed their sick, cured their lame, their blind, their deaf,

their lepers, cast out their devils, and, which was more than all, showed them the way to eternal life. Well might he have asked, as once he did upon another occasion, "For which of all my good works do ye crucify me?"—Blessed LORD, they crucify thee for all thy good works! If thou hadst been guilty, thou mightest have been spared instead of BARABBAS; nay, if thou hadst been only innocent, it is possible thy persecutors might not have been so violent against thee: but thou sufferedst for the very good thou didst; it was not only an act of injustice that spared not thy innocence, but an improvement of envy that did malign thy very goodness. "For envy they delivered him."

2. He suffered all patiently: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." (*Isa. liii. 7.*) Betrayed by his Disciples, hurried away by them that apprehended him, reproached by the Chief Priests and Elders, forsaken and denied by his followers, stricken, spit upon, and basely injured by the abjects in the High Priest's hall, denied by HEROD, insulted by PILATE, ("Knowest thou not that I have power to condemn thee?") whipped, clothed in scorn with purple, crowned with a crown of thorns, and in that disguise saluted with, "Hail, King of the Jews!" forced to bear his burdensome cross, as the vilest of malefactors, nailed to the cross with most exquisite torment, and then, by one of his companions in death, by the general rabble that were about him, by the Scribes and Elders, reproached as a blasphemer, as an impostor;—yet in the midst of all this, scarcely was a word spoken; and those which he spake savoured not of any impatience, or complaint against his persecutors, but were full of mildness, gentleness, sweetness, goodness. While his persecutors are busy in revilings and tormentings, he is as industrious to pray for them; "FATHER forgive them; they know not what they do." (*Luke xxii. 34.*)

3. He suffered all this willingly and cheerfully, which is yet a higher step. "No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself:" (*John x. 18.*) "I have a



baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be fulfilled?" (*Luke* xii. 50.) And this willingness of our LORD's sufferings appears in these particulars:—

(1.) In that when he had power to prevent them, and to rescue himself from his persecutors, yet he used it not. One Angel, armed by commission from God, in one night destroyed a vast army of the Assyrians; and upon the desire of our LORD, no less than twelve legions were ready for his guard: but yet this must not be; "How then shall the Scripture be fulfilled?" When the company that were sent to apprehend him, heard those words, "I am he," they went backward and fell to the ground. The same power by which they fell, could have so bound them, as never to have risen again; but our LORD, though he manifested this power, to evidence his Divinity, yet he used it not so far as to hinder his passion: he, as it were, calls back that manifestation of his Deity, lest it might interrupt the service he was about to perform for mankind. "He asked them again, Whom seek ye?"

(2.) In that he corrects and checks all things which might be either an impediment of his passion, or that might, in the least degree, betray an unwillingness to undergo it. Doubtless there was an adequate representation unto him of the dreadfulfulness of that conflict which he was to undergo with the wrath of God; and yet upon all occasions he corrects those apprehensions which caused his human nature to shrink from it. "FATHER, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I to this hour." (*John* xii. 27.) "FATHER, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." (*Matt.* xxvi. 39.) Even while the infirmity of his human nature started at the apprehension of what he was to suffer, and prayed against it, yet the freeness and purity of his obedience carried him on to it, and made him, as it were, *un-pray* what he had before prayed. Though his soul started at the discovery of that dismal vale through which he was about to pass, yet his love to mankind, and his resolution of obedience to his FATHER's will, carried him on with willingness to suffer that which he was troubled to see.

Again, how doth he check all impediments to his suffering? Foreseeing shame and pain, he arms himself against both: with patience against the latter, he endured the cross; with resolution against the former, he despised the shame. (*Heb. xii. 9.*) Again, when PETER began to play the politician, in advising our LORD to decline his suffering, how severely doth he take him up? "Get thee behind me: the cup which my FATHER hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?" Again, when the forward zeal of the Disciple drew his sword, and cut off the ear of a servant of the High Priest, our LORD checks the assailant, and cures the wound; lest any thing should retard the execution of that for which he came into the world.

It is very observable, how PILATE was ready to fluctuate upon every occasion, and shifted from place to place, and from point to point, to decline the condemnation of our LORD. When he answered him nothing, he marvelled, and was at a stand upon his silence. (*Matt. xxvii. 14.*) When he heard his accusation to be, because he made himself the SON of GOD, he was the more afraid. He had secret checks from his own conscience, and weighty advertisements from his wife, which doubtless did put him into a great perplexity, such as was scarcely conquerable by the importunity of the Jews. And if, in the midst of this hesitation of mind, our SAVIOUR, in any one answer, had sent forth that majesty and strength of conviction, which he easily could have done, certainly the Jews must have waited for the coming of another deputy to have been the executioner of this purpose. But our LORD was so far from declining this great work, that he seems purposely to decline that majesty of speech, wherewith he could have confounded his Judge; and either answered him with silence, or with such expressions as might not too much affright him from proceeding. "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, unless it were given thee of GOD." (*John xix. 11.*) Though he blamed the malice of his accusers, he admits and asserts the authority of his Judge.

(V.) Let us consider for whom he suffered all this.

1. The persons for whom he suffered deserved it not.

The expressions of the Scripture are full on this point: "Peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die; but God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners, CHRIST died for us." (*Rom. v. 7, 8.*) The objects upon whom he looked in his sufferings were "children of wrath;" (*Eph. ii. 3;*) "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (*Eph. ii. 12.*) See what monsters the best of us were in our natural condition, when every power of our soul and body was quite corrupted.

2. As it was for those who deserved it not, so it was for creatures who were in no way solicitous for, nor sought after redemption; such as were ignorant of their own misery, and in no way endeavoured after mercy. Thus "he was found of them that sought him not;" and surely little seeking could be found in those who were "dead in trespasses and sins."

3. Not only for those who neither deserved, nor sought after deliverance, but his sufferings were for those who were enemies. "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his SON." "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." (*Col. i. 21.*) And the enmity was so perfect that it corrupted the best habits of our minds, and turned them into enmity; the very wisdom of the flesh being earthly, sensual, and devilish: (*James iii. 15:*) so that there was not only in our nature an absence of any good that might move God to do any thing for us, and an absence of that life that might be solicitous for itself; but there was a positive malignity in our nature against that God who should pardon; against that CHRIST who should satisfy; against that SPIRIT who should apply: we were actuated with those vile affections, which looked upon a SAVIOUR with no less aversion, than those devils did, who cried out, "Art thou come to torment us before our time?" And yet for these, and such as these, our SAVIOUR died; nay, some of these who had actually their hands in his blood, found the efficacy of that very blood

which they shed, crying not for revenge against them, but for mercy towards them, and healing those who had cruelly spilled it: the efficacy of that blessed prayer of his, "FATHER, forgive them, they know not what they do," within some few months after his death, did first wound their hearts with a sense of their guilt, and then healed them with the infusion of his blood.

(VI.) From the consideration of the former particulars, it will easily appear what was the Motive of this great work. We have seen in the creature nothing but sin and enmity against God, and consequently a just obligation to everlasting wrath and misery: so that there we can find nothing that might upon any account of desert draw out such mercy as this. We must seek for the motive in the Author of it; and in him there was no necessity at all to bind him to it: it was his own free will which at first gave man a being, and a blessed being; and when he had sinned against the law of his creation, there was a necessity of justice for his eternal punishment, but no necessity at all for his restitution. God made all things for his glory; not because he stood in need of them; for he had in himself an infinite self-sufficiency, which stood not in need of the glory of his creation, nor was capable of an accession by it: and if it had, yet the great God could have enjoyed the glory of his justice in the everlasting punishment of unthankful man, and yet had creatures enough, the blessed Angels, to have been the everlasting partakers and admirers of his goodness: and if there had been an absolute necessity of visible intellectual creatures to be the participants of his goodness, and the active instruments of his glory, the same power that created man could have created a new generation of men, who might have supplied the defection of our first parents. What then is the origin of all his goodness to poor sinful man, to purchase such a worthless creature at such an invaluable price as the blood of the Son of God? Nothing but love, free undeserved love; love that loved before it was sought, that loved when it was rejected: "The LORD did not set his love upon, nor choose you,

because ye were more ; but because the LORD loved you : " He loved you, because he loved you. As Almighty God could not define himself by any thing but himself, "I am that I am ;" so he can resolve his love into no other motive than his love ; he loved you because he loved you : and here is the spring, the fountain, of all this strange and unheard-of goodness of God in CHRIST,—nothing but the free love of God : " So God loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten SON." (*John* iii. 16.) .. " Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his SON to be a propitiation for our sins : " (1 *John* iv. 10.) And that very same love which was in the FATHER to send, was in the SON to come, and to die for us. It was he who loved and washed us with his own blood ; washed us, because he loved us. When we lay, like EZEKIEL'S wretched infant, polluted in our blood, when no eye pitied us, then this love of God passed by us, and said unto us, Live : yea, " said unto us, when we were in our blood, Live ; " and when that life was not to be acquired for us, but by the death of the eternal SON of God, then to purchase that life for us, he sold his own ; and to wash us from the pollutions of our blood, he freely shed his own. This was " the love of CHRIST, which passeth knowledge."

(VII.) Now let us consider the End of this admirable love of CHRIST ; and as it looks upwards towards God, so it looks downwards towards us ; as he was the Mediator between both, so the end of his mediatorship had respect to both.

1. In reference to God ; the ends of our LORD'S suffering were principally these :—

(1.) To restore unto Almighty God the active service and glory of his creature. God did at the first create man in such a constitution, that he might not only display the glory of his power and wisdom in framing such a creature, as the heavens, the stars, and other creatures below an intellectual nature do ; but to be a beholder of himself and his works, to be an observer of his will, and to glorify his Maker in the admiration of his power, wisdom, and

goodness, and in the observance of his law and will : and to his own glory he had by an eternal bond annexed his creature's perfection and blessedness. Man rebelled ; and therefore as he became unserviceable to the end of his creation, so he lost the blessedness of his condition. **CHRIST** came, and by his own blood purchased, as unto man his blessedness, so unto **GOD** the service of his creature. "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." And this was the chief part of that account which our **LORD** giveth unto his **FATHER**, in the prayer he made before his passion : "I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." (*John* xvii. 4.) As if he had said, "Thou hast sent me into the world about a weighty business, the restitution of thy fallen creature ; and that therein, as thy creature may partake of thy goodness, so thou mayest reap the glory of thy creature's service. And now I return to thee thy creature healed and restored, that it may be as well a monument as a proclaimer of thy goodness to all eternity."

(2.) To manifest unto men and angels the glory and infinite perfections of all his blessed attributes ;—the glory of his wisdom in contriving, and of his power in effecting, such a deliverance for the children of men, by a way that exceeded the disquisition of men and angels ; the glory of his mercy, that could not have been possibly so conspicuous to mankind, if man had never fallen. In the creation of man, he manifested the glory of his goodness, which communicated being to him, that so he might communicate his goodness to him ; but in the redemption of man, he manifested his mercy in forgiving and healing a rebellious and miserable creature ; and the glory of his justice, which would not pardon sin, till he had a satisfaction for the sin, and which would not spare the **SON**, when he chose to be the surety for the sinner.

2. In reference to man ; the ends of our **LORD**'s suffering were principally these :—

(1.) To deliver him from guilt, the consequence of sin, and from misery, the fruit of guilt. "In whom we have

redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." And surely, had the fruit of CHRIST's death rested here, it had been a great degree of mercy. If a man under the guilt and horror of some hideous treason, under the severe and inexorable sentence of the law against him, under the imminent infliction of most exquisite torments, should but hear of a pardon and discharge from this, how welcome would it be, though the residue of his life were to be spent in exile? But our LORD's purchase rests not here. He suffered,

(2.) To reconcile GOD unto his creature : so that he doth not only remove the effects of the anger of GOD, which is punishment, and which may be removed, while yet the anger continueth ; nor doth it only remove the anger of GOD, and leave a man in a state of indifferency, as it is between persons that never were acquainted one with another ; but it produces a state of reconciliation. " That he might reconcile both unto GOD in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." (*Eph. ii. 16.*) " GOD was in CHRIST reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." (*2 Cor. v. 19.*) And certainly this is a great addition to the former, that GOD in CHRIST should not only pass by our sins, but should no longer look upon us as strangers, but as persons reconciled unto him. If a man were sensible of the unhappy condition of being estranged from GOD, how highly would he prize a state of reconciliation, though it were in the meanest and lowest relation? " I am no more worthy to be called thy son ; make me as one of thy hired servants." " So that I may not be estranged from thee, reconcile me unto thyself, though in the condition of thy meanest servants." But neither doth the happy fruit of our LORD's suffering rest here. It was intended,

(3.) To restore unto us that near and blessed relation of being sons of GOD : he died, " that we might receive the adoption of sons." " Behold, now are we the sons of GOD, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." This was that dear expression of our LORD, after his resurrection : " Go to my Brethren, and tell them I ascend unto my FATHER and your FATHER, to my GOD and your GOD."

(*John* xx. 17.) He seems to interest them in this blessed relation in a kind of equality with himself; “my Brethren,” “my FATHER and your FATHER;” and sweet and comfortable are the consequents of this. Is he my Father? Then I know he can pity me, “as a father pitieth his children;” he can pardon and spare me, “as a father spareth his son that serves him.” (*Mal.* iii. 17.) Is he my Father? Then whither should I go but to him for protection in all my dangers, for directions in all my difficulties, for satisfaction in all my doubts, for supply in all my wants? This I can with confidence expect from a poor earthly father, according to the compass of his abilities: “If ye then being evil know how to give good things to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” Mercy, and compassion, and love, are virtues in a man, in an earthly father, a piece of that image of God which at first he imprinted in man; and yet passion and human infirmity, as they have much weakened the habit thereof in us, so they may suspend the exercise thereof to a near relation: but in Almighty God these are in their perfection, and there is nothing at all in him that can remit it. Mercy and tenderness are attributes in which he delights; mercy pleaseth him: it was that great attribute by which he proclaimed his name; (*Exod.* xxxiv. 6;) and so diffusive is his mercy, that it extends to all; “He is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works,” not only to the just and good, but even to the unkind, “causing his sun to shine upon the evil and the good:” and surely he who hath mercy for an enemy, cannot deny it unto a child. “Can a mother forget her sucking child? Yea, she may forget; yet will I not forget thee, saith the LORD.” (*Isa.* xlix. 15.)—He suffered,

4. To restore us to a most sure and everlasting inheritance in heaven. “If a son, then an heir of God through CHRIST.” (*Gal.* iv. 7.) And here is the complement of all; not only absolved from the guilt of sin, reconciled to God, and put into the relation of a child of God; but after all this, to be everlastingly fixed in a blessed condition to all eternity: and all this from the condition of a most vile,



sinful, lost creature, and by such a price as the blood of CHRIST. More need not, cannot be said.

(VIII.) And by what hath been said, it is easy to see what the Fruits and Effects of all this are. GOD will not be disappointed in the end of so great a work, and therefore we cannot be disappointed in the fruits of it; and those are either such as are enjoyed in this life, or principally in that which is to come. Those benefits which naturally arise from CHRIST Crucified, and are enjoyed in this life, are these:—

1. Justification and acceptance in the sight of GOD. He looks upon us as those who satisfied his justice when his SON suffered: so that as the LORD imputed our sins to our REDEEMER, so he imputes his righteousness unto us; and as he was well pleased with him, so he was well pleased in him with as many as are received into this covenant.

2. Peace with GOD. This is the natural consequence of the former: “Being justified by faith, we have peace with GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.” The only cause of breach between GOD and his creature is sin; and this being quite removed, the enmity between GOD and his creature is removed, and peace and love are restored between them.

3. Peace, consequently, with ourselves, and our own conscience; and that upon a double ground: (1.) Because our conscience is sprinkled by the blood of CHRIST, which defaceth all guilt: (2.) Because conscience ever sideth with GOD, whose vicegerent she is in the soul, and hath the very same aspect, for the most part, which heaven hath; and therefore if it be clear above, it is quiet within; and if GOD speaks peace, the conscience doth not speak trouble.

4. Sufficient grace to preserve us from, or support us in, or deliver us out of temptations. We stand more in need of grace, than we do of our bread: because the consequence of the want of the former is of more danger than the latter, by so much as the soul is more valuable than the body. And if our Father is pleased to furnish us

with our daily bread, how shall he deny us our daily supplies of his grace? Especially since our interest therein is founded upon the covenant made in the blood of CHRIST.

5. A gentle and merciful pardoning of our failings; even as a father pitieth and pardoneth the infirmities of a child, and, though he doth not dispense with presumptuous offences, yet forgives their many infirmities. And it is a privilege of high concernment to us, that as in our first conversion the blood of CHRIST washeth away a whole life of sins at once, so after our conversion the same fountain stands open; whereunto we may and must resort, to cleanse our daily failings. CHRIST, received by faith in the heart, is a continual sacrifice, which I may present unto the FATHER, for my sins committed after my conversion.

6. A comfortable and sanctified use of all conditions: in prosperity, moderation; in adversity, contentedness; in all, sobriety. For as our LORD hath purchased for us grace to use all things aright, so he hath obtained for us an inheritance which renders the best the world can give us unworthy to be valued, and the worst it can give us unworthy to be feared, in respect of the blessedness which he hath settled upon us.

7. A lively hope; a "hope that maketh not ashamed," even of that glory which my SAVIOUR came from heaven to purchase by his blood, and the assurance whereof he hath sealed with his blood; "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also;" (*John* xiv. 2, 3;) a hope of a blessed resurrection after death; a hope of that blessed appearance of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST; a hope of that glorious sentence in the presence of men and angels, "Come, ye blessed;" and a hope of everlasting blessedness and glory, in the presence of the great GOD, to all eternity. And the efficacy of this hope, dipped in the blood of CHRIST, brings us victory:

(1.) Victory over sin. "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

“He that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

(2.) Victory over the world;—in the best it can afford us, its flatteries and favours; for these are too small and inconsiderable, when compared with this hope; they shine like a candle in the sun, and are ineffectual to win over a soul that is fixed upon this hope;—and victory over the worst the world can inflict; for our LORD hath conquered the world in this respect for us; “Be not afraid, I have overcome the world;” (*John* xvi. 33;) and he hath also conquered it in us; “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.”

(3.) Victory over death; which now, by means of this blessed hope, is stripped as well of his terror as of his power: Thus, “Thanks be unto GOD, who giveth us the victory through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

And now, though the nature of this argument hath carried my meditations to a great height; yet, to avoid mistakes, some things I must subjoin.

1. That when I thus aggravate the sufferings of our LORD, yet we must not think his sufferings were the same with those of the damned, either in kind or degree; for this could neither consist with the purity of his nature, or the dignity of his person: but he suffered as much as was consistent with these considerations; and as, considering the dignity of his person, was equivalent to the demerits of all mankind.

2. That his righteousness imputed to us doth not exempt us from having a righteousness inherent in us. This were to disappoint the end of his suffering, which was to redeem us “from our vain conversation,” and make us “a peculiar people zealous of good works.”

3. That this purchase of salvation by CHRIST for believers, is not to render them idle, or secure, or presumptuous: where there is such a disposition of soul, it is an evident indication that it is not yet truly united unto CHRIST by faith and love: his grace is sufficient to preserve us, and always ready to do it, if we do not wilfully neglect or reject it.

## OF AFFLICTIONS.



JOB v. 6, 7.

*Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.*

JOB's friends, though in his particular case they were mistaken, yet were certainly wise and observing men; and many of their sentences were full of excellent truth, particularly this speech of ELIPHAZ, which contains these two propositions:—

1. That the general state of man in this world is a state of trouble and affliction; and it is so incident to all mankind, that it seems almost as universal as the natural propension in sparks to fly upward.

There is no person, of whatsoever age, sex, condition, degree, quality, or profession, who hath not a part in this common state of mankind; and although some have a greater portion of it than others, and some have greater and longer intermissions and allays thereof than others, yet none are totally exempt: yea, it is rare to find any man, who hath had the ordinary extent of the age of man, but his troubles, crosses, calamities, and afflictions, have exceeded the measure of his comforts and contentments in life.

2. That yet those afflictions and troubles do neither grow up by a certain regular and constant course of nature, as plants and vegetables do out of the ground, neither are they merely accidental; but they are sent, directed, and managed, by the conduct and guidance of the most wise Providence of GOD: And this he proveth in the sequel of this Chapter.

And as in all things in nature the most wise God doth nothing at random, so this part of his providential dispensations he doth exercise with excellent wisdom, and for excellent ends, even for the advantage of mankind in general, and particularly of those that seem most to suffer by them; sometimes to punish, sometimes to correct, sometimes to prevent, sometimes to heal, sometimes to prepare, sometimes to humble,—always to instruct, and teach, and better the children of men.

And indeed, if there were no other end but these that follow, this sharp providence of Almighty God would be highly justified; namely, First, to keep men humble and disciplinable. Man is a proud vain creature; and were that humour constantly fed with prosperity and success, it would strangely puff him up. Afflictions are the necessary correctives of it, and prick this swelling imposthume of pride and haughtiness, which would otherwise render men intolerable in themselves and one to another. Secondly, to bring mankind to acknowledge God, to seek unto him, and to depend upon him. This is the most natural effect of afflictions. “In their afflictions they will seek me early.” (*Hos.* v. 15.) The rough and stubborn mariners, in a storm, will cry every one to his god. Thirdly, to tutor the children of men in this great lesson, That their happiness lies not in this world, but in a better; and by these plain and sensible documents, to carry mankind up to the end of their beings. God knows that the few and little comforts of this life, notwithstanding all the troubles with which they are intermixed, are apt to keep the hearts of men in too great love of this world. What would become of us, if our whole lives here should be altogether prosperous, without the intermixture of crosses and afflictions?

Now since the state of mankind in this world is for the most part thus cloudy and stormy, and that ordinarily we can expect it to be no otherwise, there are the following considerations with which it becomes every wise and good mind to acquaint himself.

I. What preparation is fittest to be made by every man before they come.

II. How they are to be received and improved, when they come, and while they are incumbent.

III. What is the best temper of mind when any of them are removed.

I. Touching the first of these, preparation before they come ; the best preparatives seem to be these :—

1. A sound conviction and consideration of this most certain truth, “That no man, how good, pious, or wise soever, can by any means expect to be exempt from them, but must be more or less subject to affliction, of one kind or other, at one time or another, in one measure or another.” This certain truth will be evident, if we consider the several kinds of affliction that are common to mankind: And herein I shall forbear the instances which concern our childhood and youth, as such. These, however, are subject to afflictions, which, though they seem not such to men of riper years, yet are as real and pungent, and sensibly grievous to them, as those that seem of greater moment to men of riper years. But I shall apply myself to those instances which are more evident, and of which those that have the exercise of reason may be more capable.

Afflictions seem to be of two kinds, *Common Calamities*, befalling a nation, city, or society of men, and *Personal Calamities*, which concern a man in his particular estate.

Touching the former of these, namely, *Common Calamities*, such as wars, devastations, famines, pestilences, spreading contagious diseases, and great conflagrations, experience daily shows us, that they involve in their extent the generality of men, good and bad, pious and profane. And although the gracious God is sometimes pleased, for ends best known to himself, strangely to rescue some out of a common calamity, yet it is that which I do not know how any man can promise himself, though otherwise ever so pious and just; because I find not that any where, under the evangelical dispensation, God hath promised to any person any such immunity. If a man receive any such blessing

from God, he is bound eminently to acknowledge it as a signal intervention of the divine mercy; but it is not that which a man can reasonably expect.

And upon this consideration, we have just cause to blame two sorts of persons; namely, (1.) Those inconsiderate persons who are ready to censure all such as fall under a common calamity, whether of fire, sword, or pestilence, as if they were therefore greater sinners than those who escape; —the error reproved by our SAVIOUR in the instance of the Galileans, and of those upon whom the tower of Siloam fell. (2.) Those who, upon an opinion of their own righteousness or desert, think themselves exempted from the stroke of common calamities, or are ready to accuse the divine justice if they are not delivered from them. If they truly considered the just demerit of every sin, and their own sins or failings, they would acknowledge the goodness of God, if he reserve an eternal reward of their obedience, though he expose them to the worst of temporal evils.

Concerning *Personal Evils*, they are of several kinds; (1.) Such as befall the body: (2.) Such as befall the estate: (3.) Such as befall the name: (4.) Such as befall a man's friends or relations.

(1.) Touching the first of these evils, namely, that befall the body, they are of two kinds. Some are not epidemical or universal; such as accidental hurts, diseases springing from the particular complexion of persons, hereditary diseases, diseases incident to certain ages, and infectious diseases arising from an ill disposition of the air or waters. Other diseases are incident to every man in the world. If a man lives to old age, his very age is a disease, and the decay of natural heat and moisture doth in time bring the oldest man to his end: he meets with some disease or other that makes way for his dissolution. So that upon the whole, though this or that man may not meet with this or that particular disease, yet, as sure as he is mortal, so sure shall some disease, casualty, or weakness, bring him to the dust of death.

(2.) Touching afflictions that particularly concern a

man in his estate, it is true that some are more afflicted in this kind than others. The more wealth any man hath, the more he is obnoxious to losses; and the more any man loves wealth, the deeper this affliction wounds him. And this is generally true in all worldly matters whatsoever; the more a man's heart is set upon them, the more bitter the affliction is therein. But though afflictions in this kind pinch some more closely than others, yet there are very few who totally escape them. The poor man reckons it his affliction that he wants wealth; and the rich man is not without his affliction, either in the loss of it, or the fear of such loss, which creates as real a trouble as the loss itself. Fire and shipwreck, envy and oppression, false accusations, robbers, a prodigal heir, or a false friend,—thousands of such like avenues there are to a rich man's treasure; and either they actually attach it, and then they cause sorrow, or continually menace it, and so cause fear. Nay, sometimes a rich man hath as great an affliction in not knowing where or how to dispose of his wealth, as he hath that wants it.

(3.) Touching affliction in the name. Of all things in the world, a good name is most exposed to injury, from a false accusation, a false report, or an action or word misinterpreted. A man hath no security of his wealth against invasions of others; but he hath much less security touching his name, because it is in the keeping of others more than of the man himself; and it is visible to every man, that he that hath the greatest name is most exposed to the envy, and therefore to the detraction and calumnies of others; and he that values his reputation most, is more easily blasted, and more deeply wounded by a calumny, than he that hath little reputation, or that esteems it lightly.

(4.) Touching friends. There are two things which induce the loss of friends: First, that which seems casual, yet very common, whereby either friends become enemies, or at least grow into neglect; which is sometimes done by misrepresentations, by false reports, by differences in matters of interest, or by the declination of a man's condition: Secondly,



that which is certain : Death takes a man's friends and relations from him, or him from them : the more friends and relations any man hath, the more losses of them or in them he shall necessarily have ; because every one of them is subject to all those casualties that any one of them is subject to, whether in estate, name, or body ; and consequently, the more friends and relations, the more crosses and calamities : every bitter arrow that wounds any of them glanceth upon me, and makes my wounds the more, by how much the more friends and relations I have ; and makes them the deeper, by how much the nearer or dearer those friends or relations are to me. It is true, that in a multitude of dear friends and relations there is a communication of more comforts ; but since generally the scene of every man's life is fuller of crosses than comforts, the afflictions of my many friends or relations outbalance and overweigh those comforts.

And these crosses and afflictions in body, estate, name, and friends, though possibly they may not all come together, or, in their perfection, at one time, upon any one man ; yet as no man is exempt from any of them at any time, so sometimes they have fallen in together, even upon some of the best men. Witness **JOB**, who at one time suffered the loss of all his children, of all his servants, of all his goods, of his great and honourable esteem among men, and of his health ; and, besides all this, lay under severe afflictions in his mind, and under the imputation of being a hypocrite with his best and most judicious friends.

Upon all this a man may and ought to conclude, “ That even the most sincere piety cannot give any man an exemption from afflictions of some or indeed of any kind.”

2. The second preparative against affliction is, a frequent supposition, even in the time of our greatest prosperity, that the case may and probably will be altered with us ; by which we are led to cast ourselves as it were into the mould of an afflicted condition. For instance,—I am now in health : What if I were now to enter into the valley of the shadow of death ; into some acute and painful disease ? How am I

fitted with patience, resignation, and contempt of the world? Such an estate as this I must come to sooner or later: How shall I carry myself under it?—I have now affluence: What if at this moment I were bereft of all, how could I submit to poverty and want?—I have now a good husband, wife, children, and many friends: What if God should, in a moment, deprive me of all these? What if my dearest friends should become my bitterest enemies; how should I bear myself under these changes?—I have a name in the world: What if in a moment a black cloud of scorn and reproach were drawn over it; how should I comport with such a condition?

These and the like anticipations of troubles would habituate our minds to them, render them easy to us when they come, and keep our souls in a state of watchfulness before they come.

3. The next preparative is to keep piety, innocence, and a good conscience, before affliction comes. As sin is the sting of death, so it is the sting of affliction, and that which gives it the greatest bitterness and strength; and the reason is this, because it weakens and disables that part in man which must bear and support it. This is what the wise man observes, “The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmities; but a wounded spirit who can bear?” (*Prov.* xviii. 14:)—Which is no more than this; it is the spirit of man rightly principled that doth carry him through difficulties and afflictions; but if that spirit be hurt or wounded, what is there left in a man to bear them? Innocence and a good conscience keep the spirit of a man in confidence; and indeed they have an influence, and attestation, and support from the God of heaven, to whom a good conscience can with an humble confidence appeal; and this access to ALMIGHTY God doth give new supplies and strength to the soul, to bear it up under pressing afflictions. But on the other side, sin doth disable the soul to bear affliction, till it be thoroughly repented of: (1.) Because it doth weaken the spirit of a man, and makes it cowardly and unable to bear itself up under the pressure:

(2.) It doth obstruct the intercourse between God and the soul, and that influence which might and would otherwise be derived to the spirit of a man from the God of the spirits of all flesh. .

Therefore the best preparative against affliction is, to have the soul as clear as may be from the guilt of sin : (1.) By an innocent and watchful life in the time of our prosperity : Or, (2.) at least, by a speedy and hearty repentance for sin ; and this before affliction come. For although it is true, that at many times affliction is the messenger of God to awaken a sinner to repentance, and repentance is even then accepted by the merciful God, yet that repentance is most kindly and easy, and renders afflictions less troublesome, which prevents affliction, and performs one great end of it before it comes. He that hath a soul cleansed by faith from the guilt of sin, before the affliction comes upon him, hath but one work to do, namely, to fit himself with patience to undergo the shock : but when a man defers his repentance till driven to it by affliction, his work is double, namely, to begin his repentance, and to bear his affliction.

4. The next preparative against affliction is an humble mind. When affliction meets with a proud heart, there ariseth more trouble, tumult, and disorder, in the contest of such a heart against the affliction, than possibly can arise from the affliction itself ; and the struggling of pride with the affliction galls and entangles the mind more than the severest affliction, and renders a man unfit for it and unable to bear it. The Prophet says, “ Her sons at the head of every street were like a wild bull in a net.” (*Isa.* li. 20.) But on the other side, an humble mind is calm and patient, and falls with ease upon an afflicted condition ; for the truth is, the great evil of suffering is not so much in the thing a man suffers, as in the temper of the man that meets with it.

5. Another singular preparation against affliction, is a steady resignation of a man’s self to the will and good pleasure of God ; and that upon grounds of the greatest

reason imaginable. For, (1.) It is a most sovereign will: his will must be done whether we will or not; therefore it is the highest folly imaginable to contend with him. (2.) As it is the most sovereign will, so it is the most wise will: his will is founded upon and directed by infinite wisdom. And since thou canst not judge thy will wiser than his, it becomes thee to resolve thy poor, narrow, inconsiderate will into the will of the most wise God. (3.) As it is a most wise will, so the will of God is most certainly the best will. His will alone gave thee thy being, that he might communicate his goodness to that being of thine, which he freely gave thee. It may be, thou dost not see the reason of his dispensations; yet resign thyself up to his disposal, and rest assured that it shall be best for thee, though thou yet canst not understand what it means. If thou resign thy will to his, be confident that he will never mislead thee, nor give thee cause to repent of trusting him.

6. I shall conclude with that great preparative, which includes all,—Labour to get thy peace with God, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. When this is once attained, thou art set above the love of the world, and the fear of afflictions, because thou hast the assurance of a greater treasure than this world can give or take away; “a kingdom that cannot be moved;” (*Heb. xii. 28*;) a most assured expectation which is above the region of afflictions, and which renders the greatest affliction light. And yet because thou art, notwithstanding this glorious expectation, in this lower region, and subject to passions and fears, the merciful God hath engaged his promise to support thee under them; to improve thee by them; and to carry thee through them by his all-sufficient grace: The strokes thou receivest are directed, governed, and ordered by him, in very love and faithfulness: He hath a heart of compassion and love to thee, even when he seems in his Providence to frown upon thee; while thou art under them, he will make them work together for thy good, and will never take from thee those everlasting mercies which are thy portion. And as on the one side he will never suffer thee to be afflicted beyond what

he gives thee grace to bear ; so on the other hand he will so order and govern thy light afflictions, which are but for a moment, that in the end they shall bring thee a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

II. I come to the second general head, namely, How afflictions incumbent upon us are to be received and improved. And this will be in great measure supplied by what hath been said touching our preparation of heart before they come ; for a mind so prepared will be sufficiently qualified to receive them as becomes a Christian. Nevertheless, something I shall subjoin : and,

1. It becomes a man under afflictions, in the first place, to have a very diligent consideration concerning Almighty God, that he is a God of infinite wisdom, power, justice, mercy, and goodness ; that he hates not any thing that he hath made, but hath a great love to all his creatures ; that he designs their good, even in those dispensations that seem most severe ; that if he had not a good-will to his creatures, he would never have done so much for them ; that whilst he exerciseth discipline to the children of men, it is evident they are under his care ; that oftentimes there is greater severity in his leaving mankind to themselves, than in exercising them with afflictions ; and that he equally discovers the love and care of a father in his corrections, as in his more pleasing administrations.

2. And farther, let him consider, that afflictions rise not out of the dust, but are sent and managed by the wise disposition of God ; it is his Providence that sends them, and measures out their kind, weight, and continuance ; and they are always, as commissioned by him, so also under the conduct of his power, wisdom, and goodness, and never exceed the line of his power, wisdom, and goodness ; if he bids them go, they go ; if he bids them return, they return ; if he says to the most tempestuous storms of afflictions, "Peace, be still," there will be a calm : as mankind is never out of the reach of his power to afflict and correct, so it is never out of the reach of his power to relieve and recover.

3. Consider that, as no man hath an exemption from

afflictions, so it is evident the best of men are visited with them. And it is necessary that they should; for where one man is the worse by afflictions, a thousand are the worse for want of them; and the wise and gracious God, who knows our frame better than we ourselves, doth for the most part in very faithfulness afflict us. The divine counsels have ever in them a complication of excellent ends, even in afflictions themselves: they are acts of justice oftentimes to punish, and of mercy to prevent distempers and to heal them; and this is that lot which our blessed LORD bequeathed his own people, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." (*John* xvi. 33.) So that a good man may have as great cause to suspect his own integrity in the absence of them, as in suffering them.

4. Consider that, all the divine dispensations of comforts or crosses are beneficial or hurtful as they are used:—comforts, if they make us thankful, sober, and faithful, become blessings; if they make us proud, insolent, secure, and forgetful, they become judgments:—afflictions, if they are received with humility, patience, and returning to God, are blessings; if they are received with murmuring or impatience, they become judgments.

5. These considerations evidently lead us to the following duties, whenever we are under the pressure of affliction:—

(1.) To receive it with all humility, as reached out unto us from the hand, or permission at least, of Almighty God. A stubbornness under affliction renders it useless to its end, and commonly provokes the great LORD and FATHER OF SPIRITS totally to reject such a mind, or to master it with sharper and severer and multiplied afflictions, till it yield, and till that uncircumcised heart be humbled, and accept of the punishment of its iniquity.

(2.) To receive it with patience and subjection of mind; and without either contending with God, charging his Providence with injustice, or swelling and storming against the affliction, and against the divine dispensation that sends it. This hath two singular benefits; First, it renders the affliction itself more easy and tolerable; Secondly, it is one of the

readiest ways to shorten or abate it. For as yielding and humble submission to the hand of God, so patience and submission to the divine dispensation, are two of the great ends of affliction; and when these are attained by it, it hath performed a great part of its errand.

(3.) To return unto God that afflicteth. Affliction misseth its ends and use when it drives a man from his God, either to evil or unlawful means, or to keep at a distance from him. God sends afflictions like messengers, to call home wandering souls; and if a man will shift away, get farther off, and estrange himself more from him that strikes him, he will either send more importunate messengers, afflictions of a greater magnitude, to call and fetch him, as want and famine did the young Prodigal in the Gospel; or, which is far worse, he will let him go without farther seeking him: whereas the man, who by affliction, as it were at the first call, comes home to God, for the most part prevents severer monitors, and renders his suffering more short, or at least more easy.

And if the affliction befalls a man who hath not estranged himself from God, nor departed from him, yet it is not without its end or use, even to such a man. Thou hast walked closely with God, hast depended upon him, and approved thyself in his sight; yet is it not possible that thy faith, industry, obedience, and dependance, may be more constant, and more firm? If it may be, as sure it may, then though affliction solicit not thy return to him from whom thou hast not departed, yet it solicits thy improvement.

(4.) To pray unto God. And this is the most natural effect of affliction, especially if it be severe. In a storm the sailors call every one upon his God; and the reason is, because in such a season, a man's own shifts, the help and advice of friends, and other human grounds of confidence, appear weak and ineffectual; and therefore the man is driven to the invocation of Almighty God for help, support, and comfort. It is therefore a sign of a desperate mind that will not come unto God in prayer, at least when afflictions grind him; and although a man be not of the number of

those who restrain prayer before GOD, yet afflictions naturally will make the prayer of such a man more earnest, fervent, and constant; it sets an edge, and adds life, to the prayers of a praying man.

(5.) To trust in GOD, both for support under, and deliverance from afflictions. Depend upon his goodness and mercy, even under the blackest night of afflictions: "Though he kill me, yet will I put my trust in him." Even in the valley of the shadow of death, rest upon his rod and his staff. And though it becomes the best of men to have a yielding and a soft spirit under the afflicting hand of GOD, yet be careful to bear up thyself on the power and goodness of GOD from fainting and despondence.

(6.) To be thankful to GOD under affliction; and that upon very great and important motives.—Be thankful that they are no worse. Thou hast losses, but yet hast thou lost all at once? JOB did. Or if thou hast lost all externals, yet hast thou not something which thou valuest more than all, namely, innocence, and peace with GOD and thy own conscience?—Be thankful that GOD rather chooseth to afflict thee, than to forsake thee. As long as GOD is pleased to afflict thee, it is plain that thou art under his discipline, and his care. No man's condition is desperate, so long as the physician continues his administration: nor is any man wholly forsaken of GOD, so long as he is under affliction; for it is a medicine that without thy own default will either recover or better thee.—Be thankful that GOD hath been pleased to discover so much of his design towards mankind, in his Word, as to assure us that the measure of his love towards, or displeasure against the children of men, is not to be taken by prosperity or adversity: but on the contrary, to bear up our souls under afflictions, he assures us that they are the effects of his fatherly love, rather than of his heavy displeasure; that they may indeed sometimes be symptoms of his anger, but not of his hatred; they may be for corrections, but not for confusion: he may correct those, whom yet he accounts his children, and resolves to save.

(7.) To put us upon a due examination of our hearts and ways. Certainly the best man living, upon a strict



and impartial search of himself, may find fuel for affliction; demerit enough to deserve it; somewhat amiss which requires amendment; some corruptions, some errors, which stand in need of physic to cleanse them; some budding disorders which stand in need of a medicine to prevent them. It is the great business of affliction, the great message which it brings from God to man, to search out what is amiss, and what is defective; to ransack our souls, and hearts, and lives, and search whether there be not something offensive to God.

(8.) If, upon an impartial scrutiny, thou find thy conscience clear from great and wasting sins, humbly bless God for his grace, which hath preserved thee from the great transgression; but yet humble thyself for thy sins of daily incursion, for thy sins of omission, for thy coldness in thy devotions, for thy want of vigilance over thy passions, for thy neglect of opportunities of doing good. Thou hast matter of thankfulness for escaping those greater sins; yet thou hast matter of humiliation for those sins whereunto thy inadvertence renders thee liable, and shouldest set a stricter watch upon thyself even in reference to these. On the other side, if thou find thyself guilty of any great sin, which hath not been repented of, thy affliction brings a double message: first, a message calling thee to humiliation and repentance for thy great transgression, and to turn to God with a perfect resolution of amendment; and, secondly, a message of thankfulness to God, who hath sent this messenger to awaken thee to repentance and amendment, and hath given thee an assurance of pardon upon thy repentance and faith, through the all-sufficient sacrifice of CHRIST JESUS.

(9.) To wean a man from the love of the world, and to carry up our thoughts, and hopes, and desires, to that country whereunto we are appointed. If all things went well even with good men in this life, they would be building tabernacles here, and setting up their rest on this side of Jordan, as the Reubenites did in the country of Bashan. God therefore in mercy makes this world unpleasing by affliction, that they may set the less value upon it, and

fix their hopes, and desires, and endeavours on that city which is above.

This is the voice of the rod, and of him that hath appointed it, which every wise man ought to hear and answer with all obedience, submission, and thankfulness; and when affliction hath wrought this effect, its business is in great measure ended, and for the most part it is eased or removed.

III. I come to the third general consideration, namely, the temper which becomes us after deliverance from afflictions.

1. Upon our deliverance from afflictions, we ought, in a special and solemn manner, to return our humble and hearty thanks to God; to acknowledge him to be the author of it; and to return unto him our humble and serious praises, that he hath been pleased to answer our prayer. As he in a special manner requires our prayers when we are under affliction, so he requires that we should take notice of the returns of prayers, and pay him the tribute of praise upon our deliverance. "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." (*Psalms* l. 15.) The truth is, when we are under extremities, we are easily persuaded to call to God for deliverance: but as soon as the rod is gone, we are backward in returning glory to God; and we are most apt to take notice of the means that immediately went before. If we are delivered from sickness, we have it presently upon our tongues' ends, that we had a careful or skilful physician, a strong constitution, or favourable weather, or that some lucky accident happened to us; and the like we are apt to do upon other deliverances, and rarely acknowledge the hand of God to be that which raised us up. It is true, means are not to be neglected; but it is the Providence of God which gives us means, and the blessing of God that makes them successful. He sometimes blesseth poor, and weak, and unlikely means; sometimes he maketh those things we call accidents, that seem to import the destruction of a man, the means of his recovery; and sometimes he brings about the effect without any visible means. We are no less to acknowledge his goodness and influence, when we seem to

be delivered by means, than if we were to be delivered by miracle. We are apt to fasten our thoughts upon means, because we see them : but if our eyes could be so opened as those of the Prophet's servant were, when he saw the chariots of fire in the mountain, we should see another kind of ordering and disposing of things than we now see. Many, if not most, of those signal deliverances which a man or a nation hath, are wrought not so much by the efficacy of means, as by a secret and invisible hand which we see not. If therefore thou art delivered from any great distress of any kind, in such a manner that thou canst not attribute it to means, or possibly above or beyond means, the hand of thy Deliverer is more signal ; glorify his mercy and goodness. And if thou dost obtain thy deliverance by means, yet still glorify his mercy ; for it is his Providence which sends means, and his goodness which blesseth them to its desired success : the energy of the principal cause is that which gives efficacy to the means, and makes them effectual.

2. Endeavour to express thy thankfulness by a sincere and faithful obedience to the will of that God who hath thus delivered thee. True thankfulness will not content itself with bare verbal praises, but will study and endeavour to find out and do all that may be well-pleasing to our great Benefactor. And wherever the heart is truly affected with the sense of the goodness and love of God, and feels that the deliverance it had was from his hand, it will think nothing too much to be done that may be well pleasing to him.

3. Take heed lest, after a great deliverance, thy heart be lifted up into a conceit of thy own worth. This is the common temptation that grows upon much mercy received ; and therefore the wise Lawgiver did frequently caution Israel against this : " Speak not in thy heart, after the LORD thy God hath cast them out, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me to possess this land." (*Deut. ix. 4.*) Let thy afflictions find thee humble, and let thy afflictions make thee more humble ; but let thy deliverance yet increase thy humility : the more mercy God shows thee, the more humble let thy heart be,

upon a double account: (1.) Thy deliverances do, or should, make thee know Almighty God the more; and the more thou knowest him, the more humble it should make thee: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes have seen thee: wherefore I abhor myself in dust and ashes." (2.) Thou hast need to double thy humility, because upon a great deliverance thou must expect that the assaults of pride and vain glory will be the more busy with thee. And if in all thy preparations for afflictions thou hast studied humility; if under all thy afflictions thou hast improved thy humility; yet if now, upon thy deliverance, thou yieldest to pride and vain glory, thou hast lost all the benefit, both of thy preparations and of thy afflictions, and of thy deliverance also: thou art like an unhappy ship which hath endured the sea, and borne the storm, and yet sinks when she is come into the harbour.

4. And upon the same account be watchful. It is true, thou hast weathered a storm, out of which, by the mercy of God, thou art delivered; but still be upon thy guard; thou knowest not how soon thou shalt meet with another; take heed that it surprise thee not unprovided. Though thou hast endured, it may be, a long and dark storm of affliction, and God hath mercifully delivered thee; yet thou hast no promise from God that thou shalt meet with no more.

These three considerations should keep thee watchful, notwithstanding thy deliverance from great afflictions: (1.) Thou art therefore better prepared to receive it; if it come, it shall not surprise thee unaware. (2.) If any thing be likely to preserve thee under, or from affliction, it is a prepared and watchful mind. If I may so speak, afflictions have no great business with such a man; for he is already in that posture of heart, which affliction is ordinarily sent to give. (3.) There is nothing more likely to procure affliction, than security and unpreparedness of mind;—and that, first, in respect of the goodness and justice of God, who, though with most unblameable justice, yet with singular mercy, is very likely to send affliction to awaken and amend a

man in that state of heart, and to recall him from that tendency to apostasy, which security is apt to bring upon him; secondly, in respect of the malice and vigilance of the great enemy of mankind; who, as he never wants malice, so he often gets permission, to worry a man whom he hath under this advantage of unpreparedness and security.

5. Be careful to keep as great afflictions, so also great deliverances in memory. Most men, upon the fresh receipt of mercy and deliverance, have a quick and lively apprehension of it; and accordingly their thankfulness, and purposes of obedience, are lively and diligent: but as the man is further distant from his deliverance, so the memory of it doth gradually, if not suddenly, vanish. And as the remembrance of the deliverance decays and grows weaker, so do these affections of the soul; the thankfulness grows faint; and so doth the obedience, and so doth the humility, and so doth the watchfulness: and as the water that hath been heated, being removed from the fire, grows by degrees colder and colder, till at last it comes to its old coldness; so in a little time the affliction is forgot, and the deliverance is forgot, and the man is grown into the very same state, as if he had never felt either, and possibly worse. Therefore keep deliverances, and afflictions too, fresh in thy memory; call thyself frequently to account for them; use some expedient that may frequently remind thee of them with all their circumstances; set them down in writing; mention them often; recollect them often; and recollect what were thy thoughts, purposes, and temper, when thy afflictions were upon thee, or thy deliverances freshly given. By thus keeping the memory of these afflictions and these deliverances fresh, with all their circumstances, thou wilt revive, excite, and keep alive, and quick, and active, the same gratitude, the same humility, the same obedience, the same vigilance, which these afflictions or these deliverances wrought in thee when they were fresh with thee. The vigorous perpetuating of the remembrance of them, will be an effectual means to perpetuate the due fruit of them in their life, vigour, and intention.

## OF THE REDEMPTION OF TIME.



I WOULD consider these particulars : I. What that time is which we are to redeem. II. What it is to redeem that time. III. How that time is to be redeemed. IV. Why that time is thus to be redeemed.

I. The first question is, What that time is, which is to be redeemed. The time here meant is, 1. The apt season for any thing to be done ; and then it is properly called Opportunity : It is time for the husbandman to reap his corn, when the corn is ripe, and the weather seasonable : It is time for the smith to forge his iron when it is hot : And so it is time to show mercy when an object of mercy occurs, and a power to give relief. This is that which the Greeks call *καιρός*, or *opportunity*. 2. It is our duration of life in this world, or the time of our life.

II. To redeem time, therefore, implies what follows. 1. In relation to seasons or opportunities : (1.) Diligently to watch and observe all opportunities of doing all the good we may, whether in relation to Almighty God, for his service and glory ; in relation to others, in acts of charity and justice ; or in relation to ourselves, in improvements of knowledge, piety, and virtue. (2.) Industrious to lay hold of all these opportunities, and not to let them slip, but to apply suitable actions to suitable opportunities, when they occur. 2. In relation to the times of our lives ; we are said to redeem our time, (1.) When we constantly employ our time, and leave as few vacuities as possible in it : the opposite to this is idleness, or doing nothing. (2.) When we employ our time

constantly in doing something that is answerable to the value of our time. The opposites to this, are first, the sinful employment of our time, which is worse than idleness : or, secondly, the vain, and impertinent, and unprofitable employment of our time. (3.) When we employ our time not only in things profitable, but in such things as are of greatest importance : and therefore such employments as are of greatest importance ought to take up the greatest part of our time. This is ordinarily called husbanding our time, in resemblance of the husbandman's proceeding with his ground. If the husbandman doth not at all till and sow ground, but is idle ; or if he takes much pains in tilling of his ground, and sows nothing but cockle and darnel ; or if he sows not that which is hurtful, but sows light or unprofitable corn ; or sows that ground with a more unuseful grain, which might be employed to a more noble grain, that would yield more profit ; or if he sows a suitable grain, but observes not the season proper for it ; —that man is an ill husband of his ground. And he that with the like negligence or imprudence husbands his time, is an ill husband of his time, and doth not redeem it. ♪

III. How time is to be redeemed. The particular methods of husbanding time under both the former relations, *viz.*, in relation to opportunity, and in relation to our time of life, shall be promiscuously set down. Now the actions of our lives may be distinguished into several kinds ; and in relation to those several actions will the employments of our times be diversified. 1. There are actions *natural*, such as are eating, drinking, sleep, motion, rest. 2. Actions *civil*, as provision for families, bearing of public offices in times of peace or war, employments in civil vocations, as agriculture, mechanical trades, and liberal professions. 3. Actions *moral*, whether relating to ourselves, as sobriety, temperance, moderation, (though they are rather habits than actions,) or relating to others, as acts of justice, charity, compassion, and liberality. 4. Lastly, actions *religious*, relating to God, as invocation, thanksgiving,

inquiring into his works and will, obedience to his commands, observing the solemn seasons of his worship, and, which must go through and tincture all the rest, fear of him, love to him, and humility and integrity of heart before him : —which is the one thing necessary, and over-weighs all the rest : (1.) In respect of the excellency of the object, Almighty God, to whom we owe our being, and the strength and flower of our souls. (2.) In respect of the nobleness of the end thereby attained ; for, whereas all the rest serve only to this life, the latter hath a prospect to eternal life. (3.) In respect of the nobleness of the temper itself, which hath a universal influence on all the rest of the before-mentioned relations, and advanceth, and improveth, and ennobleth them. It would be too long to prosecute the methods of redeeming the time in relation to all these actions in this sheet of paper ; therefore I shall set down only these generals.

1. We are to neglect no opportunity that occurs to do good ; but, (1.) To watch all opportunities that offer themselves in order thereunto. (2.) To seek for them, if they offer not themselves. (3.) To use them, and not to let them slip.

2. In the coincidence of opportunities of several kinds, we are to prefer those that correspond to the most worthy actions ; and in the coincidence of opportunities for actions of equal moment, to prefer such as are most rare, and unlikely to occur again, before those that are likely more frequently to occur.

3. We are to be very careful to leave no baulks or interspersions of idleness in our lives. Those men that have most employment, and of the most constant nature, cannot but have certain interstices between the varieties of business, which may be fitted with employments suitable to their length or qualities ; and it becomes a good husband of his time to have some business always ready, that may be suitable to the nature and quality of these vacant spaces. An industrious husbandman, tradesman, or scholar, will never want business fitted for occasional



vacancies. GELLIUS's *Noctes Atticæ* have left us an experiment of it: and a Christian, even as such, hath ready employment for occasional interstices in reading and praying. The crumbs and fragments of time should be furnished with their suitable employments; it is precious, and therefore let none of it be lost.

4. Much time might be redeemed in retrenching the unnecessary expenses therefore in our ordinary sleep, dressing, and meals, which, especially in this latter age, and among people of the better sort, are protracted to an immoderate length.

5. Take heed of entertaining vain thoughts, which are a very great consumption of time, and are very incident to melancholy and fanciful persons, whom I have known to sit part of a day projecting what they would do if they had such estates, honours, or places; which humour is much improved by them that lie long in bed in a morning.

6. Visits, made or received, are for the most part an intolerable consumption of time. (1.) Let them not be used in the morning. (2.) If the visits be made to or by persons of impertinence, let them be short, and at such times as may be best spared from what is more useful, *viz.*, at meals, or presently after. (3.) But if the persons to be visited are men of wisdom, learning, or eminence of parts, the visits may be longer, but yet so that the time may be profitably spent in useful discourse.

7. Be obstinately constant to your devotions at certain set times, and be sure to spend the LORD'S day entirely in religious duties proper; and let nothing but an inevitable necessity divert you from it. For, (1.) It is the best and most profitably spent time; it is in order to the great end of your being in this world. (2.) It is in order to your everlasting happiness; in comparison of which, all other businesses are idle and vain; it is that which will give you the greatest comfort in your life, in your sickness, in your death. (3.) It is the most reasonable tribute unto that God who lends you your time; and you are bound to pay it under all the obligations of duty and gratitude: and,

(4.) It is that which will sanctify and prosper all the rest of your time and employments. I am not apt to be superstitious, but this I have certainly and infallibly found true, that by my deportment in my duty towards God, in the times devoted to his service, especially on the Lord's day, I could make a certain conjecture of my success in my secular engagements for the week following: if I were loose and negligent in the former, the latter never succeeded well; if strict, and conscientious, and watchful in the former, I was successful and prosperous in the latter.

8. Be industrious and faithful in your calling. The merciful God hath not only indulged us with a far greater portion of time for our ordinary occasions, than he hath reserved to himself, but also requires our industry and diligence in it. And remember that you observe that industry and diligence, not only as a means to acquire a competency for yourself and your family, but also as an act of obedience to his command; by means whereof it becomes spiritualized into an act of religion.

9. Whatever you do, be very careful to retain in your heart a habit of religion, that may be always about you, and keep your heart and your life always as in God's presence, and tending towards him. This will be continually with you, and put itself into acts, even although you are not in a solemn posture of religious worship; and will lead you to multitudes of religious applications to God, upon all occasions, which will not at all hinder you in your secular engagements, but further you: It will make you faithful in your calling, even by that actual reflection upon the presence and command of the God whom you fear and love: It will make you thankful for all successes and supplies; temperate and sober in all your natural actions; just and faithful in all your dealings; patient and contented in all your disappointments and crosses; and will give a tincture of devotion to all your secular employments, turn natural actions into true religion, and make your whole life an unintermitted life of duty to God. This habit of piety will not only not lie sleeping and inactive, but almost

every hour will put forth actual exertions in short occasional prayers, thanksgivings, or acts of resort unto that God who is always near you, and lodgeth in your heart by his fear and love. And by this means you do effectually and doubly redeem your time: (1.) In the lawful exercise of those natural and civil concerns which are not only permitted, but in a great measure enjoined by Almighty God. (2.) In exercising acts of religious duties, observance, and veneration to Almighty God, by perpetuated, or at least frequently reiterated, acts of devotion to him. And this is the great art of christian chymistry, to convert those acts which are materially natural or civil into acts truly and formally religious; whereby the whole course of this life is a service to Almighty God, and an uninterrupted state of religion, which is the best, noblest, and most universal redemption of our time.

And now, if a man shall take a survey of the common course even of the Christian World, he shall find the generality of mankind the veriest children, fools, and madmen, that ever nature yielded. The very folly of children, in spending their time in rattles and hobby-horses, is more excusable than theirs, whose reason and experience should better instruct them. There is not any man so senseless, but he knows he must die, and he knows not how soon he shall hear of that sad summons; and if he were so brutish as not to think of it, or believe it, yet the weekly bills of mortality give him daily instances of it: and yet if we do but observe the world of men, they do for the most part wholly trifle away their time in doing that which is evil; or in doing nothing; or in doing nothing to any purpose, or becoming a reasonable nature. One man trifles away his time in feasting and jollity; another in gaming, hunting, hawking, bowling; another in dressing; another in hunting after honours and preferments, or heaping up riches, and loading himself with thick clay; another in trivial speculations, possibly touching some criticism or grammatical nicety; and all these men wonderfully pride themselves, as the only wise men; and when they

come to die, all these prove either tortures of a mispent time; or, at least, by the very appearance of sickness and death, are rendered poor, empty, insipid, and insignificant things.

But the great misery of mankind is this; they cannot, or will not, in the time of health, anticipate the consideration of death and judgment to come; nor consider that the time will come when things shall be otherwise with them than now, or that they shall be driven into another kind of estimate of things than that which they have now: and this their way is their folly. Man being in honour, in health, in life, understandeth not, but becomes like the beasts that perish.

IV. I come to the reasons why we ought thus to redeem our time.

1. Our time is a talent put into our hands by the great **Lord** of the whole family of heaven and earth, whereof we are to give an account when our Master calls; and it will be a lamentable account, when it shall consist only of such items as these:—

*Item,* So much of it spent in plays, and taverns, and gaming.

*Item,* So much in sleeping, eating, and drinking.

*Item,* So much in recreations and pastimes.

*Item,* So much in getting wealth and honour.

*And there remains so much which was spent in doing nothing.*

2. Our time is a universal talent. Every man hath not a talent of learning, or of wealth, or honour; but every man that lives to the age of discretion hath time to account for.

3. Every man hath not only a talent of time, but every man hath a talent of opportunity to improve his talent, in some measure, put into his hand. The principles of natural religion are lodged in the hearts of all men; which any man might exercise to some acts of service and religion towards God. But the Christian hath much more.

4. Upon the management of our time depend the everlasting concerns of our souls. *Ex hoc momento pendet*

*æternitas*. If it be redeemed, improved, and employed as it ought to be, we shall, the next moment after death, enter into an immutable, eternal, and perfect state of glory; if it be either sinfully or idly spent, we fall into an everlasting, irrecoverable, and unchangeable state of misery.

5. The business we have to do in this life, in order to the cleansing of our souls, and fitting them for glory, is a great and important business; and the time we have to live hath two most dangerous qualities in reference to that business.

(1.) It is *short*: Our longest period is seldom above eighty years, and few there be that arrive to that age.

(2.) It is *uncertain*: There are infinite accidents and distempers, which cut us off suddenly; as acute diseases, such as scarcely give us any warning: and considering how many strings, as it were, there are to hold us up, and how small and inconsiderable they are, and how easily broken, and that the breach or disorder of any of the least of these may be an inlet to death, it is a kind of miracle that we live a month. Again, there are many diseases which render us in a manner dead while we live, as apoplexies, palsies, frenzies, stone, and gout, which render our time either grievous or useless to us.

6. As our time is short, so there be many things that waste that short time; so that there remains but little that is serviceable to our best employment. Let us but take out of our longest lives the weakness and folly of childhood and youth, the impotency of old age, the times for eating, drinking, and sleeping, though with moderation, the times of sickness, cares, journey, and travels, the times for interview of friends and relations, and a thousand such expenses of time, and the residue will be but a small pittance for our business of greatest moment; the business, I mean, of fitting our souls for glory.

7. Remember, that this is the very hell of hell to the damned spirits, that they had once a time, wherein they might, upon easy terms, have procured everlasting glory; but they foolishly mispent that time and season, which are now not to be recovered.

## THE GREAT AUDIT.



THE great LORD of the world hath placed the children of men in this earth as his stewards ; and, according to the Parable in *Matthew* xxv., he delivers to every person his talents, a stock of advantages or opportunities ;—to some more, to some less, to all some.

This stock is committed to every person under a trust, or charge, to employ the same in ways, and to ends, and in proportion, suitable to the talents thus committed to him, and to the measure and quality of them.

To the due execution of this trust committed to men, and for their encouragement in it, he hath annexed a reward by his promise, and the free appointment of his good pleasure. This reward is not meritoriously due to the employment of the talent ; for as the talent is the LORD's, so is the strength and ability whereby it is employed ; but by his own good pleasure, and free promise, the reward is knit to the work. Therefore it is not demandable so much on account of the divine justice, as of the divine truth. On the other side, to the mal-administration of this trust there is annexed a retribution of punishment, and this most naturally and meritoriously ; for the law of common justice doth subject the creature, who depends in his being upon his Creator, to the law and will of that Creator ; and therefore, having received a talent from his LORD, and an ability to employ it according to the will of his LORD, a non-employment, or mis-employment thereof, doth most justly oblige him to guilt and punishment.

Of the persons who receive these talents, some employ them well, though in various degrees ; the best husbands

indeed come short of what they should do, and at best are in this respect unprofitable servants ; yet, if there be a faithful and sincere endeavour to employ that talent to their Master's honour, they are accounted good stewards.

On the other side, some persons are unfaithful stewards of their talents, and these are of three kinds :

1. Such as wholly mis-employ their talents ; turning them to the dishonour of their LORD, which they should have employed to his service : and these have a double account to make, *viz.* of their talents, and of their mis-employment.

2. Such as do not at all employ their talent ; but as they do no harm, so they do no good with it : These are negligent servants, and have the single, but full account of the talents to make.

3. Such as do make some use of their talents ; but do not produce an increase proportionable to their stock ; and so, though they are not debtors for their whole talents, yet are in arrear and grown behind-hand, and so upon the foot of their account are found debtors to their LORD, which, without faith in CHRIST, will be enough to cast them into prison, and keep them there to eternity.

And according to these varieties of good or bad administration, are the degrees of Reward or Punishment. He that hath administered his trust well, so that there is a great access of his improvement, hath the greater access of glory ; and he that hath less surplusage upon his account, shall have the less degree of glory : and on the other side, he that hath many talents, and made no improvement, his debt and punishment shall be the greater : He that hath fewer talents, his non-improvement leaves him a debtor in a less sum, and consequently subject to a less punishment.

The Great Day of Account will be the great day of Judgment, when the Lord of the families of the whole earth will call every man to an account of his stewardship here on earth : Wherein we may with reverence suppose the LORD thus to be bespeaking all and every particular person of the world.

## THE CHARGE.

“ Come, ye children of men;—as I have formerly made you stewards of my blessings upon earth, and committed to every one of you that came to the use of your understanding several talents to employ and improve to the honour and service of me your LORD and Master; so now I am come to call you to render an account of your stewardship: and because you shall see the particular charge of your several receipts, whereunto you may give your answers, behold, here are the particulars with which I will charge you. Give in your particular answers, how you have employed and improved them.

1. “ I have given unto you all your senses, and principally those two great senses of discipline, your Sight and your Hearing.

“ *Item*, I have given unto you all Understanding and Reason, to be a guide of your actions; and to some of you more eminent degrees thereof.

“ *Item*, I have given to you all Memory, a treasury of things past, heard and observed.

“ *Item*, I have given you Conscience to direct you, and to check you in all your miscarriages, and to encourage you in well-doing; and I have furnished that conscience with light, and principles of truth and practice, conformable to my will.

“ *Item*, I have laid open to the view of you all the Works of my power and providence, the heavens and the earth, and the conspicuous administration of my wisdom and power in them.

“ *Item*, I have delivered over to your view my more special Providence over the children of men, the dispensation of rewards and punishments, according to their eminent deserts or demerits.

“ *Item*, I have given you the advantage of Speech,



whereby to communicate your minds one to another, and to instruct and benefit one another.

“ *Item*, I have given you Time of Life, to some longer, to some shorter, to all a season wherein you might exercise those other talents with which I have entrusted you.

“ *Item*, I have delivered over unto you the Rule and Dominion over my creatures, allowing you the use of them for your food, raiment, and other conveniences.

“ *Item*, Besides these common talents I have delivered over to *you*, and to *you*, &c. divers special and eminent talents above others, *viz.*

(1.) “ Of the mind: Learning and knowledge in the works of nature ; arts and sciences ; prudence and wisdom in the conduct of affairs ; elocution ; education.

(2.) “ Of the body: A firm and healthy constitution, strength, beauty, and comeliness.

(3.) “ Of Externals: Wealth and riches ; eminence of place, and power, and honour ; reputation and esteem in the world ; success in enterprises and undertakings, public and private ; relations.

(4.) “ Of things of a mixed nature: Christian and liberal education ; advice of faithful and judicious friends ; good laws in the place and country where you lived ; the written Word of God, acquainting you with my will, and the way to eternal life ; the Word preached by able and powerful Ministers ; the Sacraments, both for your initiation and confirmation ; special and powerful motions and impulses of my SPIRIT upon your consciences, dissuading from sin, and encouraging in and to holiness ; special Providences, diverting you from the commission of things contrary to my will, dishonourable to my name, and hurtful to yourselves ; chastisements and corrections, eminently and plainly inflicted for sin committed by yourselves and others, so that the guilt was legible in the punishment ; eminent blessings upon the ways of holiness, even to the view of the world ; eminent deliverances upon repentance and amendment of life ; most clear and sensible experiences of my love, favour, and listening to your

prayers, to encourage you to a dependance upon me ; singular opportunities put into your hands, of instructing the ignorant, delivering the oppressed, and promoting my honour.

“ These are some of the many talents which I have committed to you, though in different degrees : Give up your accounts, ye children of men, how you have employed them.”

## THE ACCOUNT OF THE GOOD STEWARD.

LORD, before I enter into account with thee, I must confess, that if thou shouldest enter into judgment with me, and demand that account which in justice thou mayest require of me, I should be found thy debtor : I confess that I have not improved my talents according to that measure of ability which thou hast lent me : I therefore most humbly offer unto thee the merit of thine own SON, to make good what is wanting in my account ; yet according to thy command, I do humbly render my discharge of the trust thou hast committed to me, as followeth :—

### *I. In General: as to all the Blessings and Talents wherewith thou hast entrusted me.*

I have looked up to thee with a thankful heart, as the only Author and Giver of them. I have looked upon myself as unworthy of them. I have looked upon them as committed to my trust and stewardship, to manage them for the ends for which they were given, the honour of my Lord and Master. I have therefore been watchful and sober in the use of them, lest I should be unfaithful in them. If I have at any time, through weakness, or inadvertency, or temptation, mis-employed any of them, I have been restless till I have in some measure rectified my miscarriage by amendment.

## II. *In Particular: concerning my Senses.*

I have made a covenant with mine eyes, that they should not rove after vanity, or forbidden objects. I have employed them in beholding thy works of wonder and wisdom. I have busied them in reading those books, that might instruct me in the great concerns of eternal life. I have stopped my ears against sinful and unprofitable discourse, and against slandering, tale-bearing, and flattering tongues. I have exercised them in listening to those things that might increase my faith, knowledge, and piety. I have kept them open to the cry of the poor and oppressed. The rest of the employments of these and my other senses have been for my necessary preservation, and the honest exercise of an honest calling.

## III. *As to the Reason and Understanding which thou hast given me.*

I have been careful to govern my senses and appetites by my reason, and to govern my reason by thy Word. I have endeavoured to use it, but not depend upon it: I made it my assistant, but not my idol. I have been careful to wind up my reason and understanding to the highest key in the searching out of truths, but especially those which are of the greatest concern in matters of faith. I have made my understanding laborious and industrious, but still kept it under the yoke and rule of thy Word, lest it should grow extravagant and petulant. I have looked upon my reason as a ray of thy divine light; and therefore I have used it for thee, and have accounted it a most high sacrilege, ingratitude, and rebellion, to employ it against thee. I have endeavoured principally to furnish it with that knowledge which will be of use in the other world; this hath been my business. Other studies have been for the necessary use of this life.

In the exercise of my reason, as, on the one side, I have avoided idleness, supineness, or neglect; so, on the other

side, I have not employed it in vain, curious, unprofitable inquiries ; I have studied to use it with sobriety, moderation, humility, and thankfulness ; and as I have been careful to employ it, so I have been as careful not to misemploy it. I looked upon it as thy talent, and therefore gave unto thee the glory, the use, and the service of it.

#### IV. *As to my Memory.*

On the contemplation of that strange and wonderful faculty, which distinctly, and notwithstanding the intervention of thousands of objects, retains their images and representations, with all their circumstances and consequences, I have admired the wonderful wisdom, power, and perfection of the LORD.

I have endeavoured principally to treasure up in it those things that may be most of use for the life to come ;—thy mercies, commands, directions, promises ; my own vows, resolutions, experiences, and failings ;—to keep me constant to my duty, dependant upon thy goodness, humble, and penitent.

Some things I have studied to forget ;—injuries, vain and hurtful discourses, and such things as either would make me the worse by remembering them, or take up too much room in my memory, which might be stored with better furniture.

The rest of the employment of my memory hath been to assist me in ordinary and necessary conversation with others, the ways of my calling, the performance of my promises and undertakings, and the preservation of good and lawful learning, that thereby I might do service to thy name, serve my generation, and improve myself in knowledge, wisdom, and understanding.

#### V. *As touching my Conscience.*

I. It hath been my care, to furnish it with the best principles I could. Before I had the knowledge of thy Word, I got as much furniture as I could from the writings of the best moralists, and the examples of the

best men; after I had the light of thy Word, I furnished it with those pure and unerring principles which I found in it.

2. I have been very diligent to keep my conscience clear; to encourage in it the vicegerency which thou hast given it over my soul and actions. I have kept it on the throne, and in the greatest reverence and authority in my heart.

3. In actions to be done or omitted, I have always advised with it, and taken its advice; I have neither stifled, nor forced, nor bribed it; but gave it free liberty to advise and speak out, and rendered to it a free subjection of my will, purposes, and actions.

4. If through inadvertency, or importunity of temptations, or precipitancy of occasion, I have at any time done amiss, I have not taken her up short, or stopped her mouth, or refused my own attention to her reproof; but I have, with much submission of mind, borne her chastisement, and improved it to a humbling of myself before thee for my failings; for I looked upon her as acting by thy authority, for thy service, and to thy glory.

5. When she was pleased, I was glad; for I esteemed her as a glass which represented to my soul the savour or displeasure of God himself.

6. I have been more concerned under the fear of a seared or discouraged conscience, than under the fear of a sharp or scrupulous conscience; because I always counted the latter, though more troublesome, yet more safe.

7. I have been very jealous either of wounding, or grieving, or discouraging, or deadening my conscience. I have therefore chosen rather to forbear that which seemed but indifferent, lest there should be somewhat in it that might be unlawful; and would rather gratify my conscience with being too scrupulous, than displease, disquiet, or flat it, by being too venturous. I have still chosen rather to forbear what might be probably lawful, than to do that which might be possibly unlawful; because I could not err in the former, but I might in the latter. If things were disputable whether they might be done, I rather chose

to forbear, because the lawfulness of my forbearance was unquestionable.

8. As I have been careful to advise impartially with my conscience before my actions, so lest, either through inadvertency, precipitancy, or sudden emergencies, I had committed any thing amiss, either in the nature or manner of the action, I commonly, every night, brought my actions of the day past before the judicatory of my conscience, and left her to a free and impartial censure of them; and what she sentenced as well done, I with humility returned the praise of to thy name; what she sentenced as done amiss, I did humbly sue unto thee for pardon of, and for grace to prevent me from the like miscarriages. By this means I kept my conscience active and renewed, and preserved my peace with thee, and learned vigilance and caution for the time to come.

*VI. As touching thy great Works of Creation and Providence.*

1. I have not looked upon thy works inconsiderately, and passed them over as ordinary things; but I have searched into them as things of great eminence and wonder, and have esteemed it a great part of the duty which the wise God of nature requires of the children of men, who therefore exposed these his works to our view, and gave us eyes to behold, and reason in some measure to understand them. And therefore I have strictly observed the frame of the world, and the motion, order, and divine economy of thy works: I have searched into their quality, causes, and operations, and have discovered as great, if not greater, matter of admiration therein, than in the beauty which at the first view they presented to my sense.

2. And this observation did not rest in the bare perusal of the works themselves, or their immediate natural causes; but I traced their being, dependance, and government unto thee, the First Cause; and by this tracing of things to their original, I was led to a demonstrative conviction, that there is a God who is the first cause of their being and motions:

yea, that there is but one **GOD**, and that he is most powerful, most wise, knowing all things, governing all things, supporting all things. Upon these convictions I was strengthened in the belief of thy holy word, which had so great a congruity with these truths.

3. And upon these convictions, I did learn the more to honour, reverence, and admire thee; to worship, serve, and obey thee; to depend upon thee; to walk humbly, and sincerely, and awfully before thee, as being present with me, and beholding me; to love and adore thee, as the fountain of all being and good. When I looked upon the glory and usefulness of the sun, I admired the **GOD** who made it, marked out its motions, and placed it in that due distance from the earth, for its use and conveniency. When I looked upon the stars, those huge and wonderful balls of light, placed in that immense distance from the inferior bodies, and one from another, their multitude and motion, I admired the wisdom and power of that **GOD**, whose hand spans the heavens, and who hath fixed every thing in its place. Nay, when I looked upon the poor little herbs which arise out of the earth; and considered the secret spark of life that is in them, which attracteth, increaseth, groweth, seminateth, and preserveth them and their kinds, with the various virtues which are in them for the food, medicine, and delight of more perfect creatures; my mind was carried up to the adoration and praise of that **GOD**, whose wisdom, power, influence, and government, are seen in these footsteps of his goodness: so that, take all the wisest, ablest, most powerful, and most knowing men under heaven, they cannot equal that power and wisdom which are seen in a blade of grass, nor so much as trace out, or clearly or distinctly decypher, the great varieties in the production, growth, and process of its short yet wonderful continuance. Thus there is scarcely any thing which we converse with, but yielded me inscriptions of the power and wisdom of their Maker, written upon them.

4. In the contemplation of thy great works of the heavens, those goodly, beautiful, and numerous bodies, so

full of glory and light, I ever reflected, "LORD, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou regardest him!" It is true, man in himself considered is a creature full of wonder; but, compared with these goodly creatures, he is but an inconsiderable thing. I learned hereby to be humble, and to adore thy condescension, who art pleased, from heaven, the dwelling-place of thy majesty, to take care of such a worm as man, sinful man.

5. In the contemplation of thy power and wisdom in creating and governing the world, I have learned submission to thy will, as being the will of the same most wise GOD, who by his wisdom hath created and governs all things; I have learned to depend upon thy Providence, who though I am but a worm, in comparison of thy heavenly works, yet am an excellent creature in comparison of the ravens and the grass of the fields; yet those he feeds, and these he clothes, and shall he not much more clothe and feed me? Thus I have in some measure improved the talents of thy works, thereby to trace out thy majesty, and my own duty.

## VII. *Touching thy more special Providences.*

1. As by the works of nature, I have learned what thou art, and something of my duty to thee, so by thy Providence towards the children of men, I have in some measure learned a farther lesson, *viz.*, What thy will is; for thou hast not left thyself without witness thereof to a merely natural man, who observes thy Providence towards the children of men.

I have observed some men of eminent uprightness, temperance and sobriety, mercy and gentleness, patience and forbearance, bounty and liberality; and I have observed them to be very happy men, and blessed in what was most desired by them. It may be they were rich and great; but if they were not, it was because riches and greatness were not the things which they most valued; but I have always observed them to be happy in what they most valued; they had serenity and quietness of mind: if they were not rich, yet they were visibly happy in their con-



tentedness ; and if they were not great, yet they were honourable in the esteem of others ; nay, if they were under external losses, crosses, or reproaches, yet, in the midst thereof, it was most apparent to all men, that they enjoyed that which they more valued, a most composed, cheerful, patient, and contented soul ; and this hath been as visible to all spectators, as if they had enjoyed a full confluence of external happiness. And very many times, unless upon eminent and visible reasons, before the end of their days, they had signal returns of external enjoyments.

I have observed men of notorious and wicked lives, traitors, murderers, oppressors, adulterers, or covenant-breakers, secured by power, policy, or secrecy ; yet, by thy wonderful Providence, that power has been broken, that policy disappointed, that secrecy discovered, and eminent judgments, answerable to their eminent demerits, have overtaken them.

I have observed, both in myself and others, our sins so suitably answered with punishments, which, though they seemed to be produced by strange and casual conjunctures, yet were so exactly conformable to the nature, quality, and degree of the offence, that they carried in them the very effigies of the sins, and made it legible in the punishment.

*Sic ille manus, sic ora gerebat.*

And from these observations I found, that those sins were displeasing to thee ; that thou wert most wise to discover, and most just and powerful to punish them. And I did conclude, “ Verily, there is a reward for the righteous ; verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth.”

### VIII. *Concerning my Speech.*

I have always been careful that I offend not with my tongue : my words have been few, unless necessity or thy honour required more : my words have been true, representing things as they were ; and sincere, bearing conformity to my heart : my words have been seasonable, suitable to the occasion, and seasoned with grace and usefulness.

I have esteemed my words, though transient and passing away, yet treasured up in thy remembrance; for by my words I shall be justified, by my words condemned: and therefore I have reflected often upon my words; and when I have found that any thing, through inadvertency or passion, hath passed from me, I have endeavoured to reform it, and humbled myself before thee for it.

I have esteemed it the most excellent use of my tongue, to set forth thy goodness, power, wisdom, and truth; to instruct others, as I had opportunity, in the knowledge of thee, and in their duty to thee, to themselves, and others; to reprove vice; to encourage virtue; to convince errors; to maintain the truth; to call upon thy name, and by vocal prayers to sanctify my tongue, and to fix my thoughts to the duty in which I was engaged; to persuade others to peace, and charity, and good works; and in these employments I endeavoured to wind up my tongue to the highest degree of elocution, of which I was capable.

I have often contemplated thy wonderful wisdom and goodness to the children of men, in giving them not only reason and understanding, but that admirable faculty of speech, whereby one man might communicate to others his thoughts, and wants, and desires;—the great engine of mutual society, without which our reason and understanding were imprisoned within ourselves, and confusion would ensue, as once it did at the confusion of tongues, by the most wise Providence, for most excellent ends.

### IX. *Touching my Time of Life.*

First, I have duly considered what it is, and for what end thou gavest it to me; that it is but a short time, and that the minutes which are passed, and the opportunities in them, are irrevocably and irrecoverably lost; that all the wealth of the world cannot redeem them; and that the time that is before me is uncertain. When I look upon an hour-glass, or the shadow of a dial, I can guess that there is half an hour, or a quarter, or more or less, to come; but I cannot guess what proportion of time remains in the hour-glass of my life. I only know that it is short; but I

know not how short, whether a year, or a week, or a day, or an hour; and yet upon this little uncertain portion of time, and the due use of it, depends my everlasting happiness or misery. It is my seed-time, and if I sow not my seed here, it is too late to think of that husbandry after death; and if I sow, and sow not good seed, my crop will be thereafter in that other world. And I have a thousand diversions that rob me of much of this little portion of time, and yield me no account in reference to the great concern of my soul's welfare. When I cast out from the account of my time the unprofitableness of my childhood and youth, with the hours spent in sleeping, eating and drinking, travels, and other things that carry no sin in them, there remains but a small portion of a short life for concerns of everlasting importance; a great business to be done, great difficulties in the doing of it, and but a little portion of a short and uncertain life to do it in. And yet this life of mine was by thee given, not to be trifled and squandered away, either in sin or idleness; not to gain riches, honour, or reputation; for when sickness comes, these will appear insipid and vain things; and when death comes, they will be merely useless: but it was for a higher end, *viz.*, A time to trade for the most valuable jewel of eternal happiness; a time to sow such seed as might yield a crop of blessedness in the next world; a time to secure a title to an everlasting inheritance; such a time, as if once lost, the opportunity is lost for ever, lost irrecoverably; for "the night cometh wherein no man can work;" for "there is no work, nor device, nor knowlege, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." (*Eccles. ix. 10.*)

And upon this consideration of the great end of my life, the great importance of the business that is to be done in it, the brevity and great uncertainty of this life, and the utter impossibility after death to redeem the neglect of the important business of my life, I have endeavoured to husband this short, uncertain, important talent as well as I can.

1. By a careful avoiding of sinful employments, which at once waste this precious talent, contract a farther debt upon me, and render me in arrears for the time mis-spent, and the guilt contracted.

2. By avoiding idleness, burning out my candle to no purpose.

3. By avoiding unnecessary consumption of time, by feasting, excessive sleep, impertinent visits, or curious and impertinent studies and inquiries.

4. By applying, directing, and ordering even my studies of human learning, histories, natural or moral philosophy, mathematics, languages, laws to enable me to understand and observe thy excellent wisdom and power, to maintain thy cause against atheism, idolatry, and errors; to fit me for serving thee and my country, in the station wherein I live.

5. By exercising myself in the very business of my calling, as an act of duty and obedience to thee, performing in it those virtues of Christianity that might be honourable to thy name, of good example to others, and of improvement to myself;—using in it diligence without anxiety; dependance upon thee without presumption; contentedness, patience, thankfulness, honesty, justice, uprightness, plain-dealing, and liberality; and by this means translating my secular employment into an exercise of christian duty.

6. By religiously observing those times that have been set apart to religious duties, especially the LORD's day; not mingling with it secular thoughts or employments, but with much attention, strictness, and care, laying hold upon those times and opportunities, and carefully applying them to the proper business of the times.

7. By setting apart some portion of my time for prayer and reading of the word; which I have constantly and peremptorily observed, whatever occasions interposed, or importunity persuaded the contrary.

8. By making the one thing necessary, the business of my life; esteeming that time spent most profitably, which was spent in order to it; observing thy great works of wisdom and power; contemplating thy goodness and excellency; hearing and reading thy word; calling upon thy name; crucifying my corruptions; exercising thy

graces ; humbling myself for my sins ; returning thanks for thy mercies ; studying the mystery of God manifest in the flesh ; striving to conform to my Pattern, and to have him formed in my heart, and his life in mine ; crucifying myself to the world, and the world to me ; fitting myself for death, judgment, and eternity. These, and the like employments I esteemed the flower, the glory, the best of my spent time, because they will be carried over with advantage into the life to come ; and therefore this I reckoned my business, and accordingly I made it such : other matters, which only served for this life, I used either barely for necessity of my present subsistence, or in order to those great ends.

*X. Touching thy Creatures, and the Use of them, and the Dominion over them.*

I have esteemed them as thine in propriety : thou hast committed unto me the use, and a subordinate dominion over them ; yet I ever esteemed myself accountable to thee for them, and therefore I have received them with thankfulness unto thee, the great LORD both of them and me. When the earth yielded me a good crop of corn, or other fruits ; when flocks increased ; when my honest labours brought me in a plentiful or convenient supply, I looked up to thee as the giver, to thy Providence, as the original of all my increase. I did not sacrifice to my own net, or industry, or prudence, but I received all as the gracious returns of thy liberal hand ; I looked upon every grain of corn which I sowed as buried and lost, unless thy power quickened it ; I esteemed the best production but as stalk and straw, unless thou hadst increased it ; I esteemed my own hand and industry but impotent, unless thou hadst blessed it ; for it is thy blessing that maketh rich, and it is thou that givest power to get wealth.

2. I esteemed it my duty to make this my acknowledgement, by giving thee the tribute of my increase in the maintenance of thy Ministers, and the relief of the Poor.

3. I have not only looked upon thy blessing and bounty

in lending me thy own creatures for my use ; but I have sought unto thee for a blessing upon them in my use of them. I did very well observe, that there is by my sin a curse in the very creatures that I receive, unless thy blessing fetch it out ; an emptiness in them, unless thy goodness fill them. Though thou shouldest give me quails and manna from heaven, yet, without thy blessing, they would become rottenness and putrefaction to me ; and therefore I ever begged thy blessing upon thy blessings, as well as the blessings themselves, and attributed the good I found, or was to expect in them, to the same hand which gave them.

4. I received and used thy creatures as committed to me under a trust, and as a steward who was accountable for them ; and therefore I was always careful to use them according to those limits, and in order to those ends, for which thou didst commit them to me : (1.) With temperance and moderation. I did not use thy creatures to excess, to make provision for my lusts, with vain glory or ostentation, but for the convenient support of my nature ; and if at any time thy goodness did indulge me with a use of them for delight, as well as necessity, I did it but rarely and watchfully ; I looked not upon the wine when it gave its colour in the cup, nor gave myself over, either to excess or curiosity in meats or drinks ; I checked myself therein, as being in thy presence, and still remembered that I had thy creatures under an account ; and was ever careful to avoid excess or intemperance, because every unnecessary cup or meal was in danger to leave me somewhat in arrear to my LORD. (2.) With mercy and compassion to the creatures themselves, which thou hast put under my power and disposal. When I considered the admirable power of life and sense which I saw in the birds and beasts, and that all the men in the world could not give the like being to any thing, nor restore that life and sense when once taken from them ; when I considered how innocently the fowls and fish, and sheep and oxen, take their food, which thou the LORD of all hast given them, I have been apt to think

that surely thou didst intend a more innocent kind of food for man, than such as must be taken with such detriment to those living parts of thy creation. And although thy wonderful goodness hath so much indulged mankind, as to give up the lives of these creatures for the food of man by thy express commission, yet I still do, and ever did think, that there was a justice due from man, even to these sensible creatures, that he should take them sparingly, for necessity, and not for delight; or if for delight, yet not for luxury: I have been apt to think, that if there were any more liberal use of creatures for delight or variety, it should be of fruits, or such other delicacies as might be had without the loss of life; but however it be, this very consideration hath made me very sparing and careful, not vainly or superfluously, or unnecessarily, or prodigally, to take away the life of thy creatures. And the very same consideration hath always gone along with me, in reference to the labour of thy creatures. I have ever thought that there was a certain justice due from man to the creatures, as from man to man, and that an excessive, immoderate, unseasonable use of the creatures' labour is an injustice for which he must account. To deny domestic creatures their convenient food, to exact that labour from them which they are not able to perform, or to use cruelty towards them, is a breach of that trust, under which the dominion of the creatures was committed to us, and a breach of that justice which is due from men to them. And therefore I have always esteemed it as part of my duty, and it hath been always my practice, to be merciful to beasts; and upon the same account I have even esteemed it a breach of trust, and have accordingly declined any cruelty to any of thy creatures, and, as much as I might, prevented it in others, as a tyranny inconsistent with the trust which thou hast committed to me. I have abhorred those sports which consist in torturing the creatures: and if either noxious creatures must be destroyed, or creatures for food must be taken, it hath been my practice to do it in that manner, which may be with the least torture to the creature; and I have still thought it an

unlawful thing to destroy those creatures for the sake of recreation, which either were not hurtful when they lived, or are not profitable when they are killed ; ever remembering, that though thou hast given us a dominion over thy creatures, yet it is under a law of justice and moderation, otherwise we should become tyrants, not lords over thy creatures. And therefore those things of this nature, which others have practised as recreations, I have avoided as sins.

As to the knowledge I have had or acquired, namely,

*XI. My Learning of natural Causes and Effects, and of Arts and Sciences ;*

I have not esteemed them the chief or best furniture of my mind, but have accounted them but dross in comparison of the knowledge of Thee, and thy CHRIST, and Him Crucified. In acquiring them, I have always observed this care :—

1. That I might not too prodigally bestow my time upon them, to the prejudice of that time and pains which were necessary for the acquiring of more excellent knowledge, and the greater concerns of my everlasting happiness.

2. I carried along with me, in all my studies of this nature, this great design of improving them, and the knowledge acquired by them, to the honour of thy name, and the greater discovery of thy wisdom, power, and truth ; and so translated my secular learning into an improvement of divine knowledge : and had I not had and practised that design in my acquirements of human learning, I had concluded my time mis-spent ; because I ever thought it unworthy of a man who had an everlasting soul, to furnish it only with such learning as either would die with his body, and so become useless for his everlasting state, or which, in the next moment after death, would be attained without labour. Yet this advantage I made and found in my application to secular studies :—

(1.) It enlarged and habituated my mind to more useful inquiries.

(2.) It kept me from idleness and rust.



same, as to set forth the glorious perfections of its Maker, in a most entertaining manner.

But the main object of his pious and devout contemplations was, GOD in CHRIST reconciling the world to himself. For GOD, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, had shined into his heart to give him the light of the knowledge of GOD, in the face of JESUS CHRIST; so that he not only understood the mysteries of the kingdom of GOD himself, but it was given to him to make others know them. His preaching was in the demonstration of the SPIRIT, and of power. His sermons are the very transcript of what had passed betwixt CHRIST and his own soul; he spoke and wrote his experimental knowledge, and did both speak and write, because he believed.

He earnestly contended for the articles of faith and truths of religion. And as to the duties of Christianity, he enforced the performance of these, with all the arguments of persuasion; so that, through the blessing of GOD, his pulpit-discourses became the power of GOD to the illumination of the understandings of his hearers, the renovation of their natures, the reformation of their lives, and the salvation of their souls.

The difficult part of a reprover, he acted in the most prudent and gaining manner: when he did lick with his tongue the mote out of his brother's eye, he did it with all tenderness, and with the tear in his own. His words wanted neither point nor edge for drawing of blood, when the case of the offender made it an indispensable duty; and when he was compelled to use sharpness with any, they were convinced that he sincerely intended their good. His compassion on the ignorant, and on them that were out of the way, made it evident, how much he considered himself as encompassed with infirmity, and so within the hazard of being tempted.

He was a person of exemplary moderation and sobriety of spirit, had healing methods much at heart, and studied to promote love and peace among his brethren in the ministry. He vigorously contributed to the recovery of

the humanity of Christianity, which had been much lost in the differences of the times, and the animosities which followed thereupon. These virtues and graces had such an ascendancy in his soul, that, as he carried coals about him taken from the altar, to warm the souls of all with whom he conversed with love to God, his truths, interests, and people, so he carried sanctuary-water about with him, to cool and extinguish any thing of undue passion which he perceived to accompany the zeal of well-designing persons ; a temper that is rarely found in one of his age. But ripe harvest-grapes were found upon this vine in the beginning of spring ; and no wonder, since he lived so near the Sun of Righteousness, and lay under the plentiful showers of divine grace, and the ripening influences of the HOLY SPIRIT.

He was no fomenter of faction, but studious of the public tranquillity. He was a man of moderate principles, and temperate passions. He was far from being confident, or vehement, in the management of public affairs ; and was never imposing or overbearing upon others, but willingly hearkened to advice, and yielded to reason.

After he had laboured four years in the Ministry, serving God with his spirit in the Gospel of his SON, he died of a consumption, when he was scarcely come to the prime of life, entering on the twenty-sixth year of his age ; leaving behind him a sweet savour after he was gone, and an epistle of commendation upon the hearts of his hearers. While he lived, he was highly valued and esteemed, having been a successful instrument of saving himself and them that heard him, of turning sinners unto righteousness, and of perfecting the saints ; and he died much lamented by all good people, who had the opportunity and advantage of knowing him. He was a person of singular piety, and of an humble, meek, and peaceable temper ; a judicious and lively preacher ; nay, so extraordinary a person, that he was justly accounted a prodigy, for the pregnancy of his natural talents, and his great proficiency in human learning, and in the knowledge of Divinity.

(3.) It kept my thoughts and life oftentimes from temptations to worse employments.

My learning and knowledge did not heighten my opinion of myself, or abilities; but the more I knew, the more humble I was.

1. I found it was thy strength and blessing which gave me understanding, and enlarged it.

2. The more I knew, the more I knew my own ignorance. I found myself convinced, that there was an ignorance in what I thought I knew; my knowledge was but imperfect and defective; and I found an infinite latitude of things which I knew not; the farther I waded into knowledge, the deeper still I found it; and it was with me, just as it is with a child who thinks that, if he could but come to such a field, he should be able to touch the heavens, but when he comes thither, he finds it as far off as it was before. Thus, while my mind pursued knowledge, I found the object still as far before me as it was, if not much farther; and could no more attain to the full and exact knowledge of any one subject, than the hinder wheel of a chariot can overtake the former. Though I knew much of what others were ignorant of, yet still I found there was much more, whereof I was ignorant, than what I knew, even in the compass of a most confined and inconsiderable subject. And as my very knowledge taught me humility in the sense of my own ignorance, so it taught me, (1.) That my understanding was of finite power, which takes in things by little and little. (2.) That thy wisdom is unsearchable and past finding out. (3.) That thy works, which are but finite in themselves, and necessarily short of that infinite wisdom by which they are contrived, are yet so wonderful, that, as the wise man saith, "No man can find out the work that thou makest from the beginning to the end." (*Eccles.* iii. 11.) If a man would spend his whole life in the study of a poor fly, he would still leave much more undiscovered than the most singular wit ever attained.

3. It taught me also, with the Wise Man, to write vanity and vexation upon all my secular knowledge and learning. That little which I knew was not attained without much labour, nor yet free from much uncertainty ; and the great remainder which I knew not, rendered that which I knew poor and inconsiderable ; and therefore,

4. I did most evidently conclude, that the happiness and perfection of my intellectual power was not to be found in this kind of knowledge ; in a knowledge thus sensibly mingled with ignorance in the things which it seems to know ; mingled with a dissatisfaction in respect of the things which I knew not ; mingled with difficulty in attaining, and restlessness when attained. The more I knew, the more I knew that I knew not ; and the more I knew, the more impatient my mind was to know what it knew not : my knowledge did rather enlarge my desire of knowing, than satisfy it ; and the most intemperate sensual appetite under heaven was more capable of satisfaction by what it enjoyed, than my intellectual appetite was of being satisfied with the things which I knew. The enlarging my understanding with knowledge, did but enlarge the desire I had to know ; so that what JOB's return was upon his inquisition after wisdom,—“ The depth saith, It is not in me, and the sea saith, It is not in me,” (*Job* xxviii. 14,)—the same account all my several kinds of knowledge gave to me, when I inquired for satisfaction in them. My choice speculations in the metaphysics were of that nature, that when I had perused great volumes of it, it was so mercurial, I could hardly hold it ; and yet so endless, that the more I read or thought of it, the more I might. Natural philosophy I found full of uncertainty ; much of it grounded upon suppositions, impossible to be proved ; the latter philosophers censuring the former, and departing from them, and the latest despising and rejecting both ; the subject as vast as the visible or tangible universe, and yet every individual so complicated, that if all the rest were omitted, any one had more lines centred in it, than it were possible for any one age to sift to the bottom ; yet any one lost, or not exactly scanned, leaves all the rest uncertain and conjectural. The

very disquisition concerning any one part of the brain, the eye, the nerves, or the blood, hath perplexed the most exact scrutators. Those more dry, yet more demonstrable conclusions in the mathematics, are endless and perplexed,—the proportion of lines to lines, of superficies to superficies, bodies to bodies, numbers to numbers. Nay, to leave the whole latitude of the subjects, see what long, and intricate, and unsatisfactory pains men have taken about some one particular subject, the quadrature of the circle, conical, oval, and spiral lines; and yet if it could be attained in the perfection of it, these three unhappinesses attend it.

(1.) That it is but of little use, being only known that it may be known. That which is of ordinary use, either in architecture, measuring of bodies and superficies, mechanics, business of accounts, and the like, is soon attained, and by ordinary capacities; the rest are but curious imperinencies, in respect of use and application.

(2.) That they serve only for this life: a separated soul, or a spiritualized body, will not be concerned in them.

(3.) But admit that they should, yet doubtless a greater measure of such knowledge will be attained in one hour after our dissolution, than the toilsome expense of an age in this life would produce. And the like may be said of astronomical disquisitions: what a deal of ado there is touching the motion of the sun or earth; the habitableness of the moon; the matter, quantity, and distance of the stars; the several positions and motions of the heavens; and the various influences of the heavenly bodies in their oppositions, conjunctions, and aspects? When once the immortal soul hath flown through the stories of the heavens, in one moment all these will be known distinctly and evidently; which here are nothing but conjectures and opinions, gained by long reading or observation.

Upon all these considerations, I concluded that my intellectual power, and the exercise of it in this life, were given me for a more certain, useful, and becoming object, even “to know thee, the only true God, and JESUS CHRIST, whom thou hast sent.”

XII. *Concerning Prudence in Affairs, and Dexterity in the Management of them.*

I have been always careful to mingle justice with my prudence; and have always esteemed prudence, actuated by injustice and falsity, the most devilish practice in the world; because it prostitutes thy gift to the service of hell, and mingles a beam of thy divine excellence with an extraction of the Devil's furnishing, making a man so much the worse by how much he is wiser than others. I always thought that wisdom, which in a tradesman and in a politician was mingled with deceit, falsity, and injustice, deserved the same name: only the latter is so much the worse, because of its more public concernment.

I always observed, that honesty and plain-dealing in transactions, as well public as private, are the best and soundest prudence and policy, and commonly at the long run over-matched craft and subtilty; for the deceived and deceiver are thine; and thou art privy to the subtlety of the one, and the simplicity of the other.

It hath been my care, as not to err in the manner, so neither in the end of exercising prudence. I ever esteemed it then best employed, when it was exercised in the support of thy truth, in upholding thy faithful Ministers, in countermining, discovering, and disappointing the designs of evil and treacherous men, in delivering the oppressed, in righting the injured, in prevention of wars and disorders, in preserving the peace and tranquillity of the people among whom I lived, in faithful advising of my Prince, and in all those offices incumbent upon me by thy Providence, under every relation.

Whensoever my prudence was successful, I gave thy name the glory. I knew that the prudence which I have came from thee; that it was thy providential ordering of occurrences which made prudent deliberations successful; and that more was due to thy ordering, disposing, fitting, timing, and directing of all in seeming casualties, than to that human counsel by which it is acted, or seemed to be acted:

the least thereof, if not marshalled by thy hand, would have shattered and broken the counsel to a thousand pieces. Thou gavest the advice by thy wisdom, and didst second it by thy Providence.

### XIII. *Concerning the Gift of Elocution.*

1. I have ever used that gift with Humility: not thereby seeking applause to myself, because pride and ostentation in this gift would be idolatry and sacrilege, robbing thee of thy glory, and therefore signally vindicated in the example of HEROD. (*Acts xii.*)

2. With Truth: I never used the advantage of my elocution, either to maintain a falsehood, or to abuse credulity into a foolish persuasion.

3. With Integrity: I never used the advantage of eloquence to deceive people, or to cozen them into any thing. My heart always went along with my tongue; and if I used earnestness of speech upon any occasion, it was upon an earnest conviction in myself of the truth, necessity, and fitness of what I so persuaded: if my judgment was doubtful, so was my speech. I never used my elocution to give credit to an ill cause; to approve that which deserved blame; to justify the wicked, or to condemn the righteous; to make any thing appear more specious or enormous than it deserved. When the case was good, I thought the use of that ability was my duty. I esteemed these cases deserving of my elocution, and in these I was warm and earnest;—the setting forth of thy glory, the assertion of thy truth, the detection and conviction of errors, and the clearing of the innocent.

### XIV. *Touching my Body, and bodily Endowments of Health, Strength, and Beauty.*

1. In general: I looked upon my body not so much given for its own sake, as to be an engine for the exercise of my soul, and a cottage wherein it might inhabit and perfect itself: and for that reason I was careful to keep it useful for that end; that, as on the one side, by overmuch

severity over it, I might not tire it, so on the other side, by overmuch pampering it, I might not make it unruly; though I held the latter far more dangerous: For

2. I considered and found that my body was the harbour of the most dangerous temptations, and the receptacle of the most dangerous enemies to my soul. The greatest, and most intimate, and most assiduous temptations for the most part made their applications to my body, and held correspondence with the inclinations of my flesh and blood, whereby my body, which was given me to be subservient to my soul, was ready still to cast off the yoke, and prostitute that nobler part to be a servant to it, and bring her to that vassalage, in which all her skill, activity, and power, were wholly taken up in contriving and making provisions for the flesh. I found that the sensual and beastly part was ready still to thrust the heavenly and intellectual part out of her throne, and to invert the order of nature, so that both the parts of my composition were disordered, and out of their place. I considered that if the business was thus carried, my happiness must be only in this life: when sickness or death should seize upon my body, I had an immortal soul which had lost her time in this world, and not only so, but was imbas'd by these noisome lusts; and that the contagion of my body was so diffused through my soul, that she could carry nothing with her but disappointment and defilement, and consequently could expect, to all eternity, nothing but vexation and confusion. Upon all these considerations, I resolved and practised severity over this unruly beast, brought my body into subjection, refused to gratify her desires, denied them, kept them in awe and under discipline; and because I found that my fleshly lusts grew imperious and unruly by variety, curiosity, and plenty of meats and drinks, and by ease and idleness, I subdued them by moderate diet and temperance, by hard labour and diligence, till I had reduced my body to that order which became it, that it might be in subjection, and not in dominion,—might serve and not rule. I denied satisfaction to an intemperate appetite, a wanton eye, a vain wish, a



worldly desire. My table was sparing, my clothes plain, my retinue and attendance but necessary. I chased away my lust with the contemplations of the presence of God, the end of CHRIST's sufferings, the certainty, yet uncertainty of death, and the state after death; and mingled all my enjoyments and desires with these serious and cleansing considerations.

3. I found by experience, that it is the greatest difficulty that can be, for a man in a good condition to think it may be otherwise. There is such a vanity accompanying health, that we can scarcely persuade ourselves that we shall ever be sick, or die: we cannot put on another estimate of our condition than that which we at present enjoy, especially if it be pleasing.

To wean myself from this impotency of mind, although it pleased thee to give me a strong and healthy constitution, yet I often put myself into the supposition of sickness and mortality, and pre-apprehended diseases, old age, and death; and by this means broke and scattered my confidence of long life, and took up thoughts becoming a sick or dying man; considering how my accounts stood, if God should please to call me away, and what patience I had to bear pain, and weakness, and sickness. In my firmest health, it was my care so to order my life, as if the next hour might despoil me of health and life too.

4. In reference to my health, I always avoided these two extremes: (1.) I never made it my idol; I declined not the due employment of my body in works of charity or necessity, or my ordinary calling, out of a fear of injuring my health; for I reckoned my health given me in order to these employments. (2.) I never was vainly prodigal of it, but careful in a due manner to preserve it.

5. I esteemed strength and comeliness of body thy blessing, and an invitation to thankfulness; I esteemed it to carry with it a secret admonition to bear a proportionable mind and life. In the mean time, I looked upon them as flowers of the spring, pleasing to the eye, but of short continuance; the casualty of an unruly wind, an unseason-

able frost, a worm or fly, might intercept their continuance ; and they that escaped best, an autumn or winter would infallibly overtake and destroy them.

### XV. *Concerning my Wealth.*

1. I esteemed these acquisitions rather the effects of thy Providence and blessing, than of my power or industry ; for if instrumentally my industry acquired them, yet that very industry is thy gift. Again, (2,) though my industry and dexterity to get wealth were ever so great, yet either a small interposition or permission of thy Providence might soon have disappointed all that dexterity or industry : a thief, or a storm, or a fire, or a leak, or the discomposure of the times, or a prodigal wife or son, or an unfaithful servant, or a long sickness, or a misfortune in others whom I trust, or a flaw in a title, or a word mis-interpreted, or a thousand other emergencies, might in a little space have ruined the product of many years' labour and care.

Upon these considerations I learned in the midst of my affluence not to sacrifice to my own net, nor to say in my heart, " My might and the power of my hands have gotten me this wealth ;" but I did remember the **LORD** my God ; for it is he that gave me power to get wealth.

2. I did not measure thy favour to me, or the goodness or safety of my own condition, by my wealth and plenty ; for I found that those externals were either indifferently dispensed to the good and bad, or, if there were any odds, that the advantage of externals seemed to be to those whose portion we might probably conjecture was only in this life. My wealth and plenty therefore rather made me the more jealous of my condition, than secure in it : it made me search and examine my condition the more strictly and carefully ; and when, upon the result, I found my sincerity and uprightness of heart, though I with all thankfulness acknowledged thy goodness in giving me externals, yet I often begged of thee that my portion might not be in this life only ; that as thou gavest me wealth, so thou wouldest give and increase thy grace in my heart ; that though I could wish the continuance of any external

advantages as an opportunity to do the more good, yet if it were inconsistent with my everlasting interest, I might be without the former rather than the latter; and I made it my choice rather to be poor here, and rich in the life to come, than to be rich here, and lost in the life to come.

3. I found a man might be rich or honourable, in respect of his birth or place, and yet a fool, a glutton, luxurious, vain, imperious, covetous, proud, and in all probability the more obnoxious to these distempers by his wealth or greatness: on the other side, a man might be poor, wise, sober, and humble; and possibly his poverty might in reference to these be an advantage. My riches and honour therefore never made me set one grain of value the more upon myself. I esteemed it as an instrument, which being put into a wise, prudent, faithful, and liberal hand, might be of use; but gave no more value to that inherent worth of the man, than the axe or the saw gives skill to the carpenter.

4. I esteemed all the wealth and honour I had, as only entrusted to me by the great Master of the world; a talent which thou committest to me as thy steward, and upon account; and this consideration caused me to judge of my wealth, and dispense the same, quite in another way than is ordinarily done.

First, I did not esteem myself the richer at all for my riches; I esteemed no more given me than what was in a reasonable manner proportionable to my necessities, and to the station I had in the world; all the rest I looked upon as none of mine, but my Master's; it was rather my burthen than my possession; the more I had, the more was my care, and the greater the charge that I had under my hands, and the more was my solicitude to be a faithful steward of it, to the honour and use of my Master: indeed I rejoiced in this, that my Master esteemed me wise and faithful, committing the dispensation thereof to my trust; but I thought it no more mine, than a Lord's bailiff, or a merchant's cash-keeper, thinks his master's rents or money his.

Secondly, I therefore thought that it would be a breach of my trust to consume that wealth in superfluities of meat, drink, or apparel, or in advancing myself, or my posterity.

Thirdly, I employed the overplus in support of the Ministry, in relief of the poor, in redemption of captives, in placing children to school and apprentice, and in setting the poor on work ; and I thought this latter was an equal, if not a greater charity than the encouragement of idle persons by liberal supplies, because it kept them in the way which Providence hath designed for the children of men.

5. I esteemed my wealth (1.) As uncertain ; for it hath its wings, and might take its flight, when I little thought of it. (2.) As that which I must leave when I die. (3.) As not useful after death for any purpose whatsoever. (4.) As that which makes me obnoxious to envy and rapine, while I live. (5.) As not useful at all, but when it is going away, *viz.* in the expense of it. (6.) As a great temptation to pride, vanity, insolence, and luxury. And upon all these and many more considerations, I ever thought it too low to set my heart upon it, and too weak to place any confidence in it. When I had it therefore, I received it thankfully, and used it soberly and faithfully ; when I lost it, I lost it patiently and contentedly.

*XVI. Touching my Eminence of Place or Power in this World, this is my Account.*

1. I never sought or desired it, and that upon these reasons : (1.) Because I easily saw that it was rather a burthen than a privilege ; it made my charge and my accounts the greater, my contentment and rest the less ; I found enough in it, to make me decline it in respect of myself, but not any thing that could invite me to seek or desire it. (2.) That external glory which attended it, I esteemed vain and frivolous. I looked through this dress and outside, and easily saw that it covered a state obnoxious to danger, solicitude, care, trouble, discontent, temptation, and vexation. I esteemed it a condition, which, if there were any distemper abroad, they would be hunting and pushing at it ; and if it found any corruptions within, either of pride, vain glory, insolence, vindictiveness, or the like, it would be sure to draw them out and set them to work, which if they prevailed, it made my power and

greatness not only my burthen, but my sin ; if they prevailed not, yet it required a most watchful, assiduous, and severely vigilant labour and industry to support them.

2. When I undertook any place of power or eminence, (1.) I looked that the call thereto was such as I might discern to be thy call, not my own ambition. (2.) That the place was such as might be answered by suitable abilities in some measure. (3.) That my end in it might not be the satisfaction of any pride, ambition, or vanity in myself, but to serve thy Providence, and my generation, honestly and faithfully. In all these respects, my undertaking was not an act of my choice, but of my duty.

3. In the holding or exercising of these places, I kept my heart humble, and valued not myself one rush the more for them. I easily saw that great places were slippery places. It was therefore always my care so to behave myself in them, as that I might be in a capacity to leave them ; and so to leave them, as that, when I had left them, I might have no scars or blemishes stick upon me. I carried therefore the same evenness of temper in the holding them, as might become me if I were without them.

4. I never made use of my power or greatness to serve my own turns,—either to heap up riches, or to oppress my neighbour, or to revenge injuries, or to uphold injustice ; for though others thought me great, I knew myself to be still the same ; and in all things, besides the due execution of my place, my deportment was just the same, as if I had been no such man ; for, first, I knew that I was but thy steward and minister, and placed there to serve thee and those ends which thou proposedst in my preferment, and not to serve myself, much less my passions or corruptions. And, further, I well knew, that place, and honour, and preferment, are things extrinsical to the man : his value before and under and after his greatness, is still the same ; as the counter that now stands for a penny, anon for sixpence, anon for twelvecence, is still the same counter, though its place and denomination be changed.

5. I improved the opportunity of my place, eminence, and greatness, to serve thee and my country in it, with all

vigilance, diligence, and fidelity. I protected, countenanced, and encouraged thy worship, name, day, and people: I did faithfully execute justice according to that station which I had: I rescued the oppressed from the cruelty, malice, and insolence of their oppressors: I cleared the innocent from unjust calumnies: I was instrumental of placing those in offices, places, and employments of trust and consequence, who were honest and faithful: I removed those who were dishonest, irreligious, false, or unjust: I did discountenance, and, as they justly fell under the verge of the law, I punished, profane, turbulent, atheistical, licentious persons: my greatness was a shelter to virtue and goodness, and a terror to vice and irreligion. In sum, I so used my place, and so carried myself in all things, as if all the while I had seen thee the great Master of all the families in heaven and earth standing by me.

#### XVII. *Touching my Reputation.*

Though I loved my reputation, and was vigilant not to lose or impair it by my own default or neglect; yet I looked upon it as a brittle thing, a thing much in the power of a false report, a mistake, or a mis-apprehension,—and considered, that notwithstanding all my care, I was at the mercy of others, without God's wonderful over-ruling Providence.

I therefore always took this care, not to set my heart upon my reputation. I used all fidelity and honesty; and if, notwithstanding all this, my reputation was foiled by evil or envious men or angels, I contented myself with the serenity of my own conscience.

When thy honour, or the good of my country, was concerned, I then thought it was a seasonable time to lay out my reputation for the advantage of either, and to act it, and by, and upon it, to the highest, in the use of all lawful means; and upon such an occasion the counsel of MORDECAI to ESTHER was my encouragement: (*Esther* iv.): “Who knoweth whether” God hath given thee this reputation and esteem “for such a time as this?”

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AN  
EXTRACT  
OF  
“ **The Christian Sacrifice:**  
A TREATISE  
SHOWING THE  
NECESSITY, END, AND MANNER,  
OF  
RECEIVING THE HOLY COMMUNION :  
TOGETHER WITH SUITABLE  
PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS.”  
BY SIMON PATRICK, D.D.,  
*Late Lord Bishop of Ely.*

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THE  
AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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TO THE READER.

I HOPE the Reader will bring a free and unprejudiced mind to the perusal of what I have written, and especially a heart seriously desirous to have holy devotion wrought in it to our Creator and Redeemer; and then neither of our pains, I presume, will prove unprofitable. But I do not mean by devotion, only some transient thoughts and passions arising at certain seasons, but a settled love to him, disposing us to present him always with a heart humble, pure, just, and charitable; which is the oblation that all our other sacrifices are to prepare for him, and the greatest honour which we are capable of doing him.

This is truly and substantially to glorify him before men, to magnify his name, and to exalt his praise. This proclaims him to be the most excellent Being, and that it is the supreme happiness and dignity of human nature to be one of his friends; but all the praises we can bestow upon him, without this, are no better than flatteries. They are but good words and religious compliments; which we revoke and unsay again, when we disobey his commands.

If we would make GOD therefore an acceptable sacrifice, there is nothing, saith MINUTIUS, like “a good mind, a

pure intention, and a sincere conscience. He who highly esteems and reverences innocency, supplicates the LORD : he that hath justice in great veneration, sacrifices to GOD : and he that rescues a man out of danger, kills the fattest sacrifices. These are our sacrifices : these are the holy things of GOD. Thus, amongst us, he is most religious who is most just."

It is senseless to think, that the LORD of heaven and earth should be pleased with any thing, but the very best which we are able to give him. And what is that but ourselves, "a living sacrifice," as the Apostle speaks, "holy, acceptable to GOD;" (*Rom. xi. 1*;) because it is properly a continual oblation, and remains still to be offered in more and more actions of a god-like life.

And for this end, CHRIST instituted this commemoration of the sacrifice which he made of himself to GOD ; that we might be moved thereby to offer up ourselves freely and cheerfully, as he did, to do and suffer what our heavenly Father pleases. For it is rank hypocrisy to commend and praise his obedience to death, while we live in open opposition to GOD's commands.

The Scribes and Pharisees were of this religion, who did their own wills, and yet admired ABRAHAM, MOSES, and the Prophets, who were altogether governed by the will of GOD. They magnified those virtues in their ancestors, which they themselves not only wanted, but hated. Such is the devotion of those now, who extol our SAVIOUR, and speak great things in his praise, but do not think fit to tread in his steps, by making themselves an entire oblation to GOD, and living in absolute subjection to all his commands.

This is the best way to "show forth the LORD's death," and to make the most acceptable commemoration of this

sacrifice. It is the purest, the most sincere expression of our love to him and his service, to which we should always stir up ourselves, when we remember **JESUS**.

And this is the scope of the following Treatise, to excite those who read it to worship the **LORD** with holy worship; that is, says one of the Ancients, "with composed passions and quiet affections; and by likeness to **GOD** in virtue." They are the words of **EUSEBIUS**; who was well aware that **GOD** is to be worshipped not only with external actions, but especially with our minds,—because he is the inspector of our mind and heart, as **DAVID** tells his son **SOLOMON**, where he gives this reason why he should "serve **GOD** with a perfect heart, and a willing mind," that "he searches all hearts, and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts." (*1 Chron.* xxviii. 9.)

I shall add to this the words of **LACTANTIUS**: "There are two things which ought to be offered to **GOD**; a gift and a sacrifice;—the gift for ever, the sacrifice for a time: and both the one and the other is incorporeal. The gift is integrity of mind; the sacrifice is praise and hymns. Therefore the most excellent manner of worshipping **GOD**, is praise directed to him out of the mouth of a just man." The Eucharist consists of both, as you will find in this book; the help of which, if the Reader will be pleased to use, till he hath made himself such a thankful oblation to **GOD**, he will not want a reason why I call it "The Christian Sacrifice," nor fail to grow in wisdom and spiritual understanding. For as the son of **SIRACH** saith, "The love of the **LORD** passeth all things for illumination: he that holdeth it, whereto shall he be likened?" He will delight to be repeating this oblation of himself, and of his praises and thanksgivings, to **GOD** our **SAVIOUR**,

with higher devotion of spirit, and greater purity of heart and life. He will not stand in need of many exhortations to do this, or the rest of his christian duty: for the love of God will be above all reasons and motives to make him good. He will think continually how much he is bound to his infinite goodness; and that He will take care, by his familiar representation of the unparalleled love of CHRIST in dying for us so freely, to continue and quicken in christian souls a ready and cheerful disposition to obey him in all things.

THE  
CHRISTIAN SACRIFICE.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT is the design of this small Treatise, as briefly and plainly as I can devise,

I. To show that all those who are called by the name of our LORD, have an obligation upon them to address themselves to his holy table.

II. To prove that the ends and purposes for which it is prepared, are such as both invite and engage them to come thither.

III. To direct the readers to an easy and familiar way of disposing themselves to perform this duty with profit and pleasure : and,

IV. To furnish them with some meditations and devotions suitable to it.

These are the four parts of the ensuing Discourse.

## PART I.

### OF THE OBLIGATIONS BY WHICH WE ARE BOUND TO COMMUNICATE.



FOR the first of these, to make you sensible of the weight of this duty, there are these six things to be considered.

I. That we have an express command for it from our LORD and Master, to whose service we were solemnly devoted when we were baptized. And lest there should be any room for excuses, this command is so ordered, that it hath respect both to the Ministers in his church, and also to the people under their care: to the former, that they might prepare this holy table; to the other, that they might come to partake of it. First, he requires his Apostles to “do this in remembrance of him:” (*Luke xxii. 19:*) which words, it is plain, refer to what our SAVIOUR then did, who “took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me.” And therefore it is as much as if he had said, “Do ye take bread, give thanks, break it, and give it to all my family hereafter.”

Now if they were bound to give it, then all Christians, no doubt, must be bound, (though nothing more had been said here,) to receive it. But the more to enforce the duty, we are required so to do, according as ST. PAUL hath declared the mind of our LORD. He tells us, that when our LORD had given thanks, he brake the bread, and said,

“ Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you ; do this in remembrance of me.” (1 *Cor.* xi. 24.) Here these words, “ Do this,” immediately refer to “ take, eat,” which are not in ST. LUKE : and therefore, “ Do this,” in his Gospel, immediately refers, as I said, to taking bread, giving thanks, breaking it, and giving it to them. In that, the Apostles and their successors were more peculiarly concerned ; and none can “ do this ” (*i. e.* take bread, give thanks, break it, and give it) but they. But in the other, taking, eating, and drinking, all Christians are concerned, and are bound to “ do this ” as long as the world lasts. This appears sufficiently from the whole discourse of ST. PAUL to the Corinthians, who were, as he tells them, (verse 26,) “ to show forth the LORD’s death,” as often as they did eat that bread and drink of that cup, which the Ministers of our LORD gave to them. And to make this command appear more weighty, let me cast in two or three considerations more before I proceed.

1. That our LORD not only gave it to the twelve Apostles, but to ST. PAUL also, after he was added to the number. From which we may clearly gather his intention of having this duty every where performed, not only by the Jews, but all others : for when he appeared to this person, and revealed his whole mind to him, that he might be an Apostle, and preach to the heathen world, he left not out this precept, but gave him particular instructions about it. “ For I have received of the LORD that which I also delivered to you, that the LORD JESUS, the night in which he was betrayed, took bread,” &c. (1 *Cor.* xi. 23.) He had not this from the Apostles, nor was taught it by man, but CHRIST himself delivered it to him, as he had done to the rest of his Apostles ; that he might teach men to do this, if they had any regard to the express command of their dearest LORD. And it is very hard if they have not a great reverence to it, considering,

2. That it is the last commandment which he gave before his death. When he was parting with his Disciples, and taking his farewell of them, (until he should see them



again after his resurrection,) he left this charge with them, that they should do as they had seen him do just before he went away. Read the verses going before those now mentioned out of ST. LUKE, (*chap.* xxii. 16—18, &c.) and you will find the sense of our SAVIOUR's whole discourse to be this:—"This is the last supper we shall eat together in this world; I shall keep no more feasts with you until we meet in heaven. But I would have you meet often, and feast together upon my broken body and my blood shed for you, according to the pattern which now I set before you. As you see me take bread, give thanks, break it, and give it to you,—so do ye. This is my will, if ye have any respect to the words of a dying Master; if ye love me, and bear me in mind when I am gone from you, do not forget to 'do this in remembrance of me.'" And what he said to them, we are to take as said to us; for,

3. ST. PAUL saith, that this is to be done until his coming again (1 *Cor.* xi. 26.) It is not a temporary command, like those given to MOSES, but lays a perpetual obligation upon us; until CHRIST, who appeared to put away sin by this sacrifice of himself, (which we commemorate,) "shall appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." From whence it necessarily follows, that not only the Apostles, but all the Ministers of CHRIST to the end of the world, have power to "do this;" and that the people are bound to do their part, when the Minister hath done his. How they will excuse themselves from an open breach of our SAVIOUR's commandment, who "do not this in remembrance of him," I cannot imagine. There is nothing which he enjoins with more solemnity; and therefore the same necessity lies upon us for the performance of it, which there doth for obedience to his other commands. If there be any difference, it is such as should rather make us exceedingly careful about this duty, than otherwise. For,

II. It is a command whereby our affection to CHRIST JESUS, our ever-blessed Redeemer, is more than ordinarily

proved ; there being no other reason for performing it, but merely our respect to his will and pleasure. To most other duties in our religion there is something in nature to prompt us. That we should be just, and merciful, and sober, and grateful, we can derive from a reason within ourselves. But this duty is one of the things for which there is no other ground but his appointment ; and therefore the doing of it is a piece of pure obedience, arising wholly out of pure respect to him and his injunctions. As it was indeed designed to keep him in memory, his appointment of it for that purpose hath added a good reason to it ; which doth mightily enforce our duty, if we have any love to the memory of so dear a SAVIOUR, and desire to perpetuate the story of so rare a love.

By this it is apparent, that the thing which makes men most negligent of this duty is that which should make them most zealously affect it. The natural conscience not reproving them for not “doing this,” as it doth for injustice, cheating, lying, and such like sins, therefore they live securely in the neglect of it. But if faith were planted and deeply rooted in men’s hearts, they would upon this very account be the more favourable to do it : because it is a peculiar mark of a Christian, a work proper to him alone, who is moved to this, not by nature and the common light of mankind, but purely by his religion and devotion to his SAVIOUR : for there is no piece of divine service in which he is interested so much as this. It is more properly christian worship than any other. All the world think their religion binds them to pray to God, to praise him, and give him thanks ; but to render thanks to him by “doing this,” belongs only to believers in JESUS. And that was one cause, I doubt not, why the first disciples of CHRIST made this so great a part of their devotion ; which is the next consideration.

III. Primitive Practice upon this command of our SAVIOUR doth explain his intentions, and tells us the obligation of it. They who were taught by the Apostles of our LORD best understood the weight of this command-

ment; and they understood it so, that they did as constantly “do this,” as they did’ publicly meet together to pray or hear, which they did very frequently.

In the church of Jerusalem they did it every day, as we read in *Acts* ii. 46, “They continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart:” that is, after they had daily performed their common devotions with the Jews in the temple-service, they went to their own houses to render a more particular service to our SAVIOUR, by “doing this in remembrance of him,” and keeping feasts of charity for the poor and indigent.

IV. And indeed it is part of the food which our LORD hath appointed for his family, and which his stewards are to provide for them. It ought therefore to be thankfully received, and constantly used, when we are invited to it; unless we mean to starve ourselves, and provoke our LORD, by our refusal of this, to withdraw his blessing from other means of our spiritual nourishment.

It is part of the plentiful provision which CHRIST hath left in his house for the souls of his faithful servants, that they may be able to do their work. And truly, as long as we have any need to grow in the grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, to increase in strength and power to master all temptations, and do our several duties, to renew the sense of our obligations to GOD, and bind ourselves faster to him, to heighten our love and gratitude, and to stir up delight and joy in GOD our SAVIOUR; so long will there be a necessity of “doing this,” which serves for all these ends and purposes.

V. And did we but seriously consider this one thing, that a principal end for which both this and the other sacrament was instituted is, that by these outward signs we might express our hearty consent to the New Covenant made by CHRIST in his blood, and engage ourselves to stand to the conditions of it, we should be extremely afraid to refuse to come to this holy communion, because that is the same with refusing to be of his religion. For

he that made the New Covenant with us, and is the author of the Christian Religion, hath made these outward rites to be instruments of stipulation, whereby they who are willing to enter into that covenant, and be of that religion, should express their agreement and submission to it, and openly declare that they own JESUS to be the LORD. And, when they have once done this, they are to signify their continuance in that religion, by the repeated use of the same things. Otherwise they live as if they repented of the contract which they made, and renounced our blessed SAVIOUR, who hath made the "doing this," to be a special evidence of our devotion to him, and his service.

VI. To which if you add all the other ends for which it was ordained, they would still make it appear the more necessary; if either the will of CHRIST, his special command, the practice of all Christians, our own wants, our respect to the christian religion, or the great benefits we may receive by doing this in remembrance of him, can make us judge any thing so. And that is the Second Part of my discourse; to which I now proceed.

## PART II.

### CONCERNING THE ENDS AND PURPOSES OF THIS HOLY ACTION.



IF the Reader be convinced by what hath been written that he is as much bound to “do this,” as he is to be a Christian; I hope it will have a double effect upon him:—First, that he will stir up himself to a serious and constant performance of this duty.—Secondly, that he will be very desirous to understand the end and use of this holy action, that so he may reap the profit which is therein designed to him. I shall give him no farther incitements to this duty, than will arise from what I am now going to say about the nature of it: from whence we may draw a great many arguments to persuade him to be ready and prepared for this, as well as for every other good work.

I. First, then, the very words of the institution of this Sacrament, and the whole discourse of ST. PAUL about it, prove, that it is to be considered as a divine Feast, which our LORD hath appointed in commemoration of himself. That it is to be looked upon as a feast, or repast, provided for us, the bread and wine, the eating and drinking, sufficiently declare: but it is more fully expressed in the names of “breaking of bread,” and “the Supper of our LORD,” which are given to this action. And as it is expressly ordained to be “in remembrance” of our blessed LORD, so (I think it not amiss to add) it was no unusual thing in the world to institute feasts and entertainments to preserve the memory of famous persons.

At these most sober tables they discoursed of their memorable sayings, their worthy actions, and their patient sufferings; and rehearsing the history of their life and death, excited themselves to tread in their steps. For this, as GERMANICUS said, excellently on his death-bed, is the principal part of friendship; not to follow the dead person with tears, but to remember his will, and to execute his commands. This is the general design, I make no doubt, of this most holy feast, where we meet to preserve an eternal memory of our glorious REDEEMER, and to fix more deeply in our minds all that he did and suffered for us; that thereby we may be disposed with the greater cheerfulness to perform his will, and obey his precepts.

Now that we may be made able to do so, he is pleased to set before us this holy food, which the Christian Church hath always looked upon as a spiritual nourishment, to strengthen and increase in us all goodness. And for that purpose we are to address ourselves to the table of the LORD; that by affectionate meditation on his condescending kindness in becoming a man for our sakes, and by laying to heart the whole story of his wonderful love from his birth to his grave, and fixing our eyes on the glorious hopes which he hath given us, by rising again from the dead, and ascending to the throne of God, we may feel a greater strength derived to us from him, enabling us to perform our several duties, and be enlivened to a greater freedom and cheerfulness in denying all our own appetites and desires, and submitting them to the will of CHRIST. Say therefore to yourselves before you come thither some such words as these:—

“We are invited to a feast; our most gracious LORD is the Master of it; yea, he himself is the cheer that is provided for us. With what humility, with what thankfulness, ought we to accept of his invitation. Let us appear before him in as holy and becoming a manner as we are able. Let us go with such joy, as if we were called to the richest entertainment in the world. ‘Let our meditation of him be sweet, and let us be glad in the LORD. Let us

mention the loving-kindness of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us: and let us make his name to be remembered in all generations.' Let us meditate on his holy life, his bitter passion, his bloody and shameful death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, his power and authority at God's right hand, the great benefits which we justly expect from thence, and the precious promises which he hath by these means sealed to us, till we feel all the powers of our souls quickened and stirred up to do the will of our ever-blessed REDEEMER; even a new life and spirit coming into us, and making us strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might.'"

II. Having surveyed in your thoughts the whole Gospel of our SAVIOUR CHRIST, I shall proceed to show you, on what you are more principally to fasten them. You must not consider this holy action only as a feast in remembrance of him; but as a Feast upon a Sacrifice, wherein you are more particularly to commemorate his death.

Our blessed LORD, the High Priest of our profession, was pleased himself to be offered upon the Cross, where "he gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour;" (*Ephes. v. 2*;)—a kindness which, as it ought never to be forgotten, so it ought to be mentioned with the highest and devoutest praises. And therefore, after the manner of those feasts among the Jews, and Gentiles too, in which the people had some portion of the sacrifice to entertain themselves and their friends, he makes us partakers of the sacrifice which he made to God, by admitting us, in these representations of his body and blood, to feast upon it: which action is a grateful commemoration of his death, to his everlasting praise and glory. Therein we set forth that sacrifice of his for us; and signify the thankful sense which we have of his love, and our high esteem of those benefits which his bloody death hath purchased to us.

This we learn, first, from these words of our LORD and his Apostle, ST. PAUL, which teach us to "do this in remembrance of" him. That phrase doth not signify

our merely calling him to mind ; but our making mention of his dying love with due praise and acknowledgments ; which is best expressed by the word *commemorate*. We declare, by *doing this*, that we bear that remarkable testimony of his kindness in the remembrance of a thankful heart ; and will endeavour to make it to be remembered in the succeeding generation. That this is the meaning, appears more fully from a second expression of ST. PAUL's, where he saith, as often as they did eat this, they "showed forth the LORD's death till he came." (1 Cor. xi. 26.) We declare and publish by this action his bloody death. We proclaim, and "abundantly utter the memory of his great goodness ;" which he would have made known to all, by this solemn feast, until his second appearing.

This commemoration, and showing forth, looks two ways ; towards men, and towards GOD.

1. We show it forth, and tell it to the world. We openly declare to all those that see or know what we do, that the SON of GOD died for the children of men ; that he freely gave his body to be broken, and his blood to be shed, for our redemption. We proclaim JESUS to be the LAMB of GOD that takes away the sins of the world ; and show how GOD hath commended his love to us, in that while we were sinners he gave his only-begotten SON for us, that we might live through him.

2. We commemorate also and show forth his death unto GOD the FATHER. We set before him this free-will offering of JESUS, as a sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. We magnify his bounty in this invaluable blessing ; and make mention of this which his SON hath suffered for us as a complete satisfaction for all our offences against him.

We must approach therefore to the table of the LORD with affectionate acknowledgments of his infinite goodness ; extolling and praising his merciful kindness in bestowing on us so great a gift ; professing that we will never forget the tender love of our LORD, who laid down his life for us ; and beseeching the Father of Mercies to receive us into



his grace and favour, for the sake of his dear SON, whose death we show unto him. We should express the sense of our hearts in some such words as these:—

“It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O thou Most High. For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hand. Come and hear, all ye people; I will declare what the LORD hath done for my soul. For great is his mercy towards us, and he hath delivered our souls from the lowest hell. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O JESUS, thou lover of souls; the Word made flesh; the Image of the invisible GOD; the Light of the world; the Lamb of GOD that takes away its sin; the first-begotten from the dead; the Heir of all things; the Prince of the Kings of the earth; a High Priest who is set down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, who appears in the presence of GOD, and lives for ever to make intercession for us. Who in the heavens can be compared to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened to the LORD? For thou, LORD, art highly exalted: thou art exalted far above all gods.

“In this most powerful name, O FATHER ALMIGHTY, we humbly cast down ourselves before the throne of thy glory; give us leave to mention before thee the death of him who said, ‘Behold I come to do thy will, O GOD.’ Behold, O LORD, the bleeding wounds of thy well-beloved SON, in whom thou hast testified, by a voice from heaven, that thou art well pleased. Remember how his body was broken for us, and his blood poured out. In him we believe that thou art perfectly satisfied, and therefore we are bold to hope that thou art reconciled to us. O hear his dying groans; regard his agony and bloody sweat; by his cross and passion let our sins be blotted out; and by his glorious resurrection and ascension let us feel every evil affection perfectly killed and crucified. We have nothing to plead, if he hath not done enough, and fulfilled all thy will. But since he hath laid down his life in obedience to thee, O let us, by virtue of that voluntary

sacrifice which now we present before thee, obtain thy mercy. We cannot be content to lose our share in so great a love. And since thou hast bid us to commemorate it, we hope we shall as certainly partake of it, as we do of this feast to which thou hast invited us. So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture, will give thee thanks for ever. We will show forth thy praise from generation to generation. We will extol thee our **GOD**, O King, we will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will we bless thee, and we will praise thy name for ever and ever."

In such meditations as these, when we show forth the inestimable value of **CHRIST**'s sacrifice, we do, as it were, offer it unto **GOD**, or rather make before him a commemoration of this offering. And in this sense the ancient Christians did call this Sacrament a Sacrifice; and every Christian they looked upon as a Priest, and a sacrificer, when he came to the table of the **LORD**: because **CHRIST** not only bade his Apostles "do this in remembrance of" him; but **ST. PAUL** requires every one of us to do the same, "to show forth his death till he come."

III. By this action we make a solemn Profession of the Christian Religion, and declare ourselves to be the Disciples and Followers of **JESUS**. So much is the consequence of what hath been said. For by eating of sacrifices offered at the altar, both Jews and Gentiles professed themselves to be the worshippers and true servants of that **GOD** to whom the oblation was made. And, secondly, it may be rationally drawn from that discourse of our **SAVIOUR** with the Jews, in the sixth chapter of **ST. JOHN**'s Gospel; where "eating his flesh, and drinking his blood," signify nothing else but believing the word, and keeping the precepts, which **CHRIST** published in our flesh, and sealed with his blood. This is honestly acknowledged by a learned person in the Church of Rome; who gives the sense of those verses in these two lines, "they are nourished with the flesh of **CHRIST** to eternal life, who keep the sayings of **CHRIST**

incarnate. Therefore he was made flesh, that in the flesh or body of man, he might procure their salvation, and form them to eternal life. Therefore the words which CHRIST spake in the flesh, the Gospel of CHRIST, is the flesh of CHRIST. These words, this flesh, this meat, CHRIST would have us eat, ruminare, and digest, that, being nourished thereby, we may profit to eternal life." Indeed this eating and drinking, unto which he now called them, could be nothing else, but receiving him and his doctrine; for the Sacrament of his body and blood was not yet instituted. But when it was, then they who did eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, in commemoration of CHRIST, were to look upon it as a devout profession of that faith in him, and obedience to him, without which it is impossible to inherit eternal life. They declared by this action the entire assent of their minds to the truth of all that he preached, when he was in the flesh; and the unfeigned consent of their wills to be ordered and governed according to it. Hence perhaps it was, that this action came to be called the Sacrament, which was the ancient name for our whole religion, because here we make the most solemn profession of the Christian Religion; as the Jews did of the Mosaical, when they did eat before God of the sacrifices offered on his altar.

Ye must address yourselves then to the table of the LORD, as the friends of JESUS CHRIST; for the purpose of professing that ye believe on him, and are of his religion, and mean to cleave unto him, and obey him, renouncing all other masters for ever. Say in your hearts, "O blessed JESUS, I acknowledge thee to be the LORD; thou art 'the only begotten of the FATHER, full of grace and truth.' Thou only art 'the way, the truth, and the life.' I humbly adore thee; and here devote myself everlastingly to thee. I believe thy blessed Gospel; I own thy supreme authority, and submit myself to thy sovereign commands.

Truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant.' I look for all blessings through thy hand alone; who hast all power in heaven and in earth. Let it be unto thy servant according

to thy word. Yea, deal with me according as I unfeignedly acknowledge thee, and heartily join myself in fellowship with thee, to be thy disciple and follower for ever. I give thee possession of my heart entirely : do there what thou pleasest. Be the sole governor and disposer of all my thoughts, words, desires, and actions. ‘I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.’”

And according to our sincerity in thus devoting ourselves to him, we shall find the powerful communication of his good SPIRIT to us, uniting us more closely to himself. When this outward action declares the inward devotion of our hearts to knit themselves to him, and to become one spirit with him ; without all doubt he will make us feel that he dwells in us by the power of his SPIRIT, to enliven, help, and strengthen us in a christian course of life. For this communion is mutual ; and the word properly signifies a participation of something from him, by joining ourselves to him. We dwell in CHRIST, and CHRIST in us ; we are made one with CHRIST, and CHRIST with us ; and so may expect all those graces which he hath received from GOD, to impart to faithful souls. Particularly, it is a pledge of his divine presence with us, and that he will send his heavenly influences into our hearts. Being knit and joined to him as members of his body, we may be assured that he will take care of us, as our Head. He engages himself to guide, quicken, refresh, and powerfully move and assist us in well doing. This we may humbly wait for, by virtue of our union with him. As the Evil Spirit worked in the children of disobedience, who were joined to devils by eating of their meat, so will the SPIRIT of grace work in those that are joined to him by partaking of his holy table. And for that end we may come to it, that, being knit still faster to him, we may have a more abundant communication of his HOLY SPIRIT. We may entreat him to be a constant friend to us, and to make his abode with us ; “ so that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us.”

IV. It is easy to gather from what hath been said, that

by partaking of this feast, we make such a profession of Christianity and subjection to the LORD JESUS, as to engage ourselves hereby in a mutual Covenant with him. I told you at the beginning, that Sacraments were outward rites to express our consent to the New Covenant ; whereby we signify our settled purpose, and engage our faith, to perform the duties of Christians. But this Sacrament of the LORD'S Supper is more particularly designed for that end, that by doing this we may, with repeated protestations of our fidelity, renew our baptismal vow and covenant wherein we stand engaged ; and in the most sacred manner devote ourselves again and again to that service which we promised, when we entered into CHRIST'S religion.

It is well known that eating and drinking together was ever reputed a token of friendship and brotherly accord, between those persons who consent to such a meeting. But this was more notorious when there was a feast made on purpose to express this friendship : for this amounted to a covenant, and thereby they entered into a league, to be at peace and unity among themselves. When this feast was upon a sacrifice, and they ate and drank of what had been offered to GOD, it was still a more sacred way of covenanting. So when LABAN desired JACOB, in these words, " Come now, let us make a covenant, I and thou ; and let it be for a witness between me and thee ;" (*Gen. xxxi. 44 ;*) we are told that this was the manner of it. " Then JACOB offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread ; and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount : " (*ver. 54 :*) that is, they remained together in one and the same place, as those that had now no enmity nor suspicion of each other, (though they had been at difference before,) after they had covenanted to be friends, by eating all of the same sacrifice. An oath frequently accompanied these holy covenants ; which could never be more solemnly made, than when they were in the presence of GOD, at these feasts upon his sacrifices. And so this action is an oath which we take, that we will be CHRIST'S faithful soldiers and servants to our lives' end. This is an

ancient notion of the word Sacrament. And thus in **PLINY**'s time they understood the meaning of it: for he tells us, that Christians bound themselves at their assemblies, by a Sacrament, (or oath,) not to commit any wickedness. When we come therefore to the table of the **LORD**, we swear fidelity to him, and vow that we will be steadfast in our covenant. We take the Sacrament upon it, as we ordinarily speak, that we will be true to him, and manfully fight under his banner, against the Devil, the world, and the flesh.

This lays the most powerful engagement on us, and binds us in the strongest resolutions to be constant, hearty, and zealous in our christian profession of faith and obedience to him; without which we draw upon ourselves the greatest mischiefs imaginable. For I must observe once more, that this made it such a perilous thing to eat and drink unworthily, and brought such judgments on the Corinthians; (1 *Cor.* xi. 29, 30;) because in all covenants made in the presence of **GOD**, and with appeals to him, there is necessarily understood, though it be not expressed, an imprecation of divine vengeance, if we do not keep them. This consideration ought not to affright us from this holy communion, but should make us more serious in it, and diligent to frequent it, if we expect to enter into the blessed society of our **SAVIOUR** in heaven. It shows us the great necessity of obeying this command of our **LORD**; because of the security which we hereby give him, that all the rest of his commands shall be better observed.

Certainly the serious performance of this must needs produce great effects, and be of mighty force to make us thoroughly good. And therefore it can be neglected by none that understand it, but those who are unwilling to be tied to their duty, and are afraid to be engaged to use their best diligence, to keep the commands of **CHRIST**. For suppose that they should be guilty of any failing afterward; it would only move them to make the more haste to sue out their pardon, and to bind themselves more strictly to their

duty, that by the help of God's almighty grace, in the use of this and all other means, they might perform a uniform obedience to CHRIST's commands.

Let us always then have this in our mind, when we are going to this holy feast, that we are going to consecrate ourselves again to the obedience of CHRIST unto the death; to renew our protestations of friendship with him, and to confirm the covenant that is between us; utterly to disclaim all opposition to his will; and to profess ourselves heartily his confederates who will never forsake him;—in short, to promise and vow in the most sacred manner, that we will henceforth live unto him and not to ourselves, and remain his servants in truth and fidelity for ever. Let us say to him some such words as these, "Thou O LORD, hast redeemed me by thy own most precious blood. I see the wounds thou hast received for my sake. I behold how thy holy flesh was rent and torn for my sins. O the agonies, O the pains and sorrows, which thou hast endured for my salvation! I will never willingly grieve thy heart any more. Far be it from me to pierce thee again, by slighting thy commands. I had rather die than wound thee by my unkind unfaithfulness to thee. Rather had I be torn in pieces myself, than break thy laws, and violate thy covenant wherein I am engaged. I forswear all confederacy with thy enemies, and all opposition to thy will and pleasure. I vow most sincerely, that I will endeavour to live in all good conscience towards God and towards all men. So help me God, as I mean to be true and faithful to thee, to my life's end!"

V. By doing this, we covenant even to die for him, rather than deny him. We promise to be obedient to him, as he was to his heavenly FATHER; so that if he demand our lives to be laid down to do honour to him, we cannot honestly refuse it. For as we offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, in this commemoration of him, so we offer and present ourselves, our souls and bodies, to God, to be a lively, holy, and acceptable sacrifice unto him. Now the very life of the beast which was

offered in sacrifice, was given to GOD; its blood being shed at the altar. And therefore the complete meaning of this phrase, and of this action, of offering ourselves to be sacrifices to GOD, is this: that we part with ourselves so entirely, and are so absolutely devoted to him, that it shall not be in our power afterwards to recall this gift; no, not though we die for it. As the beast that was offered to GOD was no longer the owner's, and the blood "which is the life" (saith he himself) became appropriated wholly to his uses; so the grant we make of ourselves to GOD at his altar is irrevocable; we are no longer our own, but his, and cannot resume ourselves any more into our own disposal; but if he will have our very life, it must be at his service. This was one reason, I make no doubt, of receiving the Sacrament so frequently in the beginning of our religion, in order that the first Christians might fortify their holy resolution of following CHRIST to his cross, and dying for the testimony of his truth, to which they expected continually to be called. I have the authority of a holy martyr (ST. CYPRIAN) for it, who tells us, that in his church they communicated every day; which custom remained till ST. HIEROM's time at Rome, and in Spain. One great end of it was, that they might be well prepared against the assaults of their enemies; and have courage, as good soldiers of CHRIST JESUS, to march after him even unto death.

And with the same affections should we be inspired when we make the same commemoration of him; professing that we had rather die than dishonour him and his religion; and offering our very lives to be expended upon his account, if there be occasion for it. This being a feast, as I told you, upon a sacrifice, we engage by doing this, that we will become a bloody sacrifice to him, if his will be that we should be offered up for his service. It being a communion or fellowship with him, if he will have us to partake and have fellowship with him in his sufferings, we here express ourselves to be well contented. We unite and join ourselves to the crucified JESUS; and so profess



that if he will have us bear his cross, we will not deny him : nay, we declare that we will glory in nothing so much as in the cross of CHRIST ; that we will rejoice in tribulation ; and think it is given to us as an honour to suffer with him. For a feast is a joyful meeting ; and therefore our eating and drinking, at this feast, shows, that we will not think he feeds us with gall and wormwood, when we endure any thing for his name's sake ; but that he gives us the wine of joy and gladness, when the same cup is put into our hand, which our blessed SAVIOUR drank of. This is the very height of Christianity ; to which we should earnestly strive by all means to arrive. Every drop of our blood should be ready to be poured out for that religion which CHRIST sealed with his own. And indeed, what better use can we make of our life, than to give it for him, from whom we received it, and who gave his life for us ? And how much better is it not to live at all, than to live with the brand of cowards and fugitives from the Prince of life, and the Lord of glory ? Let us therefore say, when we come to the table of the LORD ; “ O how much do we owe thee, most blessed Redeemer ! How great is the price which thou hast paid for the ransom of us, miserable sinners ! Tongue cannot express it, nor thought conceive it ! What shall I render unto thee for the incomprehensible benefit which thou hast bestowed upon me ? I can give thee no less than myself ; which here I resign entirely into thy hands. Do thou dispose of me according to thy pleasure. It is but reasonable that I should follow thee whithersoever thou leadest me ;—though it be to thy cross, I refuse not. Though I should die with thee, I hope I shall not in any wise deny thee : for I can make no better use of my life, than to spend it for thee. I esteem all things but loss for the excellence of thy knowledge. ‘ I account not my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy.’ ”

VI. We are not to consider this merely as a feast, or only as a feast upon a sacrifice, but as a feast upon a Sacrifice for Sin ; wherein we, agreeing to be his constant dis-

ciples, profess our belief that God hath “set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood;” and he gives us a part in that propitiation, and promises to “be merciful to our unrighteousness,” and to “remember our sins and iniquities no more.” It was not permitted to the Jews, you know, (not even to the Priests themselves,) to taste of the blood of any beast that was slain in their sacrifices to God; but it was to be poured out at the foot of the altar, after some part of it had been sprinkled thereon. And as for the flesh of the sacrifice, if it was an offering for sin, that was to be wholly burnt also, and they were not allowed the least portion of it, at any of their feasts. This is a privilege belonging to Christians alone at the table of the Lord; where they not only eat of the bread which represents the body or flesh of Christ, but drink of the cup which represents his blood. “We have an altar (*i. e.* a sacrifice) whereof they had no right to eat that served the tabernacle;” that is, which the Jewish Priests themselves, who ministered at the altar, could not partake of. We are admitted to the enjoyment of more singular privileges than they were invested with. As we are partakers of a better sacrifice, which is of greater efficacy than any of theirs were; so God receives us into a nearer familiarity with himself; and by setting before us not only the body of that sacrifice which was offered to him, but the blood also, plainly tells us, that he intends to make us partakers of the highest blessings, even of his own joy and happiness. Of this he gives us a strong assurance, in permitting us to partake not only of the blood of the sacrifice, in this figure and representation, but of the blood of that sacrifice which was offered for the sins of the world. This bids us rest assured of his abundant grace, and not doubt of our acceptance to a participation of his highest favour. There is nothing now to hinder it, nor to make us call in question his merciful kindness towards us. For we have such a token and pledge of forgiveness of our sins by this sacrifice, as the ancient people of God had not of the forgiveness of their offences, by the blood that was

offered at God's altar. They were not admitted to taste of that blood, as we are of the blood of JESUS; and so could not have that "boldness and access with confidence to God," which we have through the faith of him.

This seems to be one great secret of this Sacrament; as appears from the words of ST. LUKE and ST. PAUL, who tell us that this cup which we drink of, is "the new covenant in CHRIST's blood, which was shed for the remission of sins." We are confirmed, by doing this, in that gracious covenant which assures us of forgiveness through his blood. He gives us a right to those benefits (of which that is the first) which he obtained by his obedience to the death. This is the import also of the word "communion," used by ST. PAUL to express the effect of this Sacrament: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of CHRIST? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of CHRIST?" (1 Cor. x. 16.) In its full signification, that phrase denotes, not merely our being made of his society, but our having a communication of his body and blood unto us; of which we partake by eating this bread, and drinking this cup, in remembrance of his death for the remission of sin. And so we beseech our merciful FATHER, (in the Prayer of Consecration which our Church prescribes,) "that we receiving these creatures of bread and wine, according to his SON our SAVIOUR's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood." For after the bread and wine are deputed, by holy prayer to God, to be used for a commemoration of CHRIST's death, though they do not cease to be what they were before, yet they begin to be something which they were not before this consecration; that is, they become now to us "visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace;" and do not merely figure to us the breaking of CHRIST's body, and the shedding of his blood, but are a pledge of that inward and spiritual grace which they represent. What that grace is, we are taught in our Catechism, when it tells

us, "The body and blood of **CHRIST** are verily and indeed received of the faithful in the **LORD'S** Supper;" that is, they have a real part and portion given them in the death and sufferings of the **LORD JESUS**, whose body was broken, and blood shed, for remission of sins. They truly partake of the virtue of his bloody sacrifice; whereby he hath obtained eternal redemption for us. All the effects and benefits of his passion are imparted to us by these, which in themselves are but bread and wine, yet by his appointment become to us the body and blood of his **SON**. In short, there is nothing which the body and blood of **CHRIST** can be to the spirits of men, but by these tokens he exhibits it to us, and gives us an interest in it. This is spiritually to "eat his flesh, and drink his blood;" as both our Church and the ancient Fathers speak. Our souls feast themselves upon his sacrifice, being really made partakers of whatsoever his body and blood can do for them.

And thus indeed the bread and wine are changed, not by abolishing their substance, but by turning them to this divine use, (to which they are deputed by prayer according to **CHRIST'S** institution,) to render to us the spiritual grace of the broken body and blood shed of our **SAVIOUR**; the principal part of which grace is, remission of sin. For, sin being done away, death, the fruit of sin, is abolished: he graciously restores us to the privilege of immortality which we had lost; and in order to it assures us that he will not fail to communicate the grace of his **HOLY SPIRIT**, to assist us in our way to everlasting bliss. We may be satisfied that he will send a living virtue into our spirits, to quicken and strengthen us to do according to our engagements; that so "we may continue in his love, as he continued in his **FATHER'S** love, by keeping his commandments." For this is the nature of all sacramental pledges, to assure us of the good-will of **GOD**, and of his truth in fulfilling his gracious promises. He engages to be faithful to us, by giving them; as we engage ourselves to be faithful to him, by receiving them. **GOD** puts us in possession of all which the Gospel promises, and which the

sacrifice of CHRIST on the cross obtained for us ;—mercy, grace, and peace ; remission of sin ; the power of the HOLY GHOST ; and eternal life.

Now what greater favour can we desire at GOD's hands, than to be admitted into such fellowship with him, and with his SON JESUS CHRIST? What is there of equal power with this, to possess our hearts with the love of GOD? Was there ever any so treated by him as we are? Did the friends of GOD in ancient times receive such pledges of his grace and favour? Were they ever made thus one with him, and joined to him, by partaking of his SON's body and blood? Who, that thinks of these things, would not give up himself, soul and body, eternally to him? Who can think he makes a dear purchase, if he give his life in exchange for such invaluable blessings? We should go to the table of the LORD, and say, "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O GOD! How precious are thy thoughts towards us; how great is the sum of them! Who would not fear thee, who would not love thee, and glorify thy name? For thou hast 'given us exceeding great and precious promises, that by them we might be partakers of a divine nature.' Thou hast sealed them with the blood of thy SON; and hast made a new covenant with us in that blood, 'to put thy laws in our hearts, and write them in our minds; and our sins and iniquities to remember no more.' Thou hast made him a High Priest for ever, 'to make intercession for us;' and given him power and glory at thy right hand, that he may be able to perform all his promises. 'Faithful is he that calleth us, who also will do it.' But thou hast given likewise further assurances of thy mercy and thy truth, by entertaining us at thy table, and making us partakers of that body and blood which was offered for our sins. Enough, enough, O most merciful Father! We see the love thou bearest to us. We cannot desire greater testimonies of it, than these which thou hast given us. All thy 'promises in CHRIST,' we believe, 'are Amen;' certain, faithful, and true. We know and are sure, that 'we have an Advocate with the FATHER, JESUS CHRIST the righteous; and he is a pro-

pitiation for our sins.' I will never doubt any more of thy good-will towards us: for I taste and feel that the LORD is gracious. 'The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion: he will ever be mindful of his covenant. He hath sent redemption unto his people; he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name. The mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.'"

VII. The natural consequence of what hath been said concerning the love of GOD toward us, in sending his only-begotten SON, that "we might live through him," and that he might be "the propitiation for our sins," is drawn to our hand by ST. JOHN; "Beloved, if GOD so loved us, we ought also to love one another." (1 *Epist.* iv. 11.) This is so certain a fruit of a hearty sense of GOD's merciful kindness to us, that no man ought to think that he loves him, or hath any fellowship with him or with his SON JESUS, who doth not feel in himself an unfeigned affection and readiness to do good to all his brethren. "By this we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his SPIRIT;" (ver. 13;) that is, endued us with his own kind and gracious nature and disposition, of which that we may not fail to be partakers, he hath ordained this Sacrament to be a Bond of Union between all Christians who believe in one common SAVIOUR, and all partake of his sacrifice. There is no doubt, but this is one of the ends for which he invites us to this feast, that we may join ourselves in a league of friendship with them, as well as with himself.

So ST. PAUL teaches us, "We being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." (1 *Cor.* x. 17.) As the bread was broken to commemorate the sufferings of CHRIST, whose body was broken for our sins; so it was broken also to be distributed among the communicants, in token that they were but one body, members of the same CHRIST, and members one of another. As it was a feast, their eating at the same table declared their friendship and charity: but their eating

there of one and the same loaf, (which represented the body of CHRIST,) more effectually declared it, and engaged the brotherhood to greater unity and entireness of affection.

It is well observed by ST. CHRYSOSTOM, that it was not lawful for the people among the Jews to partake of that part of the sacrifice which was given to the Priests. But they had their portion to themselves, and the sacrificer with his friends another portion different from the Priests'. But now it is not so, saith he: "One and the same body, and one and the same cup, is given to all; to teach us that we are one body, differing no more one from another than member doth from member in the same body. And therefore, we are not to throw all upon the Priests, but every one is to take care of another; and contrive, as much as he is able, the good of the whole Church."

I will only add the words of ST. CYPRIAN, who saith, "The LORD's sacrifices declare the christian unanimity, knit together in a firm and inseparable charity. For when our LORD called the bread, which is kneaded together, and made up by the union of many corns, his body, he denoted Christian People. And when he calls the wine, which is pressed out of many grapes, and gathered together in one, his blood, he signifies also his flock, coupled by the mingling together of an united multitude." From whence it is manifest, that he took the bread to be CHRIST's body, not only as it represents CHRIST, but all the faithful together with him. This appears more fully from the long discourse which he makes in another place, concerning the mixing of water together with wine in the cup of the LORD, as the custom then was. "Water," saith he, "in the Holy Scripture, signifies many people and nations; which we behold also contained in the Sacrament of the Cup. For since CHRIST bare us all, who likewise bare our sins, we see the people to be understood by water, as the wine shows us the blood of CHRIST. Now, when the water in the cup is mingled with the wine, the people is made one with CHRIST; and the multitude of believers is coupled and joined together with him in whom they believe. This conjunction of water and wine is so mingled in the

cup of the LORD, that they cannot be separated one from the other. But when both are mingled and joined together by such an union, that they cannot be known one from the other, then the spiritual and heavenly Sacrament is perfected."

Let us, therefore, when we partake of the table of the LORD, think, that as thereby we are made one with CHRIST, so we are joined in the closest union one with another. And let us remember, when we are going to commemorate the dearest love of our LORD, and to profess our love to him, to engage ourselves also to the heartiest love towards all the members of the same body; and to enter into a covenant one with another, (as well as with him,) by eating of the same bread, and drinking of the same cup, that we will never fall out any more,—much less hate, malign, or do despite one to another,—but live for ever as in the peace of GOD, in unity and godly love. O that this holy use of this Sacrament were more seriously regarded and laid to heart! It would make a marvellous change in the face of CHRIST'S Church, if all that did partake of his table did cordially embrace as loving friends, and resolve to remain in inseparable affection. For love would certainly secure all those duties which we owe to our neighbour, as ST. PAUL shows. (*Rom. xiii. 8—10.*) If our hearts were filled with it, we should not only be preserved from doing harm, but it would make us do him good, by giving and communicating to his necessities, and by forgiving him, and passing by his injuries and offences; under which two heads are comprehended all the offices of brotherly charity.

It is a maxim among politicians, that a great person should feast or entertain but seldom; because it is uncertain whether he shall procure by it favour or envy. Some may think themselves neglected; and others think themselves disparaged, who are not able to give the same entertainment. But our LORD, upon the quite contrary reasons, invites us frequently to his house and table; because he invites all, and makes no difference upon account of men's outward estates, and expects nothing at all again, but that



all his guests would love one another, with an unfeigned affection. The great he would engage not to scorn the meaner sort; and the meaner sort not to envy the great. He would oblige the rich to be merciful and liberal; the poor to be thankful and contented; the weak in knowledge not to judge the strong; the strong not to despise the weak; and all to live together as loving brethren and members of the same body, that so, they may have "the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member rejoice, all the rest rejoice with it." And whatsoever differences may arise, he conjures them by all that is dear to them, that they fall not out, nor make any quarrels; much less divide and separate themselves one from another; or do any thing that may spoil the harmony of their affections, together with the comfort of their lives, and the beauty of his Church. "O how good, how pleasant it is, (should every one say, when he is at this feast,) for brethren to dwell together in unity! Heaven and earth are pleased with this happy agreement, and sweet accord. 'Here the LORD commandeth a blessing, even life for evermore.' Never will I make any jars in this heavenly concert. Nothing but love, nothing but love, shall possess that heart in which thou, O LORD of love, art pleased to inhabit. I willingly enter into these holy bonds of friendship and peace. I tie myself here inseparably to all my brethren. I embrace them all in every place with an open heart. I will 'endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace:' and will 'love not in word nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth.' And, O that we could see that HOLY SPIRIT, who gathered so many nations, and tongues, and people, into one body of the Church, descending once more to join together all christian hearts! Come, HOLY GHOST, and draw us all to unity, concord, and peace; that as there is 'one LORD, and one SPIRIT, and one baptism, and one hope of our calling;' so the multitude of believers may be of one heart, and of one soul.' O blessed JESUS, who, when thou ascendedst upon high, gavest gifts to men, yea, to the

rebellious also, renew thy ancient bounty to thine Universal Church. Visit our minds, and inspire us with heavenly grace; 'that we may be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, and one mind,' that so, at last, there may be but one voice also: that we may all 'speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among us; but that we be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. Now the LORD of peace himself give us peace always, by all means. Now the GOD of patience and consolation, grant us to be like minded one towards another, and towards all men: to the end he may establish our hearts unblameable in holiness before GOD, even our FATHER, at the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, with all his saints. Amen.'"

VIII. Now what is there that will more certainly accomplish our wishes, and make us love our brethren, than a grateful sense of all GOD's benefits to us who are less than the least of them? This will provoke us to love and good works; and cause us not to be weary of well-doing. It will press our hearts to render something back again to him from whom we have received all; and to bestow what he needs not himself on his members who are as dear to him as his life. And therefore ST. PAUL, I observe, after he had made a passionate exhortation to the Colossians, to put on bowels of mercies, kindness, long-suffering, forbearing and forgiving one another, if any man had a quarrel against any; and above all, to put on charity, and to let the peace of GOD rule in their hearts, to which they were called in one body, immediately adds in the close of all, "AND BE YE THANKFUL." As if he thought that this would secure all the others; as they do the rest of our duty. And for this very purpose hath our SAVIOUR instituted this holy feast, that our hearts may be raised to "praise and give thanks to the FATHER of mercies" with the devoutest affection, not only when we are there, but at all times, "and in all places." This is a thing that cannot be omitted at this feast, without spoiling the very nature of it. It is not what our LORD appointed it to be, if this be wanting. With this we begin, with this we

continue, and with this we conclude, this holy action. Nay, it is thanksgiving with prayer to God, by which the bread and wine are sanctified, so that they become to us the body and blood of **JESUS CHRIST**. And (to say no more) it is so much of the essence or being of this action, that it hath been the name of it for many, if not all ages. We find this Sacrament called the Eucharist, that is, *Thanksgiving*, in the most ancient writers; which would make one think this was the name belonging to it in the Apostles' time. And indeed, **ST. PAUL** calls it "the cup of *blessing*," which is the very same with *thanksgiving*. For, the Evangelists use these words indifferently when they speak of the institution of this holy feast. **ST. MATTHEW** and **ST. MARK** say, that he took the bread, "and blessed;" and he took the cup, "and gave thanks."

And therefore you ought to be very careful of this as a principal part of your duty here; to "lift up your hearts," when the Minister calls upon you, "unto our **LORD GOD**;" and "to give thanks and praises together with all the heavenly host to the **FATHER ALMIGHTY**, who of his tender mercy gave his only **SON JESUS CHRIST** to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption." And be sure to say *Amen* to that prayer which presently follows in our service, (for the clearer understanding of the use to which the bread and wine are deputed, and of the means whereby they come to be so, which is the divine blessing,)—"that we receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, according to thy **SON** our **SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST**'s holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood." Nay, all the time of this holy solemnity, praise and thanksgiving are to be intermixed with every part of the action. How can we remember his making his soul an offering for sin, without special thanks unto him for so great a kindness? We ought to profess ourselves Christians with the height of joy and gladness of heart; to bless him for the gracious covenant into which he receives us; to offer ourselves unto him with the most solemn thanks, praying that he will accept such poor things as we are to be his servants;

and to make a grateful mention of all the benefits which he hath bestowed on us, and intends to us, and to all our Christian Brethren, whose concerns should be as dear to us as our own. And truly the members of the ancient Church were so much in love with this duty, that they gave thanks to God for all good things, the benefits we enjoy by all his creatures, as well as for our redemption by his SON JESUS; because this feast accompanied their Love-feasts, in which latter their bodies were fed with temporal food, as in the former their souls were nourished by the bread of life; and because of the offerings they then made of some of the fruits of the earth, (as we do now of money in lieu of them,) for an acknowledgment to God, that he was the author of all the blessings which they enjoyed.

It is certain that it was not common bread and wine which the ancient Christians prayed might become the body and blood of CHRIST to them, but bread and wine first sanctified, by being offered to God with thanksgiving, and presented to him with due acknowledgments that he was the Lord and Giver of all things. After this followed a thankful mention of the great love of God in sending his SON to redeem mankind by his death, represented by that holy bread and wine, broken and poured out in commemoration of his passion. This was the principal thing of all, which our Church therefore expressly puts us in mind of, and distinctly acknowledges in the Prayer of Consecration. As for the other, that also is to be understood when you see the bread and wine set upon God's table by him that ministers in this divine service: then it is offered to God; for whatsoever is solemnly placed there, becomes by that means a thing dedicated and appropriated to him.

It is but reason then, that "whatsoever we do in word or deed, we should do all in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; giving thanks to God, and the FATHER by him;" (*Col. iii. 17*;) which THEODORET refers to this business. "There being those," saith he, "that required them to worship Angels, the Apostle enjoins the contrary; that they should adorn their words and deeds with the memory of

our Master CHRIST, and send up thanksgivings to God the FATHER by him, and not by Angels." To him we should address all our services, in a grateful remembrance of his love in JESUS; and, as our Communion-Book excellently expresses it, "We should give him (as most bounden) continual thanks, submitting ourselves wholly to his holy will and pleasure, and studying to serve him in true holiness and righteousness all the days of our life." But especially when we go to this holy Communion, we should "enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: we should be thankful unto him, and bless his name;" saying, "Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised: his greatness is unsearchable. Great and marvellous are thy works, O LORD, GOD ALMIGHTY; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints. Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? Who can show forth all his praise? He made us, and not we ourselves: we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. He holdeth our souls in life, and keepeth our eyes from tears, and our feet from falling. Thou, LORD, preservest man and beast; thou givest food to all flesh. The eyes of all wait on thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks to the God of gods; for his mercy endureth for ever. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thy iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies."

Thus I have come to a conclusion of the Second Part of my discourse, concerning the nature, end, and use of this holy Sacrament. The sum of what hath been said is this, It is a holy Feast in commemoration of our LORD CHRIST, and especially of his Death; in which we, for our part, make a solemn Profession of his Religion, and tie ourselves in the

strictest Covenant to follow him unto death, and to live in love with all our brethren. And he, for his part, makes a representation of his dying love to us, and confirms the continuance of it, giving us pledges that he will make us heirs of all the blessings which were the purchase of his body broken, and his blood shed for us. So that when the Minister gives the bread and the cup to us, we should think that CHRIST by him gives us tokens and assurances of his continued and everlasting love and kindness. And when we take, eat, and drink that which he gives us, we should look upon it as expressing our consent to continue his faithful Disciples, in hope of that eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, hath promised to us.

In short, the whole action is the renewing of a Covenant between CHRIST and us. He by giving, we by receiving, engage ourselves to perform our mutual promises. He engages to fulfil his promises of giving us pardon, power to do well, and immortal bliss; and we engage to perform our promises of loving God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves: All which we are to reflect upon with the greatest love to God and our SAVIOUR, with thanksgiving, blessing, and praise, and with a humble confidence that it shall be to us according to his word.

To promote these ends, I have concluded every particular head of this discourse with a brief Meditation, which may be used in this manner.—The first of them may serve to excite our devout affections before we go to Church, or when we have placed ourselves conveniently, just before the Communion-service begins, or while the congregation is making its oblations to God. The second will be proper immediately after the consecration, while the Minister is receiving himself, and giving the bread and wine to the other Ministers, who may be there present with him. Of the other six, half may be used after we have received the bread, and the other half after we have received the cup. Or if any desire a more compendious form of devotion, wherein to lift up their souls to God immediately after their receiving, they may reserve those

till they retire from the holy table to their seats again ; and in this manner address themselves to him just after the receiving of the bread.

“**BLESSED** be **GOD**, even the **FATHER** of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**, the **Father** of **Mercies**, and the **GOD** of all comfort ; who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of **JESUS CHRIST** from the dead ; who hath reconciled us in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy, and unblameable, and unproveable in his sight. Blessed be **GOD**, who hath delivered us from the kingdom of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear **SON** ; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins. I love thee, **O LORD**, I love thee ; I devote myself unfeignedly unto thee. I will ever cleave unto thee, and unto all my brethren, with settled purpose of heart. Try me, and know my thoughts : see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil ; for thou art with me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life ; and I will dwell in the house of the **LORD** for ever. I will sing unto the **LORD** as long as I live ; I will sing praise to my **GOD** while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet : I will be glad in the **LORD** ; and let all the people praise thee. O that men would praise the **LORD** for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing : for his merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us, and his truth endureth for ever. Praise ye the **LORD**.”

*Or thus :—*“**LORD**, what is man that thou art mindful of him ! or the **SON** of Man that thou visitest him ! Thou hast made him a little lower than the Angels, and crowned him with glory and honour. Many, **O LORD** my **GOD**, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done ; and thy thoughts which are to us-ward, they cannot be

reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not: but a body hast thou prepared for thy SON JESUS; who hath done<sup>e</sup> thy will, O GOD, and made himself an offering for sin, and made us one body with himself. Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto thee, O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, and unto thy SON for ever and ever: I offer up myself entirely, both soul and body, unto thee: I consecrate myself here most faithfully to thy service. I delight to do thy will, O my GOD; yea, thy law is within my heart. Withhold not thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me. Unite my heart to fear thy name. Fill me with all thy fulness, O GOD; and above all things with fervent charity. This I pray, that my love may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment; that I may approve things that are excellent; that I may be sincere, and without offence, until the day of CHRIST; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by JESUS CHRIST unto thy glory and praise. I am thine, save me. Multiply grace, mercy, and peace, upon me unto eternal life: for it is thou, O GOD, that givest strength and power unto thy people.”

Immediately after receiving the Cup, they may lift up their hearts and say:—

“BLESSED be the GOD and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in CHRIST; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence. O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all. The earth is full of thy riches; and so is the great and wide sea, wherein are creatures innumerable. These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and they are filled with



good : but eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which thou hast prepared for them that love thee, and hast now revealed to thy holy Apostles and Prophets by the SPIRIT, according to thy eternal purpose in CHRIST JESUS our LORD ; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was manifested in the flesh to destroy the works of the Devil, and died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, and ascended up on high to give gifts unto men, and is at the right hand of God to make intercession for us ; Angels, Authorities, and Powers, being made subject unto him, and sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. O the unsearchable riches of CHRIST, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge ! I submit myself unto thee, O thou Prince of Life, and LORD of glory : unto thee I will live henceforth, and not unto myself ; and if for thee I must die, the will of my LORD be done. Thy favour is better than life ; in thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore. LORD, increase my faith, strengthen my hope, raise my love to a greater height, and make patience have its perfect work ; that I may not love my life unto the death, but that the trial of my faith, though it be tried by fire, may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at thy appearing. And O that our hearts may be comforted, being knit together in love ; that we may be ever kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as thou, O GOD, for CHRIST's sake hast forgiven us ; that so, with united affections, we may be still praising thee, and saying, Blessed be the LORD of heaven and earth, who only doeth wondrous things : and blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen."

*Or thus :—*"O THE breadth, and length, and depth, and height ! O the love of CHRIST JESUS our LORD, which passeth knowledge !—Who made himself of no reputation, but took upon him the form of a servant ; and, humbling

himself, became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, for us miserable sinners. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing : for he hath washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by CHRIST JESUS. Behold, O LORD, a heart that offers up itself unto thee, in love unfeigned. I absolutely resign my will to thy holy will and pleasure. Not my will, but thy will be done. And praised be God who hath made a new covenant with us in the blood of JESUS ; who hath by him reconciled all things to himself, both in heaven and in earth ; and hath now renewed unto us the assurance of his continued love. Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks ; unto thee do we give thanks : for that thou art near unto us, thy wondrous works declare. The LORD remember all our offerings and accept our sacrifices : Grant us according to our hearts' desire, and fulfil all our petitions : That we may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding ; and may walk worthy of him unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in knowledge ; strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness ; giving thanks continually to the Father of Mercies, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. And let all the people say, Amen."

Some perhaps may still desire a more compendious address, immediately after they have communicated ; for whose sake I shall add these two following.

As soon as the Minister hath pronounced those words, "Feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving," they may say,—“I believe, O blessed JESUS, that thou art the LORD of heaven and earth, the Prince of Life, and the King of glory. I most heartily thank thee, that thou wast pleased

to stoop so low, as to visit us poor dust and ashes ; yea, vile and miserable sinners. Blessed be thy goodness which moved thee to do more,—to humble thyself to death, even to the death of the Cross, that we might be lifted up to immortal life. I devote myself everlastingly to thy love and obedience. I consent to all thy holy Gospel ; desiring that all the dwellers upon earth would praise and serve thee. Let all nations come and worship before thee. Let all generations call thee blessed : and show forth thy dying love, while the sun and moon endure, to the glory of **GOD the FATHER.** Amen, Amen.”

At the giving of the cup, let them attend to those words : “ Drink this in remembrance that **CHRIST**’s blood was shed for thee, and be thankful ; ” and say,—“ I do remember, with all thankfulness, thy most marvellous love, O my gracious **LORD** and **SAVIOUR** ; and the remembrance of it is dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver. I will never forget thy merciful kindness, which is so great towards us ; but will be always showing forth thy praise, and giving thanks to the Father of Mercies, who hath raised up such a mighty salvation for us. Blessed, for ever blessed, be his incomprehensible love, which gave his only-begotten **SON** to die for us, that we might live through him ! Henceforth I will not live to myself, but unto him that died for me. Behold, and accept, O **GOD**, a heart that entirely offers itself unto thee, and delights to do thy will. Preserve me unchangeably in thy love, and in unfeigned love to all my brethren. Let thy mercy, O **LORD**, be upon me, according as my hope is in thee.”

But when you have eased your hearts a little by these expressions of faith, love, and grateful remembrance of our **SAVIOUR**’s kindness, you will still find room for more devout effusions of your souls in some holy exercise or other, while you are at this feast. Either before or after you have been at the table of the **LORD**, (while the rest of the congregation is communicating,) there will be time to entertain yourselves with sundry meditations ; which I shall briefly suggest unto you in the next part of this treatise.

## PART III.

### HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH PROFIT AND PLEASURE.



HAVING showed you what is the nature and use of this Feast, you will expect, perhaps, that I should tell you who are the persons whom our LORD invites unto it. This is a question easy to be resolved, from what hath been said. If you are baptized into the name of the LORD JESUS, and take upon yourselves to make good that promise, vow, and covenant, which were made in your name when you were baptized; if you understand the ends of this Holy Communion, (which I have named,) and are willing and desirous to perform them; you are the persons for whose company he waits, and he would gladly see you at his table. Nay, he will take it ill, and account it a neglect of him and of your duty, a breach of your promise to obey all his holy commands, if you accept not of his kindness in inviting you thither; because this is one of his commands, as I have proved, that you should do this in remembrance of him. Do not entangle yourselves therefore in endless doubts and scruples about the qualifications which are required in those who come to this Supper of the LORD: but only examine your hearts by this plain and certain rule, “Do you believe the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST to be the truth of God? Do you consent to be governed by his laws? Do you remember, and will you stand to, the vow that was made in your name, when you were baptized? Are you desirous to renew that covenant, in the manner

that I have described? Would you partake of this Holy Communion, that you may commemorate your SAVIOUR'S dying love; that you may acknowledge him to be your LORD, and may devote and unite your hearts unto him; that you may bind yourself in the bond of peace to all your brethren; and that you may receive more of his grace, and greater assurance of his love? Then lay aside all your fears; and humbly approach unto him, to render him the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and to receive fresh tokens and pledges of his unchangeable affection to you. That I may the better raise those affections in you, which are suitable to this action, it will not be amiss to remind you of the excellency of the feast to which you are invited.

To make a true feast, these four things (in the opinion of the most learned of all the ancient Romans) must conspire and meet together. 1. *Select persons*; 2. *A convenient place*; 3. *A suitable time*; and 4. *Proper provision*. Now in all these regards, if we reflect a while on them, this Supper of the LORD will be found incomparably beyond the noblest entertainment which the world ever saw.

1. For as concerning the *persons* that here meet together, they are our blessed LORD, the Master of the feast, and those who believe on his name; to whom he hath given the right, or privilege, to become the sons of GOD. (*John i. 12.*) So that there cannot either be a more honourable or more sweet society found under heaven.

2. Then for the *place*, you see it is prepared in the House of GOD: where we "give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; and pay our vows unto him in the presence of all his people;" where the Angels (as I may say) are waiters, and the heavenly host are glad to attend upon us; according to those words of the Apostle, (in the very Chapter where he treats of the Sacrament,) "The woman ought to have a covering on her head, because of the Angels." (1 *Cor. xi. 10.*)

3. As for the *time*, it is commonly the LORD'S DAY; the day when he arose from the dead, when he trampled

under his feet the great enemy of mankind; when the Angels brought news that he had accomplished our redemption; when the host of heaven was at a gaze to see mortal man made immortal, and restored to the state of paradise again; when we have nothing else to do but to rest and rejoice, to declare the works of the LORD, to give thanks to his holy name, and triumph in his praise.

4. And lastly, for the *provision* itself, it is the body and blood of the LORD of life; bread that excels the Angels' food; a cup of blessing, of which these sons of glory never tasted. To these our LORD calls, nay, beseeches and entreats us to come, that we may feast ourselves on his sacrifice of himself, be filled with his love, and satisfy ourselves with his joys and everlasting consolation.

Now what soul is there that can be willing to lose his share in such divine food? that would be shut out from such society, or absent from such a place; or desire to spend his day better than in a near communion with our LORD? Either men do not believe these things, or they do not reflect on them; otherwise, there is none that reads this, but will be moved to make one at this holy feast. But then, as you cannot choose, if you seriously consider, but judge it very desirable to be admitted to it, so you cannot but think how you should behave yourself in so great a presence.

I shall spend a few pages, in directing you how to demean yourselves before him, and dispose your hearts to enjoy most sweet and fruitful communion with him.

Our LORD here presenting himself unto us in this broken bread, and wine poured forth, we are not to look on these as dumb signs, but as things that speak most significantly to us. Though we never heard a word with our ears, yet our minds are to conceive, when CHRIST crucified is set before our eyes, that we hear him discoursing to us of his love, of the ends of his death, of all the great blessings that he hath bought for us, and of all those things which he justly expects from them that profess themselves his disciples; and accordingly it becomes us to

make such replies unto him, and to answer in our hearts with such expressions of our affection, as may show that we understand, and are very sensible of what he says unto us.

Of both these I shall treat a little, leaving it to every man's own devotion to enlarge, as he sees occasion.

I. First then, when you see these symbols of CHRIST's body and blood, think that you behold the crucified JESUS represented to you; that you stand in his sight, and are in his company, yea, and hear him speaking graciously to you, and calling you by the name of his chosen guests, his dear friends.

Make account that you hear him say, "My brethren, I sent my Ministers to call you to my house, and bid you to my table, which here you see spread for you. It is well done that you are come. The reason of my invitation is, that I may remind you of my love, and that you may show yourselves my friends, by a joyful commemoration thereof. I have no other end in sending for you, but to make you more sensible of your happiness; to lay obligations on you to continue in it, and to impart unto you new tokens of my love,—the very greatest pledges that I can bestow on you, to assure you that I will be your eternal friend. You may think perhaps, that is but a little bread and wine which here you see before you; but open the eyes of your mind; remember and believe what I have taught you; and you will see that this is my body which was broken for you, and that this is my blood which was shed for you; and on these I would now have you feast together. Behold here, how the spear pierced my side. See the hole which was made by the lance when it ran to my very heart. Do you not discern how my hands were wounded, how my feet were bored, when I was nailed to the Cross for you? How despitefully was I used! how cruelly was I tormented!—besides all the mockeries and abuses, the agony and bloody sweat, which I endured for you. Did I not love you, when I suffered thus for you? Can you choose but read the greatness of my affection, which is written in my most precious blood? Can you doubt that you are dear unto me, whom

I have purchased at so high a rate? Let those wounds speak for me, and tell you. Look into them, and see what a vehement desire I had to accomplish your salvation. What sorrow was there ever like unto my sorrow? Or what love was there ever like unto my love? This broken bread, and this wine poured out, tell you that I have died for you. What greater assurance can your heart wish of my love, than this which I now offer you? What more would you have me to do, to testify that my heart is still towards you, and that I will be ever mindful of you? 'As the FATHER hath loved me, so have I loved you;' and all that I desire of you is, that you would 'continue in my love; even as I have kept my FATHER's commandments, and abide in his love.' This is the token I would have of your kindness to me. 'Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.' Nothing else do I request of you, but that you would not hurt yourselves by sinning against my love; that you would henceforth live unto me, who died for you. Come, renew your covenant with me, by taking, eating, and drinking, this which I give you; plight me your faith that you will be ever true unto me. I will present you fair and beautiful before my FATHER, as if you had been always innocent. I will deliver you from the wrath to come, and give you the blessing of eternal life. If you doubt at all of it, come hither, take this bread, and drink this cup: as sure as you now receive these, your sins shall never be remembered. By these tokens I give you an interest in my death and sufferings. I oblige myself, by these sensible signs, to perform all my promises. I seal to you that gracious covenant which was made in my blood. As certainly as I died, I assure you that you shall live for ever. Only, do not deny me your hearty love. Correspond with me in sincere affection. And by eating and drinking here at my table, tie yourselves to be my faithful servants. Then I allow you to begin now the joys of heaven. Nay, I require you to rejoice in my salvation; to comfort yourselves in my promises; to solace your souls in the hope of my



glory; and to sing the song of Angels, which shall be completed in eternal hallelujahs. Praise ye the LORD."

II. And will it be possible then that you should be altogether silent, and answer never a word unto him? Can you find nothing to return to so gracious a declaration of the bowels of his mercy towards you? Or will it be hard to tell him your heart, who hath so freely opened his unto you?

Pause awhile upon every part of the foregoing words, and then thus reply unto him:—

1. You may say to him, "O my LORD, I blush to see my soul so foul, that nothing less than thy precious blood would serve to cleanse it. I am confounded to see thee in such a condition for us, who cared not how vile, and base, and miserable we were. What have we done, that we should bring thee to a Cross? O what wretches were we, that we should understand the love of GOD no better, than to stand in need of such an instance of it! With what confidence can we behold thee thus battered and bruised, thus wounded and bloody, thus full of pain and anguish, as thou representest thyself unto us? I am ashamed to think that we have exposed thee to such an ignominy and shame. I am grieved at the heart, that we have made thee a man of sorrows. And our infidelity, O how great is it, that after thou wast pleased to endure all this for us, we should stand in need of such frequent remonstrances of it; and be in danger to forget thee, or distrust thee, unless thou didst continually thus present thyself unto us, and assure us of thy good-will towards us! O my LORD, how shall I present myself before thee, who am one of those that have occasioned all this care and pain, this agony and passion, this sweat and this blood? I sigh to remember the many groans with which we have made thy heart to ache. It wounds my ears to hear those words, 'My GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken me?' It is too much, too much, but that thou art love itself, to spend all this love upon such insensible and ungrateful sinners."

2. Thus having begun, you may, in the second place,

acknowledge your unworthiness to be guests to so great a person as he is. You may say, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am? It is too high a favour to sup with thee; since I am not worthy to pick up the crumbs that fall from thy table. The least of thy common mercies is too good for me; how shall I dare to approach to this fulness of heavenly blessings? I have sinned, I have sinned; and am not worthy to be called thy son; how shall I appear before thee? O my LORD, I come merely in obedience to thy call. I should not have presumed to appear in thy presence, but that thou hast bidden me; and should have been afraid to be seen in this condition, but that I was more afraid not to be seen here at all. My comfort is, that thou wilt not be angry with us when we obey thee; nor be offended that we show ourselves ready to execute thy commands." —And here,

3. You may call to remembrance those sins which brought our SAVIOUR to his cross; and let him know, by an humble and ingenuous confession, how the case stands with you. Say to him, "O my LORD, thou dost call to mind, by this remembrance of thy dying for us, the foulness and pollution of all mankind. All our iniquities stare me in the face, as the people gazed and stared on thee. I see our deformities, by seeing thee thus vilely and despitefully used. It was our covetousness that stripped thee naked; our pride that crowned thee with thorns; our intemperance that gave thee gall and vinegar to drink; our contempt of religion that put upon thee all those scoffs; our coldness in devotion, which put thee into that agony and sweat; our want of love to God, that made thee hated and rejected of men. I see as in a glass, now that I look upon thy blood, the abominable state of sinful men: how shall one of that wicked race be bold to look up unto thee; especially since, though I had known thy love, I so little valued it, and sinned against thy precious blood? Canst thou endure to enter into familiarity with such a soul as this? May I hope to be admitted into thy holy fellowship, and to dwell

with thee? I abhor, I loath, I am weary of myself; desiring nothing more than to be made like to thee in purity and holiness, in truth and justice, in love and humility, in meekness and patience, in compassion and forgiveness, and in entire resignation to the will of God.”—From hence,

4. Proceed to stir up in yourselves the greatest hatred against your sins. Continue your addresses to him, and represent your extremest detestation of that covetousness and worldly-mindedness, that pride and vain glory, that ambition and love of the praise of men, that envy and ill-will, that wrath and bitterness of spirit, that hypocrisy and partiality, which betrayed and killed him, the Prince of life. Show him how much you abhor these, and all that is evil; resolving to cleave to that which is good. “Destroy, O LORD,” may you say, “all these thine enemies, and root them perfectly out of my heart. Pierce through all these evil affections, by a stroke from thy cross and passion. I have brought them to be slain by thine hand, for they are too strong for mine. If there be any life remaining in them, O that they may be quite mortified, and never able to stir any more. They are offensive to me, as well as unto thee. Would I might never see them more, but crucified and dead. Would I might never behold them, unless it be drowned in thy blood.”—And then,

5. Excite in your heart the mightiest sense of his love. You may say to him; “O my LORD, what manner of love is this, wherewith thou hast loved us, that we should be called the sons of God! How great was thy goodness which brought thee down from heaven, and made thee one of us! And was it not enough that thou shouldst come to dwell among us in the likeness of sinful flesh; but thou wouldest also lay down thy life for us? Would nothing serve to testify the height of thy affection to us, unless thou sufferedst the death of the cross! O the infinite riches of thy grace! For a friend one might be content to die. But what should make thee so in love with enemies, with the very worst of enemies, with idolaters, with us Gentiles who were without God in the world,

yea with us, who now that we know the greatness of thy love, have so little to thee? What am I, O LORD, that thou shouldest command me to love thee? Nay, shouldest take such a course to deserve my love? What am I to thee, that thou shouldest so much desire me, and now thus graciously visit me, and come to entertain me! What made thee, being in heaven with them who knew so well how to love and serve thee, descend to us who know so ill how to do either? Couldst thou not be satisfied unless we enjoy thee? Nor be contented to be without us, who have such low thoughts of thee and of thy love? Is it possible that thou shouldest still continue it to such insensible wretches? Art thou still desirous of our friendship, and come to give us new assurances of thy grace by making us partakers of thy body and blood? O how precious are thy thoughts to us! How great is the sum of them! I can do no less, most blessed SAVIOUR, than set my soul wide open to thee; and accept thy kindness with the most enlarged affection. How happy should I think myself, if I could think of nothing, and delight in nothing, but thee! O that a perfect image of thee, in all virtues, may be formed in me, and be ever dearer to me than life itself; that I may live no longer, but that thou, O blessed JESUS, mayest live in me; and that the life which now I live in the flesh, I may live by the faith of thee, the SON OF GOD, who lovedst me, and gavest thyself for me."—And then,

6. It will be a fit time to offer up yourself entirely to his service. Pray him to accept of a poor sacrifice at your hands. Though it be worth nothing at all, yet entreat him to receive it. Say to him, "O SAVIOUR, I have known and believed the love that thou hadst to us. I see here the excessive greatness of thy dying love. Never was any thing bought so dearly as this sinful soul. Never was so great a price paid for any creature, as thou hast laid down for my sake. If I were as great as the highest angel, I should be an oblation too little for thee. The flames of those heavenly fires are not strong enough wherewith to offer to thee. But that I may be just (for it is no more) I

humbly lay myself here at thy altar ; and present thee with all I have. I sacrifice soul and body, without any reserve, to thy holy will and pleasure ; though I must be beholden to thy great love, and not my own, to procure acceptance for me. I know how vile and unworthy I am, that thou shouldest have any respect to my oblation. All that I can say, is, that I offer myself for this end, that I may be made better ; and so have every day more and more to return unto thee."

7. For that purpose engage yourselves in a covenant to him, that you will never rob him any more of that which you have so solemnly offered to him. "I look, O LORD," may you say, "upon myself, as a holy and devoted thing. I have consecrated myself to thy service, and so I will ever remain. Never will I be so sacrilegious as to employ myself to any other uses, but only thine. Thou hast been pleased to make me thy temple ; and therefore I will not willingly suffer thy holy place to be defiled. I am sealed to thyself, and have thy mark upon me. I will never consent that my soul should be broken up by any temptation, and stolen away from thee. I promise thee my faithful obedience. I bind myself by these presents in a firm and everlasting tie of duty to thee. I am not my own ; but bought with a price. Therefore will I glorify God in my body and in my spirit, which are God's."—And then,

8. Say to him : "Since thou hast so graciously died for me ; since thou hast invited me hither to represent thy death and sufferings to me, and assured me of thy love ; since thou hast bidden me to commemorate it at this holy feast ; be not angry if I call thee my LORD and my God. Suffer me to claim an interest in the merits of thy precious blood, which was shed to be a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Look on me, O thou that sittest at the right hand of God, with the favour thou bearest to thy people. Join thy powerful intercession with my humble suit to the Father of Mercies. I believe that thou appearest in the presence of God for us, and, as we show forth thy sacrifice of thyself here on earth, presentest it in the most

high and holy place, before the mercy-seat. Bless me, O LORD, from that throne of thy glory. And raise up such a holy hope in thee as if I heard that voice sounding from thence, 'I am thy salvation.'"—And here,

9. Beg of him his mighty grace to confirm you in your resolution; that so you may always maintain in your soul this sense of his pardoning love. "Since thou, O LORD," may you say to him, "art so forward to do us good, to die for us when we desired it not, to institute this feast which we never expected, O do not deny me the continuance of thine almighty grace. Take not thy HOLY SPIRIT from me; but let him be my constant companion, my guide, my helper, my comforter for ever. Is he not the purchase of thy blood? Is he not thy own promise? Hast thou not received him of the Father? And art thou not possessed of this gift, and of glory and power to bestow it on us? Thou thyself hast told us that it 'shall be given to those that ask it;' and that 'because thou livest, we shall live also.' Perfect that which concerneth me; and forsake not the work of thine own hands."

10. Conclude all in praises to our LORD; rejoice in his holy name; and say, "Blessed be the LORD our GOD for ever; blessed be thy glorious name which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even thou art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is in them; and thou preservest all, and the host of heaven worshippeth thee. Thou art the LORD, the GOD and FATHER of JESUS CHRIST; who hast chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, redeemed us by his blood, raised him from the dead, and given him glory, that our faith and hope might be in thee our GOD. Thine, O blessed JESUS, is the power and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. In thy hand is power and might, and in thy hand it is to make great, and to give strength to all. Now therefore our GOD, we thank thee, and praise thy

glorious name. We will bless the LORD from this time forth, and for evermore. Yea, bless the LORD, ye his Angels, that excel in strength ; that do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word. Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure. Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion : Bless the LORD, O my soul."

Thus if we did converse with him, it would be so pleasant that we should cry out with the Jews in another case, "LORD, evermore give us this bread." (*John vi. 34.*) We should long for such another repast ; and be desirous every day to wait on him at his table. At least we should greedily embrace the next invitation that he gives us to come unto it. And because we cannot every day do this in remembrance of him, we should secretly retire unto him in our heart, as into his holy temple ; and there call to mind what he hath done unto us, commemorate his love, maintain our acquaintance, and renew to him our vows ; that by all these ways we may prepare ourselves for his fellowship and society in the eternal world.

It may happen indeed that there may be but a few communicants at the table of the LORD, and so you may not have time there to do all this. In which case, you may use only some part of it ; or thus in brief open your heart to him, when you see how he declares his love to you :

"ADORED be thy condescending love, O merciful SAVIOUR, to thine unworthy servant, who blushes to lift up his eyes towards thee, even when thou invitest me unto thee. For, besides my other guiltiness, this most gracious representation which now thou makest of thyself to me, doth but little move my dull and heavy affections. I am heartily ashamed of myself ; only I desire to become better. And here I prostrate myself before thee, presenting thee with a poor oblation of my soul and body, which I dedicate again, with the most dutiful affection I am able, unto thee. Do thou, O LORD, excite a greater ; that when I shall appear before thee again, I may present thee

with a soul more pure, humble, meek, merciful, and improved in all other fruits of thy HOLY SPIRIT. In thy mercies alone are all my hopes. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is thy mercy towards them that fear thee. As far as the east is from the west, so far hast thou removed our transgressions from us. Strengthen me with might by thy SPIRIT in the inner man; that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, I may live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great GOD, and thee our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. Now unto him that is able to keep me from falling, and to present me faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise GOD our SAVIOUR, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

But when there is time, you will not spend it, I hope, in any thing else but such meditations as these. And that every one of them may come in its season, you may make use of them in this manner. Think you hear our SAVIOUR speaking to you by the bread and the wine; when you see the one broken, and the other poured out. Then you may immediately employ your thoughts in the first four (together with the second meditation set down in the Second Part) while the Minister is communicating himself, and others with him. The fifth and sixth will be seasonable after you have received the bread, and the seventh and eighth after the cup; together with those mentioned before in the same place. And the last two, in like manner, may be used after you have withdrawn yourself from the holy table; or before, according as you can find room for them. And if your spirit be not able to hold out in so many thoughts and expressions of the inward sense and affection of your heart, you may single out those which you find to suit you best. And at some opportunity, the rest perhaps may be as acceptable; nay, you may feel your soul enlarged, and run out in more pious affections than I can



suggest or excite. But I desire you never to omit one meditation, when you behold the rest of the company receiving,—which is, that all those, and the whole church, who partake of this holy communion, are your brethren; to whom you must stir up the most fervent charity, and the readiest disposition to relieve, counsel, assist, comfort, or admonish them, as there shall be occasion, and with whom you must resolve to live in the strictest unity, as those who are members of the same body. When you think therefore that our LORD tells you, there is nothing he desires of you, but that you would continue in his love and friendship, by keeping his commandments, remember that he adds presently, “This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you.” And so take them all into your heart, with as much affection, as if the embracing each other in our arms, and giving the holy kiss of charity, were still in use among us. And let the memory of CHRIST’s death for his enemies, and of this divine feast together with him and your brethren, ever kill all your enmities, extinguish your anger, compose your differences, sweeten the harshness of your spirits, and make you live together as loving friends, that hope to live in endless love in the highest heavens. Of that you may also look upon this feast as an earnest; and begin those joys in such thoughts as these, at the holy communion,—that, one day you shall keep an eternal feast with our SAVIOUR, in the happy company of the Saints and Angels, who will all join in the cheerful praises of the “blessed and only Potentate, the KING of KINGS, and LORD of LORDS, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.”

## PART IV.

CONTAINING SEVERAL OTHER MEDITATIONS  
AND PRAYERS.



By this time, I hope, you see that it is good for you to draw near to God, at his holy table; if you have any desire to be real Christians, or any savour of spiritual pleasures. You must wholly cast away all remembrance of your duty, and be lost to all rational satisfaction; or else be strongly inclined to keep yourselves in a constant preparation for frequent communion there with our blessed SAVIOUR. An innocent, holy, and useful life, cannot but commend itself to you, if it be but on this score, that you may be entertained with such a comfort, as to know the love of God in CHRIST to you, and be fit to be feasted continually with such delightful pledges of it. There is no comparison between all the jollities in the world, and this one pleasure of giving hearty thanks to God for his unspeakable mercy to us in CHRIST JESUS.

We may apply to this heavenly nourishment what the Jews say of their Manna, sent down by God from heaven for them, which contained in it (as their tradition affirms) all the tastes that any man desired and longed for; it being so suited to every palate and constitution, that none could fail to be both fed and pleased, though they were of ever so different tempers. Accommodate this now to that divine food which our SAVIOUR hath ordered to be prepared for us; and you will find it true, that he hath declared therein his sweetness to his children, by making it

suitable to every complexion of mind, and temper of spirit, who may meet with what is agreeable to their wants, and will give content to their desires. The infant Christians are hereby marvellously cherished and encouraged; it pours on them the oil of joy and gladness. It gives strength and power to the young men, and is the bread of life to them; that they may "overcome the wicked one," (as ST. JOHN writes to them, 1 *Epist.* ii. 14,) and never yield to the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. And to the fathers, or more aged Christians, to those who have had long experience of the service of God, it gives a singular relish also; and makes them say, that his "commandments are sweeter than the honey or the honeycomb," and that "in keeping of them there is great reward." Their hopes of immortal bliss are hereby exceedingly advanced, and they receive the foretastes of it, as the Israelites did of the land flowing with milk and honey.

But it is not the business of this treatise to demonstrate these things. I only conclude from hence, that this is a great reason why many that have some good desires, some good purposes, yea, begin to do well, remain so weak and feeble, so languishing and dull in their devotion, nay, grow cold and indifferent again; because they do not come to this holy feast, that they may cherish, encourage, and confirm what God hath wrought in their hearts. They are easily overcome and drawn away by flatteries and violent temptations from abroad; and so bring a reproach upon the ways of God, breed an ill opinion of them in themselves and others, and persuade themselves they cannot do better, but that there is a necessity of sinning; because they will not use the means which God hath appointed for strengthening their inward sense of spiritual things, or because they will not frequently use them when they have opportunity.

It is the design of this last part of my discourse, to furnish you with matter for your meditation, and with suitable prayers; whereby you may both quicken your-

selves in your closets when you are preparing to go to the table of the LORD, and likewise preserve alive those godly affections and resolutions which are excited there, after you are come home ;—that so by continuing to look upon what you have done, and what your SAVIOUR hath done unto you, and beholding, as in a clear mirror, the great love of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, and your great obligations to him, you may never forget him, nor the duty you owe to him, but be blessed in a faithful observance of both.

No man's thoughts are always alike, neither his that writes, nor his that reads ; therefore sometimes one may be most agreeable to you, sometimes another : but there will be no time, I hope, wherein you may not be able, among them all, to fit yourselves with a Meditation and a Prayer, that may further your devotion towards God. And he that will be at so much pains as to follow some such method as this, will never be able to say hereafter, as too many wretched fools have done, that they have frequented this Holy Sacrament, but were never the better for it.



#### THE FIRST MEDITATION BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

CONSIDER with yourself, some time before you communicate, that you are invited to come, not only into the presence, but unto the table of GOD, and to be one of the guests of the LORD of all the world. What an honour is this ! Shall any business, any pleasure on earth, put by the thoughts of it ? It is impossible, if you remember what the great GOD is who calls you to him ; and that he sets the body of his SON before you upon your table ; and that your cup is filled with his blood ; that the Angels

think it not below them to wait on you and minister to you ; and that the **DIVINE SPIRIT** will be ready to breathe upon you, and fill you with such holy love, that you shall send up your soul in joyful hymns of praise and thanks to **GOD** our **SAVIOUR**. With what admiration should you receive the news of this invitation ! With what reverence ought you to approach him ! With what forwardness of love, with what gladness of heart, should you go to meet our blessed **LORD** ! Was there ever any kindness like unto his ? Did there ever such a furnace of love (if I may so represent it) burn in any heart ? Could he do more than die the bloody and shameful death of the Cross, to save sinners ? How is it possible that the remembrance of this tender love and compassion should ever die ? Unless we be wilfully careless, he will have our love ; he will not suffer any thing to rob him of the purchase of his blood. For lest we should prove so ungrateful as to let him slip out of our mind, he hath left himself still among us in sensible signs and representations. By these he shows us his bloody death and passion ; he makes himself present to our faith ; and we may see that he is desirous to do more than die for us ; having contrived a way to live for ever in us, and be firmly united to us.

What manner of love is this that Heaven hath manifested unto us ! Who can refrain from tears of grief to think of his own ingratitude ; and from tears of joy to think of the wonderful kindness of the **LORD** ? Can you look on him who was pierced for our sins, and not lament and mourn ? Can you see his bleeding wounds, and not be troubled ? And yet when you consider that by those stripes you are healed ; and that he hath washed us from our sins in his blood ; that faithful souls may take sanctuary in his wounds, and be safe ; you cannot but rejoice in the **LORD**, and be glad in his salvation.

Call to your soul then, and stir up all the graces of the **HOLY SPIRIT** ; that so you may go to this holy feast with a deep humility ; a godly sorrow ; a perfect hatred of all sin, both of the flesh and of the spirit ; a strong resolution

against them ; a lowly faith ; enlarged desires ; and great longings. Ask your soul, What dost thou think of? What dost thou love? What dost thou long for? With what intention art thou going to the LORD's table? Are the treasures of christian wisdom and knowledge more in thine account than thousands of gold and silver? Hadst thou rather die than willingly offend thy SAVIOUR that died for thee? Art thou going to hang all remaining affection to thy sins upon his Cross ; that there they may be perfectly crucified, and never taken down till they be quite dead? Resolve to go and tell him as much, and to declare to him the sense of thine heart. Only ask thyself again, what appetite dost thou feel in thee? Dost thou long to be more like him, and made partaker of his divine nature? Art thou going to make a new resignation of thyself to him, to be made one spirit with him, never any more to depart from him? Then think how the Bridegroom will welcome thee; how our SAVIOUR will declare forth his love to thee, and give thee assurances that his mercy endureth for ever, and bid thee rejoice and be exceeding glad in what he hath done already, and in the hopes thou hast of what he will do hereafter.

And here you may call to mind how the WORD was made flesh, and dwelt among us ; how he manifested forth his glory by his wonderful works ; how he taught us the way to eternal life ; and at last was delivered into the hands of sinful men, and was crucified for us ; with all the rest that concerns the knowledge of CHRIST ;—that so you may have it more ready in your thoughts, when you come to his table, to do this in commemoration of him.

In this manner also you may bewail the sins of your former life ; sue for pardon of what is past ; and beseech the grace of his HOLY SPIRIT, to assist your resolution of well-doing for the time to come.

## THE PRAYER SOME TIME BEFORE.

O ETERNAL GOD, the fountain of being and bliss, highly exalted above all our words or thoughts ! I am astonished at the thoughts of the brightness of thy glory ; and justly afraid to present myself before so great and holy a majesty. Even that abundant grace which invites me to thee, abashes me too, when I reflect upon my shameful ingratitude. It becomes me to lie down in silence, rather than confidently to lift up mine eyes towards heaven to speak unto thee. But since thou art so rich in mercy, as to require repenting sinners to draw nigh to the throne of grace ; I prostrate myself in the humblest reverence before the Searcher of all hearts ; not to excuse, thou knowest, but to aggravate my faults ; to acknowledge the justice of thy laws ; to condemn myself for opposing thy sovereign authority ; and to vow to thee the most hearty obedience for the rest of my life.

I have done so much evil, and so little good ; been so eager in the pursuit of the things of this world, and so cold about those of eternity ; so unmindful of my promises, unthankful for thy benefits, and unfruitful in the knowledge of the LORD JESUS ; that it is a wonder of thy patience, I am still alive, and not cut down like a barren tree that cumberes the ground. For ever adored be thy sparing mercy, which hath borne so long with an unprofitable servant, who hath in so many ways offended in thought, word, and deed, against thy Divine Majesty. I have not given thee that honour and service which I owe to my Almighty Creator ; nor laid to heart, as I ought, thine infinite love in CHRIST my Redeemer ; nor duly followed the motions of thy HOLY SPIRIT, which thou hast sent to renew and sanctify my affections, and draw me to thine obedience. I have not lived according to the faith which I continually confess ; but behaved myself too often as if I dreaded not the threatenings, and valued not the promises, of my LORD CHRIST ; as if I

feared not his vengeance, nor cared for his rewards; and as if he would not come to judge the world, and to render to all men according to their works.

The stupid insensibleness of mine heart, even now that I remember these things, brings new accusations against me. It testifies that I know not, as I ought, the terror of the LORD, but am apt rashly to mention thy name, without any awful and considerate regard to thy infinite greatness, power, and holiness. I am no more worthy to be called thy servant; much less to present thee with any offering; nothing but shame and confusion of face belong to me; and it is only of thy tender mercy that I am not lamenting those follies in weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, which I speak of now with so little grief and bitterness of spirit. Mercy! still more mercy, good LORD, I most humbly beseech thee! O that a greater fear and dread of thee may now fall down mightily upon me, and overspread me! O that I may feel such a strong sense of thine incomprehensible majesty pressing on my heart, as may bear down all other thoughts, sink me low, and make me abhor myself in thy sight! I know that the sacrifices of the LORD are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O GOD, thou wilt not despise. And JESUS hath also offered himself a sacrifice for us, in whom thou art well pleased. For JESUS's sake, dispose me now to offer unto thee that acceptable sacrifice. And give me grace ever to fear thee, and to walk humbly with thee; to preserve a tender sense of my duty towards thee; and conscientiously to obey thee; that so, by virtue of his sacrifice of himself, all my sins may be remembered no more.

Blessed be GOD, that I have any hope of that great mercy. Blessed be GOD, who by him hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. By him I will offer up to thee continually the sacrifice of praise, giving thanks to thy name. Yea, the mercies of thee my GOD move me to present my body a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto thee, which is my reasonable service. I dedicate myself absolutely to thy



obedience. I will never willingly depart from thy precepts. Assist and strengthen me mercifully with thy grace, that I may perform my vows; and never return to those sins, which grieve thy HOLY SPIRIT, which rent the flesh, and shed the blood of the LORD JESUS, and which I have so often and so solemnly protested against.

And now that I am going to thine holy table, to commemorate the sacrifice of my SAVIOUR, O vouchsafe to make thyself powerfully present to my mind. Represent thyself and thy SON JESUS in so lively a manner to my thoughts, in all thy wisdom, power, goodness, holiness, and truth, that I may never forget thee more; but most seriously reverence thee, and love thee, and rejoice in thee, and trust thee, and obey thee, all the days of my life. Imprint the image of thy SON upon me; that I may carry him ever in mine heart, and have his life and death continually before mine eyes; and in all things conform myself to his will, and fashion myself after his holy example. Come, LORD JESUS, and possess thyself of my whole man. Purify me from all remaining filthiness, either of the flesh or of the spirit. Bring all thy heavenly graces with thee into my soul. And be my perpetual defence, by giving me a fuller communication of thy HOLY SPIRIT, to do my duty towards thee and towards all men.

And for that end, compose mine unsettled thoughts, before I approach to thy holy mysteries; that I may attend thee with a full and clear conception of their meaning, with love to thee, and desire to be more like thee; with thy high praises in my mouth, and joy unspeakable in my heart. May I presume, most gracious FATHER, to ask such tastes of thy wondrous love, that I may never be able to delight in any thing so much as in the remembrance of it; that mine eyes may be ever towards the LORD, and that I may hunger and thirst perpetually after thy righteousness, until I am perfectly made partaker of thy divine nature, and rendered meet to be translated to that high and holy place, where I shall see thee (not as now in mysterious representations, but) openly, and

face to face. Amen, LORD JESUS, who art able to save to the uttermost all them that come to God by thee.

#### A MEDITATION AFTER THE SACRAMENT.

WHEN you come home, ask your soul, What wentest thou out to see? Where hast thou been? And what hast thou been doing? Never forget that thou hast been with the Lord of Life; and that before God, Angels, and men, thou hast acknowledged him, and devoted thyself to his obedience; that he hath vouchsafed to represent unto thee his marvellous love, the pains he hath taken for thy salvation, and the great desire he hath to see thee with him in immortal glory, of which he hath given thee such earnest and pledges, by making thee partaker of his body and blood, that thou mayest say of that place, where he was pleased to meet thee, "This is no other than the gate of heaven. I have been in the porch of his dwelling-place, and begun to enter into the joy of my LORD. How shall I escape, if I neglect such great salvation! God forbid that I should receive this grace in vain. As I have received CHRIST JESUS the LORD, so will I walk in him. I will endeavour to keep myself holy and unblameable before him in love; and to have my conversation as becomes the Gospel. There are no joys like the joys of God; no pleasures comparable to those of piety. All his commandments are sweeter than honey, and the honey-comb; and in keeping them there is great reward. Shall I cease then to delight myself in the LORD, and to do good? Shall I leave off to do the rest of his will, now I have done this in remembrance of my SAVIOUR? Shall I go away from him, now I am gone from the place where his honour dwelleth? Alas! Whither shall I go? Thou, LORD, hast the words of eternal life. Thou art the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey thee. I will go in the strength of the LORD God; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only. As I have received how

I ought to walk and please **GOD**, so I will abound more and more. I will grow up into him in all things, who is the head, until I perfectly resemble him in righteousness, and holiness, and truth."

Here you may meditate upon all the parts of his holy life, and the complete example he hath set us of all virtues; more especially those which shone at his death. And, as I have known some do, you may single out one or two for your daily meditations all this month, that you may bring yourself to an habitual imitation of him, (suppose in his great humility,) and tread in his steps, "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Say to yourself often, "Was there ever any creature so lowly in heart as my blessed **SAVIOUR**? How reverently and thankfully doth he acknowledge **GOD** in every thing, assuming nothing to himself, but giving all the glory to his heavenly **FATHER**! How easily doth he condescend to the poorest condition, and the meanest offices, for the welfare of the world! O how contented was he to be despised by some; and how little concerned in the applauses of others! How desirous to exalt us by debasing himself, and to wave his own esteem on earth, so he might bring us into the favour of Heaven! I admire the evenness and equality of his spirit, in his constant devotion and submission to **GOD**, and in his stooping so low to minister unto men. What other ambition can I reasonably have than to be made thus like to **JESUS**? I will always live in a sense of my **CREATOR**'s presence, and humbly acknowledge him in all my ways. To him I give the glory of all I have, or can ever do; and resolve most gladly to do all I can to serve my neighbours. There is nothing I will think below me to submit to, for their greater good. It is honour enough to be truly humble. It is sufficient glory to be the follower of such a Master: none other praise will I seek but that, which he the Judge of the world shall give at the day of his appearing."

## THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AT HOME.

O HOLY, holy, holy LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. I most heartily join with all the Saints on earth, and with the Angels in heaven, in giving blessing, honour, and praise unto thee. Glory be unto thee, O GOD most high, thou Creator and Possessor of heaven and earth, thou Preserver of all things, thou spring of all mercy; who hast made Angels and men to know thee, and praise thee, and be beloved of thee for ever; and who hast so loved mankind, that thou hast opened thy bosom, and sent thy dear SON to convey thy love to us. All praise and thanksgiving be to thee, O Father of Mercies, who hast now made me taste how gracious and good thou art.

Glory be to the SON of GOD, who took on him the form of a servant; who died for us upon the Cross; who purged away our sins by his blood; who hath left us so many remembrances of his love, and given us his body and blood to preserve our souls and bodies to eternal life; who lives for ever to make intercession for us, and hath promised to come again, and take us up unto himself.

Blessed be the HOLY SPIRIT, the mighty power of GOD, the Author of all good thoughts, the inspirer of all heavenly desires, the light and comfort of our minds, the purifier of our hearts, the guide and strength of our life, who hath given us the earnest of the eternal inheritance.

Thus will I praise thee whilst I live. I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever. My lips shall rejoice when I sing unto thee, and my soul which thou hast redeemed. For thou, LORD, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. I have now tasted of thy love; the savour of which, O that it may remain fresh for ever in my heart; that I may live for ever in thy love, and be ready to die for thy love; that I may delight to do thy will, O GOD, and be content to suffer it, as the blessed JESUS did. And O that I may feed

on him daily by faith and love, until all the powers of my soul and body be employed by his counsels, and not my own. O that my life may be an exact imitation of him, and express his perfections, and show forth his virtues, and declare to all how much I love him. Especially endue me with great humility and modesty of spirit, that I may live in a constant remembrance of thee my CREATOR; and, considering that thou art the Author of every good gift, may never be puffed up, nor do any thing through strife and vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind esteem others better than myself. O that the same mind may be in me which was also in CHRIST JESUS, who, being in the form of God, made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant; and humbling himself, became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross;—that so thou mayest exalt me in due time to glory and honour, as thou hast highly exalted him; and after thou shalt call me from this delightful employment of worshipping, praising, and serving thee here on earth, I may pass into the company of Angels and Saints, whose work it is with eternal joy to glorify thee our CREATOR and REDEEMER.



#### THE SECOND MEDITATION BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

THINK with yourself,—“It is now so long since our LORD did me the honour to entertain me at his table. Where have I been since that happy time? What have I been doing? Have I never gone to return him thanks for that grace bestowed on me? Have I been a perfect stranger to him who loves me so much, who spake so kindly to me then, and gave me such assurances of his everlasting kindness? O shameless ingratitude! how shall I be able to look him in the face any more?—But I hope the case is not altogether so

bad. Have I not sometimes reflected on his incomparable love; have I not endeavoured to preserve some memory of the benefits he hath done unto me; is there not still a little sense of them remaining in my heart? I would fain encourage myself to wait again upon my LORD. Pardon me, O GOD, if I presume again to enter into thy gates with thanksgiving, and into thy courts with praise, to eat of the bread which came down from heaven, to show forth the LORD's death, to represent to my GOD the sacrifice he made for the atonement of our sins, and by virtue of it humbly to expect the continuance of his pardon, to renew my covenant with him, and to receive new confirmation of the truth of his promises to me. Awake, awake, O my soul, all thy holy thoughts, thy faith, thy love, and every grace, until thou canst say with DAVID, 'My heart is fixed, O GOD, my heart is prepared, I will sing and give praise.'"

Go, then, and show him how thy heart hath been wounded with the thoughts of his love, how all thy sins have been bleeding to death, how ready thou art to offer up thyself again in sacrifice to him. Show him how resolved thou art to walk on still more steadily in his holy ways, to employ all the renewed strength thou shalt receive in his hearty service, and to go forth in the joy of the LORD to do his will with greater humility, freedom, and cheerfulness of spirit.

Then] thou mayest think thou hearest that voice of wisdom, which saith, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." He authorises his Ministers to say, Come, ye blessed souls, receive the tokens of his love, and rejoice in the hopes of his heavenly kingdom. He hath not only prepared for you a kingdom; but as the Psalmist speaks in another case, he hath "prepared a table for you, and anoints your head with oil," (that gladness wherewith your Royal High Priest is crowned,) and "makes your cup (his celestial blessings poured on us) to run over."

Let us go then, and humbly receive that "cup of blessing," to which he invites us. Let us go and renounce all ungodliness and worldly lusts. Let us crucify the flesh

with all the affections and appetites thereof. Let us engage our hearts in that covenant, which we have often taken into our mouth ; and think it our happiness to be his obedient servants. Then make no doubt but that he will accept thee, and send thee away with his blessing. Address thyself as cheerfully to him, as if thou heardest a voice from heaven, saying, “ Rejoice in the LORD alway ; again, I say rejoice.” For GOD hath done great things for you : he hath declared his salvation, and openly showed his righteousness in the sight of the heathen. He hath so loved the world as to give his only-begotten SON, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And therefore, “ be glad, O ye righteous ; be joyful, all ye that be true of heart.”

#### THE PRAYER BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

O MOST holy and ever-blessed GOD, who art brighter than the sun in its strength ; and dwellest in that light which no man can approach unto ; whom no man hath seen, nor can see ; but who in thine infinite goodness hast condescended to show us thy glory by manifesting thyself in our flesh, so that our weakness may look upon thee and live :—I thy poor creature, encompassed with darkness, adore, as I am able, that unspeakable love, though I have just reason to tremble at the presence of my SAVIOUR, and to be afraid when I have before mine eyes the tokens of his dearest love. For I have not duly weighed his infinite kindness, nor rejoiced in the light of his blessed Gospel, nor loved his commandments, nor feared his threatenings, nor settled my hope and satisfaction in his precious promises, as I ought to have done. A great part of my life, I acknowledge, hath held but little conformity with the faith I profess. I have not remembered so frequently as becomes me, my dependance upon thee as my CREATOR, and my subjection to thee as my sovereign LORD. I have strangely forgotten thy fatherly love in sending thy SON to

dwell among us, and his tender love to us in all his agonies, and sweat, and wounds, and bitter passion for our sake. O the folly I have been guilty of in listening to the inordinate desires of the flesh, rather than to the motions of thy HOLY SPIRIT! How many neglects (if not injuries) have my brethren to accuse me of? How little have I been concerned for the honour of Religion, and the good and enlargement of thy Church? I have not glorified thee with body and spirit, as if I believed the resurrection of the dead, and expected from CHRIST JESUS everlasting life. How shall I stand in the great day of judgment, which I have so little thought of? O pierce my heart with a more mortifying sense of what I utter with my mouth. Work in me a deeper sorrow for all my sins, a sorrow that worketh repentance, never to be repented of. Turn my heart, good LORD, turn me quite away from them, that I may "abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good." I spread my wounds before thee that thou mayest cleanse and heal them. It is not thy pardon alone which I desire; but that I may be thoroughly changed in my mind, will, and affections. I long for a strong and settled apprehension of thee, to over-awe and rule me in every thought, word, desire, and action; for a steadfast love to thee, that may move me willingly and cheerfully to obey thee; and for an active hope in thee, which may constantly excite me to purify myself, even as thou art pure. Great, O LORD, is the levity of my mind, and the fickleness of my thoughts, which makes me afraid lest these holy desires should presently vanish. Wretch that I am, how often have I started from my purposes, and forsaken mine own resolutions! I am going, therefore, once more unto thy altar, to offer my soul and body to thee; to renew my covenant with thee; and to put myself into thy hands, that thou mayest preserve these thoughts and purposes in my heart for ever. Accept, most loving FATHER, of these holy intentions. Meet me there again, and visit me from above with a more plentiful effusion of thy HOLY SPIRIT, to confirm and strengthen me in all goodness. I beseech



thee by the precious blood of **JESUS CHRIST**, and by thy wonderful and ineffable love which gave him for us, to pour down upon me the abundance of thy grace, that I may ever hereafter walk before thee with a perfect heart in newness of life. As thou hast invited me to that holy feast in remembrance of him, so dispose my soul to approach unto it with such reverence and holy fear, with such pure devotion and fervent love, with such spiritual gladness and heavenly joy, that, tasting the pleasures of thine house, I may never thirst for any thing else; but delight myself always in the **LORD**, and do good. **LORD**, what wait I for? Truly my hope is in thee, that I shall increase in faith, and be rooted and grounded in love, and cleave unto thy testimonies with my whole heart, and run the ways of thy commandments, until I have finished my course with joy.

Come, **LORD JESUS**, and seat thy faith in my mind and will, as in its throne. Establish thy laws and government there; reign and rule in me for ever; that all my enemies may flee before thee, and no evil may dwell in thy sight; that I may overcome the world, the flesh, and the Devil, and serve thee without fear in righteousness and holiness all the days of my life. Make me to know and feel that **JESUS**, who died for me, is alive from the dead, and liveth for evermore; and that he is an eternal fountain of life and strength, of comfort and refreshment, to all those that by him believe in **GOD** who raised him from the dead.

#### A MEDITATION AT HOME AFTERWARD.

SOME time that day, and as often as you can after, reflect upon your own thoughts, resolutions, and vows; and consider, that there may be but a few days, perhaps hours, remaining, before you must appear at the tribunal of him who hath now entertained you at his table. The next sight you have of him, may be upon his throne,

as one that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. Put your soul in mind of the great account you must then give of all that you have done in the body, and of your sacred actions, no question, as well as the rest. And therefore ask yourself in the most serious manner, and bid your soul tell you, with what affection hath the death of the **LORD** been remembered?—"Hast thou as sincerely renounced all thy evil ways, and consecrated thyself to the life of **CHRIST**, as thou hopest to be saved? As **GOD** shall judge the world in righteousness, art thou determined to become a new creature, and to pass the time of thy sojourning here in fear? O, how dreadful will he then appear to those who return with the dog to his vomit, after they have eaten of this holy bread, and drunk of this holy cup! Who can stand before him, that hath known and remembered his transcendent love, and yet loved his ease, his pleasure, his money, or any other thing, better than life eternal? It concerns me nearly, O my soul, to keep him ever in my thoughts, and to express him in my life; that, when he comes, he may see himself in me, and behold his image, in righteousness and true holiness, fairly engraven on my heart. The Searcher of my heart knows that I went unfeignedly thither, to give him possession of it: and here again I confirm the gift. Let him command what he pleases, and I will obey it. Let him bring the cross along with him, I will submit unto it. Come poverty, come reproaches, come imprisonment, come pains and torments, come death itself, rather than to depart from the living **GOD**."

To furnish your soul with greater plenty of good thoughts, you may often reflect upon the example which **CHRIST** hath set you in his death as well as in his life. And particularly meditate every day upon his charity, "who though he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor, that by his poverty we might be rich." In this "**GOD** commendeth his love to us, that while we were yet sinners, **CHRIST** died for us. Greater love hath no man than this,

that a man lay down his life for his friends. But we, when we were enemies, were reconciled to **GOD** by the death of his **SON** ; and therefore shall much more be saved by his life." Pray for a great and compassionate love to mankind, especially to your brethren, with whom you are knit in one body ; that you may be strongly inclined to do good, as occasion is offered, to refresh the bowels of the poor and needy, to comfort and support the feeble-minded, and to live with all in unity and peace, till your christian friendship be perfected in endless love in the other world. Remember that **GOD** is the **GOD** of Peace, and **CHRIST** is the **LORD** of Peace. Often meditate on the words of our **LORD**, that "it is better to give than to receive ;" and upon these words of a good man, that "he is the best merchant who lays out his time upon **GOD**, and his money upon the poor."

#### THE THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER.

I **CAST** myself down before thee, O, **LORD**, to worship and praise thee, together with all the heavenly host, saying, "Holy, holy, holy **LORD GOD** Almighty, heaven and earth are full of thy goodness." Thou art the joy of all those happy creatures above, who continually behold the brightness of thy glory ; and thy presence, and the light of thy countenance, makes heaven upon earth to us thy servants, whom thou admittest thus near unto thee. Glory be to **GOD** in the highest, who to all other blessings hath added the gift of his dear **SON**, and delivered him up for us all. Glory be to the **SON** of **GOD**, the Prince of Peace, who hath loved us and given himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity ; and hath left us such remembrances of himself, and precious pledges of his never-failing love. And thanks be to the **HOLY SPIRIT**, the power of the divine love, which draws us unto **GOD**, and inflames us with his love, and raise our hearts towards heaven. Blessed, for ever blessed, be thine infinite wisdom, power, and good-

ness, which all the world proclaims unto us, and which thou hast more particularly manifested in CHRIST JESUS. There is none in heaven that we can desire, but thee, nor in earth besides thee; that we may know thee, and be made like unto thee, and be loved by thee, and made meet to live for ever with thee. O that the sight I have now had of thee, may make all things here below seem mean and contemptible in mine eyes; that no temptation may be able to draw my heart from the obedience I have vowed unto thee; but that I may ever think of thee, and ever seek thee, and ever speak of thy goodness, and esteem myself happy in being beloved of thee, the possessor of heaven and earth. It is the desire of my heart to cleave to thee, and to spend my days in humility and heavenly-mindedness, in temperance and chastity, in works of justice and mercy, in doing good and forgiving evil, in meekness and peaceableness, contentedness and thankfulness, patience and forbearance, and in all other fruits of thy HOLY SPIRIT. And therefore I humbly wait on thee, O Father of Mercies, for the continued help thereof, that I may be able "to show forth the virtues of thee, who hast called me out of darkness into thy marvellous light." Preserve me by thy mighty power through faith unto salvation. And so constantly assist me by thy grace, that I may keep myself unspotted from the world, and never do any thing to offend thee, and cause thee to hide thy face from thy servant. O that I may "put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, kindness, lowliness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; and above all these things, charity, which is the bond of perfection;" without which whoever liveth is as dead before thee.

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THE THIRD MEDITATION BEFORE THE  
SACRAMENT.

You may consider, that when God intended to make a new covenant with man, of more abundant grace and mercy than was ever known before, he was pleased to do like a man. "The Word was made flesh," and he came "and dwelt among us." He declared, by the mouth of one taken from among ourselves, his great good-will towards us. He entered into all imaginable bonds to perform his part of that sacred covenant. He gave us his word and his oath; he gave us his SON for a pledge; and his SON gave his blood for a seal, and his HOLY SPIRIT for an earnest of his eternal love.—"Adored be the goodness of God," should you say within yourselves, "who hath done so much to assure the hearts of unbelieving sinners: adored be his goodness, who is so desirous that we should be persuaded of it. Is there no way for us also to engage ourselves, and pass our word as solemnly to him? Can we find no bonds that are sacred, wherein to tie ourselves strongly to his service? Blessed be the mercies of our God, who hath appointed two Sacraments, wherein we for our parts promise and seal to stand to the conditions of that covenant. But so excessive is his love, that he doth there again likewise engage his fidelity to us, and secures to us the blessings which he hath promised in his holy Gospel. O how excellent is his loving-kindness, which has given us such strong consolation! And how long is it now since I was first devoted to him, and received the first assurances of his love! These many years have I been called by his name, and made partaker of his grace. In my baptism he began to show his love to me; and there I entered into covenant with him, and vowed to keep his commandments. What manner of person ought I to have been in all holy conversation and godliness, who am so deeply indebted to him; who have lived so long in his family, and been often likewise entertained at his

table, and received there the renewed tokens of his dearest love! O how unwearied is his goodness, which calls me once more to partake of that great favour! Canst thou find in thy heart, O my soul, to admire any thing, to love any thing like unto him? Let us go to testify how much we value his kindness, to confirm the agreement between us, and to make a new choice of him for our only Master and Saviour, and take upon us to be eternally his servants. Is not this thy intention in approaching his table? Doth it not grieve thee that thou hast at any time offended so great love? Hadst thou not rather die, and be crucified as he was, than willingly break the least of his commands? Dost thou not in heart and resolution forsake every thing that would hinder thee from doing his will? Art thou not purposed to follow JESUS in all the actions of a holy, humble, charitable, and religious life? Let us go then and wait upon him, and show him the love that we bear unto him. Let us give him thanks even for this good mind which he hath put into us; and for all the hopes we have that he will continue it to eternal life. Be not discouraged; for when the wicked forsakes his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, he himself hath said, he will have mercy upon him, and multiply to pardon. He will pour more abundantly of his HOLY SPIRIT on us, to strengthen our resolutions. He will make us grow in grace, and bring forth all the fruits of righteousness. He will abundantly satisfy us with the fatness of his house, and make us to drink of the river of his pleasures. For with him is the fountain of life; in his light shall we see light. He will continue his loving-kindness unto them that know him; and his righteousness to the upright in heart. For the LORD's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But as he that is mighty hath done great things already; so his mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation."

THE PRAYER.

O most holy and ever blessed God, the fountain of good, the highest object of our love! I bow myself before thee, and humbly worship thy incomprehensible Majesty. It was thy goodness, which brought me into being, and thy patience which continued me unto this time, and a greater mercy which hath not suffered my being to be miserable to me, but heaped on me innumerable good things. But I have no fit name for that superabundant love, which thought of making mankind so happy by thy SON JESUS. It is a wonder, O LORD, that thou wouldst be at such expense about those, who had chosen to be any thing, rather than such as thou madest them. None but infinite compassion could be so tender of those who despised thy image, and loved to live like the beasts that perish. None but thou, O merciful God, could think of bestowing greater benefits on such brutish sinners. And nothing but a stupid negligence, and unaccountable inconsiderateness, could ever refuse such endless happiness as thou designest to us. I am one of those strange things, that have forsaken thee, and know not why; and who was long insensible of thy grace, and unmoveable under thy greatest importunities to return to thee: and since thou hast prevailed with me, I am too much inclined to content myself with a small degree of likeness to thee; and apt to find out little pretences and excuses for doing my own will, rather than thine;—and that, though I am so solemnly consecrated to thee, and have been instructed in thy blessed Gospel, and put in hopes of such glorious rewards, and received such encouragements at thy table.

Blessed be thy inconceivable love, O most gracious LORD, who hast given the blood of thy SON to be shed for those who sin against that love; if with all their hearts, and all their souls, they return unto thee. For ever magnified be thy mercy, who hast given us so many assurances of the truth of thy love to us, and so many

opportunities to testify the truth of ours towards thee. Thou art pleased, not only by thy word, thy promises, and oath, to give us ground of hope, but even by outward and sensible signs to encourage our weak and fearful faith. Who can but tremble to think that he hath offended the Majesty of heaven and earth? And yet, who can but hope, that hears the voice of thy SON inviting us to come unto thee, and promising a pardon to returning sinners? O thou, who callest me now again to thy holy table, and there hast made such rich provision for us; assist, I beseech thee, all the meditations, desires, and resolutions of my soul; that I may remember all the LORD JESUS hath done and suffered for me, with such humble admiration, lively faith, and thankful love, as to feel my heart tied faster to him with the cords of his love, and sent up to heaven, as the whole burnt-offerings, to the LORD. Draw me, O God of love, more powerfully to thee, and fill me more with wisdom and goodness, that my mind may more clearly discern between things that differ; that my will may become more easy to all that is good, and more obstinate against all that is evil; and that every affection and passion may be more gentle and submissive to the government of thy holy laws. Possess my heart against all the force of temptations by a never-dying sense of thy goodness, and a remembrance of those joys which thou hast prepared for those that love thee. O that all my graces may receive increase; and that I may more perfectly imitate the humility, the meekness, the patience, the charity, the resignation, and the absolute obedience of my LORD and Master. He hath bidden us believe that thou wilt give thy HOLY SPIRIT to those that ask him, as readily as an earthly parent gives bread to his children. O let the power of that SPIRIT tend upon me, to fix my wandering thoughts, to raise my heavy and dull affections, and to form all my holy purposes into a settled disposition and temper of heart to comply with thy blessed will in every thing. I am not worthy, I confess, of the smallest crumb of thy mercy; but thou hast made me to hope for these great blessings,



through thy grace declared unto us in **CHRIST JESUS**; in whose words I further recommend myself unto thy merciful kindness, saying, "**Our FATHER, &c.**"

#### A MEDITATION SOME TIME AFTERWARDS.

"I HAVE seen strange things to-day. I have seen the marvellous love of heaven to us sinful dust and ashes. I have seen how the **SON of GOD** died for the love of us; how the blessed **JESUS** was hanged, and bled upon a cross for our salvation. I have beheld him presenting himself unto me; and offering to make me partake of all his benefits. With what affections did I meet and receive his strange love? Did not my heart burn within me, when he opened the counsels of his heart to me? When he showed me how passionately he loved me? Did not I offer myself both soul and body to him, and promise to be his faithful servant? Did I not remember that I was his already, and renew my vows to cleave unto him in loyal obedience? O what a transforming sight was it, to behold '**JESUS**, who was made a little lower than the Angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour;' and promising, by patient continuance in well-doing, to lift me up also at last unto glory! '**LORD**, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him; or the son of man that thou makest account of him!' How is it possible to forget this love, or my own engagements? For what pleasures shall I leave communion with **GOD**, and my gracious Master, **CHRIST JESUS**? 'You offer too little, all ye temptations upon earth, that would draw my affections from so great a happiness. There can be nothing comparable to being beloved by the **LORD** of heaven and earth. 'One thing have I desired of the **LORD**, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the **LORD** all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the **LORD**, and to inquire in his temple.' This is sufficient to endear a holy life unto me, that I may be always fit to be one of his guests, to

feast with him at his table, and to be filled with his comforts, and may live in hope to live with him in endless joys. And could I but see what things he hath prepared for those that love him, the height of his glory, the attendance of his Ministers, and the pleasures that are at his right hand,—‘there would be no more spirit in me.’ This little that I have seen, makes me say, ‘Happy are those thy servants, that stand continually before thee. Blessed are they whom thou hast chosen, and caused to approach unto thee; that they may dwell in thy’ heavenly ‘courts; they will still be praising thee.’ I will never forego the beginnings of this bliss. ‘For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.’ ”—

And here it will be fit to remember, how every deliberate sin, after such fresh experiences of God’s goodness, new obligations from him, and new resolutions and vows to him, will be of a more crimson dye. And therefore you must be sober, and watch unto prayer. And remember withal, on the other side, that every good action will be the more acceptable, when it proceeds out of love to our Master, JESUS, who hath loved us so much. And therefore always endeavour to quicken the one by reflecting on the other. More particularly, you may resolve to meditate all the week following upon the great meekness of the LORD JESUS; who was “dumb as a sheep before the shearers, and as a lamb that is brought to the slaughter. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.” And so labour to tread in his steps, and to imitate him in this lovely grace; “to speak evil of no man, to be no brawler, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.”

## THE THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER FOLLOWING.

**PRAISED** be **GOD** ! Let all creatures in heaven and earth praise the name of the **LORD**. For his name is excellent ; his glory is above earth and heaven. Glory be to thee, O **GOD** most high, the Creator of all, the Father of Mercies ; who openest thy hand, and fillest every living thing with good. Blessed be thy name, O **SON** of the **FATHER**, to whom I bow myself, as the image of **GOD**, the brightness of his glory, the Redeemer of our souls, the Mediator of our peace, and our Intercessor at the right hand of the Majesty on high. O thou **HOLY SPIRIT** of grace, the Almighty Power of **GOD**, inspire my heart, that I may know, that I may love, delight in, obey, and praise the **LORD** our **GOD**, from henceforth and for ever !

Thanks be to the eternal goodness for the everlasting Gospel ; for the constant services of thy Ministers ; for the happy communion of Saints ; for all the comforts of food and health, for peace and friends ; but above all for the death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation of our **LORD JESUS** ; for all the fruits of them ; and for the earnest and pledges I have received of forgiveness of sins, and immortal life. One day is too short to recount thy mercies. While I live, I shall never be able to find out how much thou hast already loved me, or how many blessings thou hast loaded me with, since I came into this world. And yet, in the careful improvement of these, thou intendest to bring me to higher felicity. O that the remembrance of what I have seen and felt of thy love, may always cleave unto my mind, and that I may every day see and be made sensible of more ; that the powerful operation of it in my heart may defend me against all the allurements of the world and the flesh ; and that nothing may be able to entice me from my duty, nor be too hard to do for thy mighty love. Incline my heart, O **LORD**, continually towards thee ; that I may delight to be with thee, and study in all things to conform myself to thy blessed nature and will ; and that having thee always before

mine eyes, thy holiness and righteousness may move me to purify my heart thoroughly from all worldly and fleshly lusts,—thy greatness may breed in me much reverence, fear, and humility,—and thy tender mercies incline me to pitifulness, bowels of mercies, and readiness to do all good. Give me such a sense of thy truth and faithfulness, that I may entirely trust thee, and rely upon thy promises; and of thine unerring wisdom, that I may resign my understanding to thee, and be perfectly contented with whatsoever thou appointest. Dispose my soul so, that a serious sense of thine omniscience may, on all occasions, over-awe every thought of my mind, and motion of my will, into order and obedience; and thy patient goodness suppress all angry affections in me, and make me gentle, long-suffering, and forbearing towards others in love. Represent thine infiniteness, O LORD, continually unto me; that it may engage me in eternal thoughts of thee, and make me rejoice in the happiness of being one of thy children, and an heir of thy glory. There is nothing more my heart can desire, but only that I may still receive more pledges of thy fatherly love, and have grace to keep my soul so pure and undefiled, that our LORD may delight to manifest himself to me, and make his abode with me.

Reign in me, O blessed LORD; and in all the world subdue all the enemies of thy Cross. Advance it above all the crowns of the Kings of the earth, that they may become thy obedient subjects. O that those of them, who call upon thy name, may be nursing fathers to thy Church; and promote christian piety by their high authority, and great examples. Illuminate all the Bishops and Pastors of thy flock, that they may feed thy people with wisdom and understanding, and lead them in the ways of righteousness. Bless all my friends; pardon and change all my enemies. Comfort and relieve all sorts of miserable people. And grant us seasonable weather, that the earth may bring forth her increase.

Accept of my hearty thanks, which I tender thee again for all thy mercies, both to my soul and body. Accept of

this oblation of my whole self, which I consecrate unto thee; desiring to render all praise, thanksgiving, love, and hearty service to thee eternally.

“Now the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by CHRIST JESUS, make us all perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle us. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

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#### THE FOURTH MEDITATION BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

“AMONG the innumerable people that are upon the face of the earth, how few are there that know the love of God in CHRIST JESUS! And among those few that know it, alas, how small a number are there that celebrate it constantly with those praises and acknowledgments, which it eternally deserves! O what a grace is this, of which I am a partaker, that I should be made ‘a fellow-citizen with the Saints, and of the household of God!’ That I should know what is ‘the riches of the glory of this mystery; which is CHRIST in us the hope of glory!’ I am infinitely indebted to the divine goodness, which inclines my heart also to go and commemorate this love in the assembly of Saints. ‘O come,’ my soul, ‘let us worship and bow down; let us go and kneel before the LORD. Let us exalt the LORD our God, and make the voice of his praise to be heard.’ Let us go with humble confidence, to admire and proclaim, once more, the infinite love of GOD our SAVIOUR. Let us openly declare that we are his friends and followers; and bid defiance to all his enemies. Yea, let us bind our heart to his altar with the cords of love; and make an oblation of all we have unto him. It is but just and reasonable, since we have received so much from him. It is but right, meet, and our bounden

duty to praise him continually ; and to glorify and serve him with the body and soul which he hath redeemed. Let us go and thank him that he would come down from heaven to us ; that he will accept us for his servants, and set any esteem upon our poor obedience ; and that he will still from heaven visit us, and not leave us comfortless. So may we rejoice in his salvation, and represent with glad hearts his sacrifice to **GOD** for our expiation ; and fix our eyes upon that glory where he is enthroned, hoping we shall one day sit down with him in the kingdom of the **FATHER**.

“Search and try, examine and prove thyself. Hast thou not a mind to know and do the whole will of **GOD**, with all thy heart, and with all thy strength ? Dost thou not long to be poor in spirit, meek, merciful, pure in heart, a peace-maker, a patient sufferer for righteousness’ sake ? And art thou not desirous to make an increase of all these by going to his holy table ? ‘There be many that say, Who will show us any good ?’ But let thy voice be, ‘**LORD**, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things’ out of thy Gospel. Make me able to ‘comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of **CHRIST**, which passeth knowledge.’”

#### THE PRAYER SOME TIME BEFORE THE COMMUNION.

**O LORD**, who fillest all things, and delightest to pour out thy blessings upon all thy works, especially into those who empty themselves of all their own desires, that they may be filled with thy holy truth : Behold a poor soul, that opens itself to thy bounteous goodness ; though with much shame and confusion of face, when I remember how much of thy grace I have refused, or in vain received. Thou hast sent me, I acknowledge, unasked, innumerable benefits. Often have I felt holy thoughts springing up in my mind, and pious

affections carrying my heart away from all these earthly vanities. Many godly purposes hast thou wrought in me; and made me taste how happy a thing it is to be beloved of thee. "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth," and early instructed me in the knowledge of thy truth. Thou hast prevented all my desires, and secretly disposed me to choose thy ways. "Hitherto I have declared thy wondrous works;" and every day brings along with it new testimonies of thy fatherly care and Providence. But all this only reproaches me for my shameful negligence, ingratitude, and unfruitfulness in the knowledge of the LORD JESUS; and makes me despair of receiving any more of thy grace, unless thou wilt magnify the riches of it, in thy patient and long-suffering love towards me. Thou hast required us to put on bowels of mercy, kindness, and condescension, forbearing and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; and hast taught us such charity as is kind, and suffereth long, and beareth all things. And, therefore, I am encouraged to flee unto thee, and to hope in thee, who hast made thyself the pattern of tenderness and compassion to us in CHRIST JESUS. There is something of thyself likewise still remaining in me. I feel my heart inclining towards thee, desiring to have a more lively knowledge of thee, and to be made thoroughly good and perfectly like thee; which emboldens me the more to wait upon thee; for new communications of thy HOLY SPIRIT.

O thou who givest food to all flesh, and satisfiest the cravings of every living thing, deny not the desires of an immortal soul which hungers and thirsts to be filled with the fruits of the SPIRIT, "in all goodness and righteousness and truth." It is not thy pardon only which I crave, through thy mercy in CHRIST; but a power from above continually to assist the holy resolutions which thou hast wrought in me, to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." With my whole heart do I seek thee; O let me not wander from thy commandments. But stablish thy

word unto thy servant who is devoted to thy fear. Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.

And give me leave, good LORD, to approach to thy table, and there to dedicate myself again unto thee, and receive fresh tokens of thy favour towards me. I am not worthy, I confess, to be seen in thy presence: but since thou hast wrought in me a will to please thee in all things, I desire that I may humbly appear and profess it before thee, and wait upon thee for a power to do according to the purposes of my heart. O thou who searchest the hearts, and knowest what is in man, open my eyes, that I may see if there be any evil way in me, any pride, any covetousness, any impurity, any hatred or uncharitableness. For I renounce them all; and unfeignedly resolve to do justly, and to walk humbly with my God. Let these words of my mouth, and meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD my strength, and my Redeemer. And when I come to thy holy table, may I feel that thou hast accepted them, by inspiring me with stronger purposes of obedience, and lifting me up to a higher degree of love to thee and my blessed SAVIOUR. Raise me, O LORD, so high, that I may be out of the reach of the temptations of the world and the Devil; or that at least they may never be able to draw me down to follow any sinful desires. “O LORD, hear; O LORD, forgive; O LORD, hearken and do,” according to thy infinite mercies declared in CHRIST JESUS.

#### A MEDITATION AFTERWARD AT HOME.

THE next time thou visitest thy soul, ask it if it observed well that glorious Person who feasted thee at his table, and marked the gracious words which he spake unto thee, by the representation of his broken body, and blood. “Alas!” wilt thou say, “I should not have been here, if I had had a clear view of his glories. He would have carried me to heaven with him, if my heart had been possessed with the fulness



of his love. My eyes are too weak to behold his perfections; my thoughts too narrow to comprehend the unsearchable riches of his grace."

But hast thou not seen something of him? Did not many of his graces shine in thine eyes? Did he not even force upon thee some sense of his wondrous goodness? And hath he not put himself, by sensible tokens, into thy very hands; nay, entered into thine heart, and told thee, that he hath desired it for his habitation? Where is he then? What hast thou done with him? Are the thoughts of him vanished already? Art thou content to let him go, and see him no more till the same solemnity come about again?

How wilt thou be able then to appear before him, at that time? With what face wilt thou look upon him whom thou slightest so much? Will it not confound thee to think that thou art but a stranger to him, though thou hast been so often with him; and that he can find nothing of himself in thee, no, not after so many professions of love and friendship to him? O let him see that he hath not bestowed himself on one that knows not how to value so divine a guest. Preserve an everlasting memory of his dying love. Never fail to thank him for it every day, with the greatest passion thou art able. Look on him seriously, and study to be like him. Never take off thine eyes from his beauties, till all his lovely qualities be imprinted on thy heart. Imitate his humility and great condescension to us of low estate. Learn of him to be "meek and lowly in heart." Walk in love as "CHRIST also hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." "Purify" thyself "even as he is pure." "Let thy conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as thou hast." Trust in the LORD, and do good: make him thy hope and thy portion: that as long as thou livest, CHRIST JESUS may be seen among men. O what a goodly sight would it be, to behold our LORD still walking up and down in the world! To see the loving, the peaceable, the meek, the

merciful, the holy **JESUS** again upon the earth ! Do thou resolve to be that blessed man, in whom he shall appear. Let not his image and likeness be lost, whilst thou art in being ; and labour to leave it upon others when thou art dead and gone.

Particularly thou mayest resolve all this week to meditate often on the patience of our **LORD**, under all the rude affronts and cruel pains which he endured from his enemies, and the great dulness, untowardness, and slowness to believe, which he found in his disciples ; that so “patience may have its perfect work” in thee, to the end thou mayest be “perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” Resolve not to be discouraged in thy christian course, whatsoever it be that thou art to do or suffer. “Warn them that are unruly ; comfort the feeble minded, support the weak ; be patient towards all men.”

#### THE THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER.

**ALL** thy works praise thee, **O LORD** : they proclaim thy greatness, thy wisdom, thy power and goodness, throughout all the world. There is no place in heaven or earth where their voice is not heard. But the mouths of rational creatures ought most to be filled with thy praises, whom thou hast made to understand the wisdom and majesty of all thy works. We ourselves, **O LORD**, are fearfully and wonderfully made. And after we had despised this honour which thou didst us, choosing to become like the beasts that perish, thou wast pleased to do us a greater, and to demonstrate an infinite wisdom, power, and love in our recovery by **CHRIST JESUS**. I bless thee, **O GOD**, for that abundant grace ; and for that portion which thou hast given me in it.

There is no end, **O LORD**, of thy loving-kindness. For thou continuest to give us new assurances of thy good-will, and hast now entertained me at thine own table with his most precious body and blood. It is too little, **O GOD** of all grace,

to give thee myself, if I had any more to give. All that I can do, is again and again to give myself to thee. And as I have at thine altar offered my whole soul and body to be employed according to thy holy will, so I continue here to renew my devotion to thee ; and to oblige myself by repeated vows to be thy servant. I hope that I shall never suffer thy love to slip out of my mind, nor forget the promises wherein I stand engaged to thee ; but that thou in thine abundant goodness wilt always accompany me by thy HOLY SPIRIT, to preserve alive the memory of CHRIST in my heart, that I may ever be a follower of him in poverty of spirit, in meekness, in mercifulness, in purity of heart, in peaceableness and studying to be quiet. “ And the LORD direct my heart into the love of GOD, and the patient waiting for CHRIST ; ” that I may endure all the troubles of this life with a composed and constant spirit, and never repine at any thing that befalls me ; and that I may cheerfully suffer for righteousness’ sake, and, taking up my cross, “ run with patience the race that is set before me ; looking unto JESUS, the author and finisher of our faith ; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of GOD.”

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#### THE FIFTH MEDITATION BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

CAST your eyes on the beautiful face of the earth, and see how all things smile upon you ; how GOD hath crowned the year with his goodness, and clothed the pastures with flocks, the gardens with flowers and fruits, and the valleys with corn ; how the little hills, as the Psalmist speaks, are girded with gladness ; and every creature shouts for joy and sings. And then think with thyself, how uncomely it is that thou shouldest be the

only dull and silent thing, whom the **LORD** hath adorned with greater riches and honour, and set over all the works of his hands. Think what nobler beauties he hath made thee to behold, and set before thy mind, even himself, in all his glory, which shines upon thee in the face of **JESUS CHRIST**. Think how he calls thee to a paradise of delight; and how he hath invited thee to his table, where he represents unto thee the **SON** of his love, the express image of his person, and all the happy fruits of his manifestation in our flesh. Bid thy soul therefore awake, and meditate on his descent from heaven for our sake, with the acclamations of all the heavenly host; on all his miraculous works of love; his holy and useful life; his bitter passion; his bloody and shameful death; his glorious resurrection and ascension; his power at the right hand of **GOD**; and all the benefits which he hath by these means obtained for us. Stir up all that is within thee, to bless his holy name; that while all things round about thee are fresh, and full of life, thou mayest not remain the only dead and heartless creature; but spring up together with the rest, in all the acts of spiritual life. Say to thyself, "What a new world do I see; **GOD** dwelling here among men: '**GOD** in **CHRIST** reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them:' friendship made between heaven and earth: death 'swallowed up in victory:' the gate of heaven opened to all believers: **JESUS**, our fore-runner, there already enthroned, waiting for all his faithful followers, and filling them now with good hope, peace, and joy in the **HOLY GHOST**. O what a glorious sight is this; which the angels themselves admired! What a 'new heaven and new earth' should this have made, 'wherein dwelleth righteousness?' What ails us, that we do not all become new creatures; and, 'beholding as in a glass the glory of our **LORD**, are not changed into the same image, from glory to glory; even as by the **SPIRIT** of the **LORD**?' I am ashamed of my barrenness in the knowledge of **CHRIST JESUS**. It is high time to be more fruitful in all good works. For he hath

said, ‘Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, my FATHER taketh away ; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring more fruit. And herein is my FATHER glorified, that ye bear much fruit ; so shall ye be my disciples.’ I will go therefore to him who is the root and fountain of life, that I may derive new spirit, vigour, and strength from him. I will go and declare that I have placed my hope, my comfort and satisfaction, in his love ; and value his favour and blessing more than all the world. I will show him how I long to be changed more and more into his divine image ; and am resolved to abide in him, and that his word shall abide in me. I will give him all the assurance of it which I am able ; by renewing my covenant with him, and making a cheerful oblation of all that I am, and have, and can do, unto his service. Then surely he will communicate more of himself unto me. I shall see his divine power and virtue quickening me ; and ‘because he lives, I shall live also.’ The sun, when he returns to visit us with his warmth, doth not more revive all things, and renew the face of the earth, than I shall find him enlivening and renewing me ; that I may have my ‘fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.’ For he himself hath said, ‘If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.’ Be it unto me, O LORD, according to thy word. I ask nothing, but that I may still have the grace to continue in thy love, by keeping thy commandments ; that I may grow and increase in wisdom and holiness, and be filled with all the fruits of the SPIRIT,—with ‘love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance ;’ and that they may abound in me more and more, to thy praise and glory. Amen.”

#### THE PRAYER SOME TIME BEFORE.

‘O most blessed God, who art lovely in thyself and in all thy works, and full of love to us whom thou hast made

to understand thy glorious perfection : Thousands of angels and saints thou hast, whose hearts burn continually with love to thee ; and thou hast had many faithful servants who have died for the love of thee. I am one of those fools and senseless wretches, who have loved every thing better than thee my Creator and merciful Saviour. I am too unlike the ancient Disciples of the LORD JESUS, being prone to content myself with reading or hearing thy word, with speaking of thee, or praying to thee, and all, many times, without any love, or but little affection to thee. I have beheld the Sun of Righteousness shining upon me, and received the dearest pledges of thy loving-kindness, without that warmth which they ought to have excited. The liveliest truths have not penetrated so deep as they should have done into my heart. But though thou hast been pleased to entreat so earnestly, and promise so liberally, as if thou shouldest be indebted to me for my love, it hath many times but little stirred in this dull soul towards thee. Thou hast loved us so much as to purchase our love at any rate ; having redeemed us with thy SON'S blood, which is the greatest price, and called us to thy kingdom and glory, which is the greatest reward : but, alas, how unconcerned have I been, too often, in all these wonders of thy love !

I am ashamed of myself. I blush to think that I should love thee to no higher a degree. Still make me more ashamed, that after all thy care and pains thou shouldest see so little of thyself in me ; and assist me, by the power of almighty grace, to fix mine eyes more steadfastly on thee, till I love thee so much as to be changed into thy likeness. Now that I am going to commemorate thy love in CHRIST JESUS, let not my ingratitude provoke thee to absent thyself from me ; but according to the gracious covenant which thou hast made with us in his blood, be merciful to my sins, and remember mine iniquities no more. Make me know and feel that thou dost pardon me ; excite holy resolutions in me to purify my heart more perfectly, and dispose me entirely to love thy holy nature and will,

and conform myself unto it in all things. O that all carnal affections may die in me, and all things belonging to the SPIRIT may live and grow in me; that I may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph against the Devil, the world, and the flesh; that I may utterly hate every thing that is evil, and cleave most affectionately to that which is good; yea, that I may hate even father and mother, and the dearest thing in this world, rather than sin against thee; that no relation, no pleasure, no profit, may ever turn my heart from thee, but rather draw me to thee, and make me more in love with thee. All thy creatures may justly complain of me, if I should not love thee above them all; but how shall I answer it to our LORD JESUS, if his love should not constrain me? O that the spirit of thy ancient saints may hereafter possess my heart, that I may cry out after GOD, even the living GOD; that I may watch for thee more than they that watch for the morning; that my soul may follow after thee, and even break for the longing it hath to thee at all times; that I may be a diligent follower of their doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, and patience; that I may delight myself in thy commandment which I have loved; and that the light of thy countenance may be better to me than life itself. Amen.

#### THE MEDITATION AFTERWARD AT HOME.

“O love! what hast thou done!” said a holy man, when he thought of the mercies of GOD in CHRIST JESUS. Thou broughtest the SON of GOD down from heaven, and madest him appear in the likeness of man. Thou broughtest him to his cross, and madest him an offering of a sweet-smelling savour unto GOD. “O love, what wouldest thou not do,” mayest thou say to thyself, “if thou didst but possess our hearts? That which made him like us, and brought him down hither, would make us like to GOD, and carry us up to heaven. If I did but love

GOD, what could he demand of me which I should not immediately do? How naturally should I study to please him? How easy and delightful would it be to comply with his will? And what a favour should I count it that I might know his will? None of his commandments would be grievous to me; but all his ways would be pleasantness, and all his paths peace. It would be very strange if I should not love him who hath loved me so much, and is still demonstrating his kindness to me. I must forget my belief, if I should not love him; and that I may, he calls me often to the remembrance of him. There he represents to me that which I continually profess to believe; that he is the FATHER Almighty, of whom the whole family of heaven and earth is named; that JESUS is his only SON our LORD; that he was conceived by the HOLY GHOST, born of the VIRGIN MARY, suffered under PONTIUS PILATE, was crucified and put to death, rose again, ascended to GOD's right hand, and will come at last to judge the quick and the dead. This is my faith. May I never make confession of it without feeling it excited to work by love. May it always call to mind the vows I have made to live by this faith of the SON of GOD. May it purify my heart, that when he shall appear to judge the world, my faith may be found to praise, and honour, and glory. Amen."

Thou mayest resolve particularly to meditate often all this week upon CHRIST's love, in instituting and ordaining, just before he died, these holy mysteries, as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death, to our great and endless comfort. "O what a kindness was this," mayest thou think with thyself! "What a wonder of love is here fairly represented to us, and set before our eyes! What a pleasure is it to see ourselves thus beloved of the Sovereign of the world! to behold ourselves in the arms of the Almighty, the only wise and all-sufficient good; who will never fail to take care of us, provide for us, direct, support, assist, comfort, and protect us, yea, and eternally bless us! This is love indeed, that we have such



pledges given us of his everlasting kindness ; and that we shall see him in the other world, where we shall know him, and love him, as much as we can desire.”

#### THE PRAYER AND THANKSGIVING.

O MOST holy and ever-blessed GOD, thy name alone is excellent, thy glory is above the earth and heaven. All the heavenly powers continually proclaim thy greatness, and raise themselves, not thee, by admiring, loving, and praising thy eternal Majesty. I most humbly adore thy unsearchable wisdom, thy uncontrollable power, thy boundless goodness, and thy unspotted holiness and truth. Thy wisdom is the surest guide, thy power is our strength, thy providence is our all-sufficient treasure, thy holiness and truth are our security, thy goodness is our hope and comfort, thy unerring will is our satisfaction, in all events that befall us. I cannot wish, when I seriously recollect myself, to live in a world without thee. It would be better not to be at all, than to be forsaken of thee, and left to the conduct of my own childish thoughts and desires, and to the protection of my own weakness. How much do I owe thee, even for this knowledge of thee ! And I have had daily experience of thy loving-kindness ever since I had a being. A great number of thy creatures serve me, and minister unto my content and comfort, by thy command. And thy own SON is become a servant to me, and submitted himself to the vilest state for my happiness. I deserve not to live, if I should not love thee entirely ; for thou art every day adding new fuel to my love, and taking care that it may never go out. What tokens of thy love hath this day brought along with it to my soul ! Thou hast given me leave to wait upon thee, and to feast with thee at thy own table ; to see the love which the LORD JESUS bare and still continues to me, that I may be still more induced to love thee, and more strongly

engaged to continue in thy love by cordial obedience. But, alas! our eyes are weak, our thoughts are short and transient, we are soon weary of beholding and thinking even of thy love: direct my thoughts therefore by thy mighty power more strongly towards thee. Fasten in my mind a more lively remembrance of thee, that I may delight to reflect upon thy wondrous love. "Turn mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in thy way."

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THE SIXTH MEDITATION BEFORE THE  
SACRAMENT.

Is it possible that the great God should be manifested in the flesh, and that he should purchase those who were his creatures, sinful creatures, with his own blood? Surely we do not believe this. How joyful, how thankful should we be; how holily, how purely should we live; if we thought ourselves so nearly related to him! What faith, what hope should we place in him! How confidently should we trust ourselves, and all we have, with him! How willingly should we resign ourselves to his pleasure! And how contentedly should we want what he pleases not to give! If he had taken hold of the nature of Angels, and laid down that life, that precious life which was spent for us, for their redemption, how much would those heavenly creatures have loved him? And yet, now that he is desirous of our little love, he cannot have it. O how easily do we forget the greatest benefits! How apt are we to pay him only with liberal promises! If he had not made us this new invitation to his table, it is possible that we might have forgotten we have any obligations to him. Thanks be to his goodness for this new opportunity of acknowledging his love, and of professing my own. I hope in time I shall love him to the height of my desires, and, by

these frequent remembrances of him, become perfectly like him.

Though unworthy therefore of this new favour, who have been so unmindful of old ones, I will go into his house, and present myself at his altar; if it be but to declare that I belong to him, and that I am not willing to lose his blessing. I will show him at least that I have a desire to become a better Christian. But how is it possible that I should see the representation of his mighty love, that I should behold his pains and agonies for my sake, and do no more than tell him that I intend to obey him? I cannot refrain from offering myself entirely to him. I must bind myself in the most sacred covenant to keep his commands. I can do no less than assure him again, that I will choose death rather than displease him. Nay, I will resolve never to cease to renew these vows, and multiply my engagements; and at last, surely, I shall become steadfast in his covenant, and delight myself greatly in his commandments. "My soul shall keep thy testimonies, and love them exceedingly. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments which I have loved, and I will meditate in thy statutes: so shall I keep thy law continually, for ever and ever."

#### THE PRAYER BEFORE THE COMMUNION.

O most high and holy One, who canst not be comprehended by our shallow thoughts: though inconceivably beneath thine infinite majesty, and also a miserable sinner, I make bold, in the name of the LORD JESUS, who is my hope, with humble reverence to prostrate myself before thee; acknowledging that thou art my Maker, my Lord and Sovereign, and that I being the work of thy hands, must needs be thy servant and subject. Yea, thou hast given me leave to call thee Father, and ownest me for thy child. With what sorrow doth it become me to lie in thy presence! For I have not always honoured and served thee as my Creator, nor loved thee as my gracious Father,

nor obeyed thee in all things, as my Sovereign Lord and Master. I have too often rebelled against thine almighty power, and spurned against the bowels of thy love, and broken thy most holy laws, and violated that faith which I professed in my baptism, and which I have many times since plighted unto thee. Thine almighty mercy accuses me. The passion and torment, the death and resurrection, the threatenings and promises, and all the love of my SAVIOUR, condemn me; and so do the mighty works, and the gracious inspiration of the HOLY GHOST; and yet I have nothing to trust to but that almighty mercy, the passion and love of our LORD, the power and grace of the HOLY GHOST. O the long-suffering and patience of my GOD! O the infiniteness of thy mercy, and the preciousness of that blood, that can wash away so many transgressions! I thank thee, O GOD, who "hath set forth CHRIST JESUS to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." By his cross and passion, good LORD, I hope to be delivered; and I wait on thy mercy for the power of his HOLY SPIRIT, to "wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." Assist me thereby, I most humbly beseech thee, to purify myself from all "filthiness both of flesh and spirit;" to purge my mind and my affections from whatsoever is offensive to thy pure eyes, who canst not approve of iniquity. For I would have no uncleanness, no inordinate affections, no evil concupiscence and covetousness, no anger, wrath, malice, or evil-speaking to be found any more within me. And now that I am about to remember the death of JESUS, help me to mortify all these more perfectly, and to hate them worse than death. Take an absolute possession of me; rule in me by thy laws; guide me by thy counsels; fill me with thy love; satisfy me with the comfort of thy promises and joys; that I may delight to be thy faithful and obedient servant. O that I may feel, at thy table, the liveliest apprehensions of what thou hast done for my soul. Hold my thoughts close unto thee; inspire me with devout meditations; strengthen and increase in me all good resolutions; and enable me to bring

them to good effect. I know thou never failest those that heartily seek thee. Our SAVIOUR hath bid us ask and we shall receive, seek and we shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto us. Fulfil then, O gracious LORD, all my petitions: give unto thy servant what he humbly asks; let him that seeks find; open the gate to him that knocks; that I may be made partaker of CHRIST's most blessed body and blood; and feeling the comforts of holy fellowship and friendship with him, and studying to maintain it by a pure and blameless life, I may now and ever triumph in thy salvation, and sing thy praises in thy church on earth, and among thy Saints and Angels in heaven; ascribing honour, blessing, power, and dominion unto thee, O FATHER ALMIGHTY, and unto thy SON CHRIST JESUS, to all eternity. Amen.

#### THE MEDITATION AT HOME.

Dost thou mind, O my soul, what thou sayest, when every day thou callest GOD, Father; thy "Father which is in Heaven?" How happy art thou, if thou art beloved of GOD; so beloved, that the LORD of heaven and earth is thy Father! What is there that thou canst desire beyond this? How well satisfied shouldest thou be in the poorest condition? How well assured that all shall be well with thee, if thou art sure of this one thing, that he is thy Father? Where hast thou been now? What hast thou been doing? Hast thou not been with JESUS? He hath shown thee the love which GOD bears to thee. He hath bidden thee by those tokens; and rest assured that he will never cease to love thee: for he hath given himself to thee; and thou hast given thyself to him. The covenant of eternal love hath been renewed between us. Thou hast again made oath of fidelity to him; and he hath sworn in his holiness that he will not take his loving-kindness from thee, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. O how rich is he, who possesses GOD, and is heir of his immortal glory!

How void should we be of all other cares, but only this, to preserve the love of our heavenly FATHER ! What should covetousness do in that heart, which enjoys such a treasure ? What should ambition, what should vain glory do, in him who can boast of having GOD for his father ? Need he fear that he shall want, who is so well provided ? Should he murmur and repine who hath such fulness ? Is there any cause of anger, if our Father be not angry ? Watch, O my soul, and walk circumspectly, that thou lose not such abundant grace, as this which is bestowed on thee. Go forth in this new strength which thou hast received, and perfect thy conquests over the world, the flesh, and the Devil ; and resolve that nothing shall separate thee from the love of GOD in CHRIST JESUS our LORD.

Well mayest thou stand to this resolution, if thou rememberest that he is thy Father ; for what is it that hath tempted thee, and drawn thy heart at any time from him ? Nothing but a little short pleasure. Nothing but a vain, and many times foolish breath of a mortal man ; whose breath is in his nostrils. Nothing but that which the moth can corrupt, or the rust consume, or of which a thief may despoil us. Nothing but a fading beauty, which sickness or time will certainly bring to decay. What are all these to the pleasures of pleasing GOD ? to the praise which comes from unerring and eternal wisdom ? to the durable riches, honour, and beauty, which our heavenly Father will give us for our portion ? Our hopes in him are infinitely better than any thing else. The love of such a Father is of more worth than the whole world. Value thyself highly, then, upon this account ; and never call him Father more, but with the greatest contentment of heart. “ Be careful for nothing ; but in every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let thy requests be made known unto GOD.” Look often into thy heart, and ask if he be there, and say, “ It is enough ; GOD is my Father, in this will I rejoice. The peace of GOD which

passeth all understanding shall keep my heart and mind through CHRIST JESUS.”—

You may all this week meditate often upon the great faith and confidence which he reposed in his heavenly FATHER, and expressed when he died, saying, “FATHER, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” He trusted himself with him, that he should have a blessed resurrection. “His flesh rested in hope, that GOD would not leave his soul in hell, neither suffer his Holy One to see corruption.” Though he was then scorned, abused, made the vilest of men, and shamefully put to death; yet he took GOD’s word for it, that he should rise, and reign, and be glorified eternally; triumphing over all his enemies, hell, and death itself. Do thou labour to imitate him in this holy faith, both for all the things of this life, and of that which is to come. Trust in GOD’s careful Providence, and precious promises; and “commit thyself unto him in well-doing.” Take care of that only; and leave all the rest, with an assured confidence, to Him. “Let thy conversation be without covetousness; be content with such things as thou hast; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The LORD is my helper, and I will not fear what man can do unto me.”

#### THE THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER.

I RETURN to thee, O most great and glorious GOD, all praise and thanks, for thine infinite and inconceivable mercies. It is but just that I should acknowledge thee with the heartiest affection, and the greatest cheerfulness of spirit, who hast made us, and redeemed us, and sent thy HOLY SPIRIT to sanctify us, and designed us for immortal glory. All the host of heaven is continually praising thee. The Thrones, the Dominions, the Principalities and Powers, the Apostles, the Prophets, the Martyrs, and all the blessed, “rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, LORD

**GOD ALMIGHTY**, which was, and is, and is to come." Thou ever wast, and ever wilt be the fulness of wisdom, power, bounty, holiness, and truth : and therefore it is not only my duty, but my happiness, to unite my heart with all that glorious company ; and to bless thee, O Father of Mercies, who hast brought me forth out of nothing, and made me such an excellent creature ; and sent thy SON to seek and to save me when I was lost ; and purchased me to thyself by his blood ; and washed me in the laver of regeneration, adopted me for thy child, instructed me in thy holy Gospel, guided me hitherto by thy faithful Ministers, admitted me to the communion of Saints, and fed me with the body and blood of my SAVIOUR. Blessed be that goodness, which hath sent the HOLY SPIRIT so often to visit me, to comfort, assist, and conduct me through the dangers of this world ; though I have not always given that reverence, attention, and obedience to his heavenly motions, which I ought. Every day gives me new occasions to speak good of thy name : and now particularly I am bound to render thee my thanks for the sweet refreshments of that holy feast, of which I have been partaker ; for the new resolutions thou hast wrought in my heart ; for the fresh pledges of thy love ; for the assurance thou hast given me that thou art my Father who wilt ever take care of me ; for the joys I feel in thy fatherly love ; for the comforts of brotherly kindness ; for all the pleasure of thy house, the foretastes of heaven, and the hope of everlasting life. I will trust thee ; and commit myself entirely to thee. I will always hope in thy mercy ; and depend on thy power and faithfulness ; and satisfy myself in thy kindness and fatherly Providence ; and glory in this, that I " know and understand that thou art the LORD, which exerciseth loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth ; " for in these things are thy delight. And therefore I wait on thee, from whom cometh my help and my salvation, for the constant supply of thy HOLY SPIRIT, which I believe thou wilt give to those that ask it, to strengthen and enable me to pay thee my vows continually. Maintain, good



LORD, such a sensible remembrance in me of thee and of thy love, that my heart may always be “inclined to thy testimonies, and not unto covetousness,” and that I may serve and please thee in all purity, heavenly-mindedness, simplicity, charity, humility, contentedness of spirit, faith, hope, and joy in the HOLY GHOST.

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#### THE SEVENTH MEDITATION BEFORE THE COMMUNION.

How can I think that I love my SAVIOUR? They are often in my thoughts, whom I love. My mind is perpetually looking towards them. I delight in their company and conversation; and ever labour to recommend myself to their affections, by conforming myself to their will and humour. How do I study to please them; and if they will tell me what will please them, O how glad am I of the opportunity to serve them! Nay, I can cross myself and my own inclinations, to follow theirs; I desire that they should be honoured and esteemed by all. I am much cast down if I have given them any disgust; and not a little troubled that others have offended them or done them any wrong. O that I felt but this little sign of love to my Redeemer; and that my heart were wounded, now that I am going to behold his wounds for the just offence I have at any time given him, and the forgetfulness and ingratitude of most of those who are called by his name. He may well be displeased, if it be but for the defects of my love, and the coldness of my affection to him, who hath deserved to be remembered with the greatest passion. For I have long professed to love him. I have received many testimonies of his special kindness to me, and given many assurances of mine to him. And yet how dim are those marks of love to him, which are plainly visible in me to others?

Am I ever casting mine eyes towards him? Doth he often present himself before my mind, and feelingly touch my heart? Am I never better pleased than when I am going to him? Is the question rather what will please him, than whether I shall do it? He hath declared his will in his holy Gospel; am I glad to hear of it, and read of it, and very desirous to know it in all things? Can I forsake my own will cheerfully to follow his; and doth it grieve me much that his excellent laws are not observed, and that all christians do not love and honour him?

O LORD, thou knowest our weakness, and how hard it is to keep our minds and hearts steadfastly fixed upon invisible things. And in great pity therefore hast thou ordained holy mysteries, for a frequent remembrance of thee, and to represent thyself and thy love more sensibly to us. By this means I hope to grow to a perfect love; ever bearing thee in mind, and delighting to give thee thanks and praise, and conforming myself to thy blessed will, and desiring and studying that thy name may be hallowed and honoured by me, and all men else throughout the world. This hope encourages me to go to thy table, though unworthy. There I hope also my LORD will meet me, and speak kindly to me; he invites us thither to increase our faith and nourish our love, and to strengthen our hope, and excite our gratitude, and exercise all our graces; and therefore I will not refuse his kindness; even because I desire to love him.

But first, my soul, doth it not become us humbly to confess the foolish wanderings of our affections from him; to blush for shame that we fall so short of our own resolutions; and to excite ourselves to greater watchfulness and diligence in well-doing? Ought not the very remembrance of our former coldness to put a greater heat into us; and that of our former backwardness, to make us more forward and zealous? Should we not devote our hearts again to him; and let him know, that we shall not think we live when we do not love him, and that we shall be willing to die that we may love him more? But how can we hope to grow

still better by these new expressions of his love, to which he invites us, without his gracious assistance? Let us go then to him before-hand, and desire him to raise those thoughts and affections in us, which we cannot produce in ourselves; that we may bring a heart full of love to him, and carry it away full of joy, to find itself more enlarged to love and serve him.

#### THE PRAYER SOME TIME BEFORE.

O MOST holy and ever blessed LORD of heaven and earth, who art good, and doest good to all creatures, and to us above all the rest, who are most unworthy of thy loving-kindness: It is but a part of my duty to admire and praise thy great and glorious perfections, to reverence thee, to worship thee, to love thee, and with heart and tongue, both here and eternally, to give thee thanks and speak good of thy name. But it becomes me no less to debase myself before thee; because all that I speak in thy praise declares my foul ingratitude. There is nothing that I can justly call my own: and I have received exceeding much from thy bounty, and thou hast made me that I might enjoy satisfaction in thee, and taken care to bring me acquainted with thee; which ought now to be remembered with the greatest humility, thankfulness, and joyful resignation of myself and all that I have to thy obedience. But, alas! how little do I feel thee, though I live and move and have my being in thee? Though I have tasted of thine abundant goodness every moment, how late was it before I seriously thought of my obligations to thee? Now that I see thou hast sent thy SON, the express image of thy person among us, how little is it that I know of thee, and what a stranger am I still to thee? I have been too willing to receive but small benefit by his appearing, and to content myself with a little measure of that purity, wisdom, and goodness, which he came to impart unto us. For ever adored be thy infinite love, which is not willing to

lose us, when we are so forward to lose thee and ourselves. Blessed be the abundance of thy grace in CHRIST JESUS, which continues to invite even such senseless wretches to come unto thee; who have so little esteemed it, and so little know how to value the unsearchable riches of it. Let the marvellous greatness of thy forbearing and pardoning mercy excite my heart to love thee, that at last I may understand it is my happiness to have thy image renewed in me, in righteousness and true holiness.

Thou hast often convinced me, praised be thy goodness, that it is impossible for me otherwise to be happy. Thou hast wrought many strong resolutions in my soul, to be guided and governed by thine unerring wisdom. And I have felt the comforts of a pure, humble, meek, merciful, peaceable, and loving disposition of heart. Perfect, good LORD, what thou hast wrought in me, that all the inclinations of my soul may settle in a firm and lasting habit of well-doing. Our righteousness, I know, cannot profit thee; but thou delightest to communicate thyself to thy creatures, especially to those who think it the greatest treasure to be enriched with thy wisdom, and to be made partakers of a divine nature. O thou who hast given me this knowledge, and who hast given me a will to choose thee for my portion, make me completely happy in being exactly like unto thee.

Meet me graciously when I approach thy table, and represent thy SON JESUS so feelingly to me, that my mind may be more clearly illuminated to understand the beauteous perfection of his holiness, and my will more strongly bent to cleave unto him, and all the powers of my soul enlivened to follow and imitate him to the end. I go with a desire, O LORD, to learn of him, that I may henceforth have low thoughts of myself, and low thoughts of all enjoyments on earth, as a small part of that happiness to which thou hast designed me, and hateful thoughts of every sin, as that which is opposite both to thee and to my own happiness. O that the thoughts of thy goodness may ever hereafter make me partake of more of thy holiness; that thy mercy

and indulgence may never tempt me to offend thee, but rather affright me into thy obedience, and that I may love thee so much, as to feel it a satisfaction to cross my own desires, to fulfil thy will and pleasure. O that it may be a comfort to me to deny them; that I may account it my greatest victory to overcome myself, and my highest triumph that thou, LORD, conquerest, and makest me thy willing subject. I hope to be subdued perfectly unto thee, and enabled to maintain a sovereign dominion over all things here; so that I may use them all soberly, moderately, and with due acknowledgments to thee, but be brought in subjection unto none. Amen, LORD JESUS!

#### A MEDITATION AFTERWARD AT HOME.

WHAT makes thee sigh, my soul, now thou hast been with thy SAVIOUR? Thou art afraid thou shalt forget him, now those sensible representations are removed from thine eyes; and that thy love and thy joy will vanish, now thou art gone from his blessed presence. Be of good comfort, for he is every where, and will not absent himself if thou art desirous of his company. "His word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart." Look into his holy Gospel, and read again and again the story of his love. Look into thyself, and see what he hath already done for thee; and he will not fail to be ever doing more. He hath given thee "a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life," if thou believest. And thou mayest feed continually on the remembrances which he hath now given thee of himself. He desires thou wouldest make him thy daily bread; and be ever drawing life, and power, and joy from him, the fountain of life. Doth not he love holiness, better than thou canst do thyself? Did he not live, did he not die, did he not rise again, and is he not at God's right hand, and hath he not an unchangeable Priesthood, that he may "bring us to God," and "purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works?" Be

confident of this very thing, "that he which hath begun a good work in thee, will finish it until the day of **JESUS CHRIST.**" Do but let him know every day that thou "lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity," and he will crown thee with more of his grace. He will love to beautify his own image, and make it fairer and clearer wheresoever he finds it. Do but "work out thy salvation with fear and trembling," and thou needest not fear, he will continue to work in thee for ever. That little light which is in thee shall increase to perfect day.

And here remember, that the more thou canst forego thy own will to satisfy his, the more assured thou wilt grow that he delights in thee, and will rejoice over thee to do thee good ; and so thou canst never fail to find thy joy in him to be full. Therefore resolve particularly all this week to meditate often upon his absolute **RESIGNATION** to his **FATHER'S** will in all things ; of which he hath given such a perfect example from the beginning to the end of his life. When he came into the world, he said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." When he preached among men he protested, saying, "I can of my ownself do nothing ; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the **FATHER** which hath sent me." And when he was an hungered, he protested again ; "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." And when he was in the bitterest agony, from which nature was passionately averse, he submitted himself, nevertheless, with the greatest meekness, saying, "Not what I will, but what thou wilt. Not my will, but thine be done." Labour thou after the same mind and disposition, both in doing and suffering ; remembering the word that he said unto his Apostles, "The Disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. It is enough for the Disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

## THE PRAYER AND THANKSGIVING.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful FATHER, the fountain of all life and happiness: Thou bountifully communicatest thy blessings, and every where overflowest in thy mercies to all thy creatures,—more especially to the sons of men, who are surrounded with an ocean of them, the bounds of which we cannot see, and the depth whereof we cannot fathom. And the more thirsty any souls are, and humbly desirous to receive them, the more it pleaseth thee to pour out thy mercies upon them. I thine unworthy servant, encompassed about with thy salvation, come to make my humble acknowledgements, and such returns of dutiful affection as I am able, to thy Divine Majesty. If I had the spirits of all creatures united in me, I could not conceive, or worthily express, thy loving-kindness; who hast raised me out of nothing to an excellent degree of being; endued me with reason and wisdom; instructed me in the Christian Faith; and therein let me see such things as “eye never saw, ear never heard, nor did it enter into the heart of man to conceive;”—that the LORD GOD “should dwell among us,” and our nature be “exalted at his right hand, far above all Angels, Principalities, and Powers, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” Blessed be the infinite wisdom and goodness of GOD, which sent his SON JESUS, born of a woman, to die for us, and to be a propitiation for our sins; and, by means of death, hath crowned him with glory and honour, that we might have a blessed hope of glory, honour, and immortality, together with himself. I ought to be overwhelmed with the thoughts of thy mercies, which I cannot comprehend. The great load of them ought to press my heart continually, to send them all back again in eternal love and obedience. Accept, good LORD, I beseech thee, of such poor expressions of them as I have now made unto thee; and of my vows, at thy holy table, to tender unto thee better. There thou hast been pleased to give me a

sweet remembrance of thy past loving-kindness, and assurances of the future. Bestow upon me likewise such a wise and considering heart, that I may sink my thoughts deeper and deeper into the vast sea of thy mercies; and think myself happy when I am filled with such a great sense of them, that all my thoughts, desires, and actions, are under the power of heavenly love.

O that the love of GOD, my SAVIOUR, may be ever admirable in mine eyes, and that I may delight to think of thy love, to speak of thy love, and to imitate thy love; so that all inordinate affections may die in me, and I may perform most ready and easy obedience to all thy commands. Thou hast laid also great engagements upon me, in that whilst thou makest this provision for my soul, thou hast not neglected my body; but hast taken care that a world of good things should serve my needs continually. O that my heart were but duly sensible of all thy goodness! I know that then I could not deny any thing thou desirest to thee, who hast opened thy hand so liberally to me, even beyond my desires. I could not but trust thee, and resign my will wholly to thee, and be contented with what thou orderest for me, and in every thing give thanks, which is thy will in CHRIST JESUS concerning me.

All that I have and can do is too little to give to thee. I can love thee but a little, and therefore I desire that all the world would love thee, and worship thee, and glorify thy name. "For thou art great, and doest wondrous things; thou art GOD alone. O that all the Kings of the earth would praise thee, O LORD: yea, that they would sing in the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD." May they think it their greatest honour to be the subjects of our SAVIOUR, and their greatest security to obey him, and observe his laws; and being entrusted with thy power, may they employ it to right those that suffer wrong, to ease the oppressed, supply the wants of the poor, defend the fatherless and widows, and comfort all mankind in their miseries. I recommend this Church and Kingdom, our Sovereign, and all his subjects, to thy most powerful



protection; beseeching thee to endue us all with thy heavenly grace, to dispose us to thy true religion, and to be zealous of good works; that our LORD and Master may be honoured by us, and all men may know we are his disciples, by our loving one another. Now to “the most high God, who liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation; before whom all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;” be blessing, and honour, and praise rendered, by me, and by all creatures, now and eternally. Amen.



#### THE EIGHTH MEDITATION BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

OUR LORD hath done such great things for us, that we may be tempted sooner not to believe them, than to forget them. But this is one piece of the greatness of that love, that it hath taken care it should be always remembered. He hath not thought it enough to die for us; but he hath left us a representation of it, and a command to “show forth his death until he come.” What dost thou think of that command? Is it a burden to thee to yield obedience to it? Dost thou unwillingly “do this in remembrance” of him? What! is it a sad thing to think of declaring the goodness of the LORD, to magnify the love of God, to profess ourselves his servants, and to engage to him our fidelity? Thou art not a stranger, surely, to thy own happiness, but knowest better things, even things that accompany salvation. Give glory therefore to the LORD, that he calls thee again, so graciously, to show forth his death; let him know that thou meanest to obey him, by attending him at his holy table, and thank him too. But with what blushing should

we look there upon that love, which we have some time slighted? With what hatred, upon those sins which murdered the Lord of Life? With what joy should we think of the hope there is, that they may be pardoned? And how shall we stand admiring at that wise goodness, which made that blood, which sinners shed, to be the expiation for their sins? Surely we do not believe these things, or else we should already feel our hearts burn with love to him, and ready to offer themselves in sacrifice before we come to his altar. Let thy faith stir up thy love, and carry all the passions of thy heart along with it to him. Show him that the desire of thy heart is to the remembrance of his name, that thy care is to please him, thy fear to offend him, thy joy to do his will, and thy sorrow that thou canst do no more for him. Let it be a comfort to thee, that he knows thy sincerity, and sees the very secrets of thy heart; how affectionately thou studieth to be like him; what a pleasure it is when thou canst steadfastly think on him; how it grieves thee when thy thoughts are broken, thy affections heavy and dull, and thy power falls so short of thy will and desires. And be assured that he pities thee; and that, notwithstanding this, he will kindly entertain thee, and receive the poorest oblation thou art able to make him at his table. "Eat, and be satisfied, and bless the name of the LORD." He hath invited thee, he expects thee, he loves to see thee there, and will make thee know that he loves thee, and delights to do thee good.

Let us go, my soul, and declare before Angels and men, that we are Christians, and mean to live and die in his holy religion. And let us now take shame to ourselves, that we have at any time contradicted our belief. Let us acknowledge the breach of that faith into which we were baptized; and declare before we go, how great a trouble it is to us that we love him no more, and how desirous and fully resolved we are to love him better and better.

## THE PRAYER SOME TIME BEFORE.

O ETERNAL GOD, the LORD of life, of grace, peace, and all our comforts, it is of thy great mercies alone that I am not consumed, or that I lie not now on a bed of sickness, but am invited to feast at thy holy table. I might have loathed even the ordinary food of my body; and thou continuest to me the opportunity of receiving the precious food of my soul. The grave might have been my dwelling, the worms my companions, and I been turned into rottenness and corruption; but now I am going to thy house, to be the companion of thy people, and to communicate with thee and my blessed SAVIOUR, that I may be nourished to a blessed immortality. This is nothing else but thy marvellous mercy, and because thy compassions fail not; for I have in too many ways violated thy holy laws, broken thy covenant, resisted thy grace, and under-valued eternal life. Thou hast adopted me early for thy child, sown the immortal seed of thy word in my heart, and sent thy HOLY SPIRIT to further its growth and increase to that never dying happiness. But how little have I recovered of thy image in wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, which hath been miserably defaced! How coldly have I sometimes entertained the motions of thy HOLY SPIRIT! How barren and unfruitful have I been in the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST! How often have I heard of that great and dreadful day of reckoning, and been prone to follow the little pleasures of this life, as if I looked neither for joy nor misery in the other world! That faith which should save me, might justly condemn me; and JESUS my most compassionate REDEEMER, were it not for infinite mercy, would become only a severe judge towards me.

Adored be thy patience and long-suffering to sinners. For ever magnified be that grace, which gives another opportunity of humbling myself before thee; of entreating thy favour; of deprecating thy displeasure; and of devoting myself again to thy service. O merciful God, according to

the multitude of thy mercies in CHRIST JESUS, blot out all mine iniquities. I have not offended thee beyond the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, of thine incomprehensible love; and there is still remaining in my heart some esteem of that love, with a hearty desire to be sanctified throughout in body, soul, and spirit. Though not by works of righteousness which I have done, yet by thy mercy I hope to be saved, through the washing of regeneration, and more perfect renewing of the HOLY GHOST. That renewing virtue from above I earnestly desire to be more abundantly poured on me. Let me study to purify myself, even as thou art pure; and to walk before thee in all sobriety, righteousness, humility, meekness, peaceableness, and charity; endeavouring to perfect holiness in thy fear. Vouchsafe me some earnest of this grace, when I present myself before thee, to commemorate the death of thy SON JESUS, who was wounded for our iniquities, and bruised for our transgressions; that my heart may be deeply wounded with a sense of sin, and hate the very thought of every evil way, and choose to endure any misery, rather than offend thy love again. O that I might then feel my thoughts carried away from this world, so that I could think of nothing but thee, the dying love of my SAVIOUR, and the greatness of that love which I owe to him. Replenish my soul with holy thoughts, lift me up in heavenly meditations, and fill me with a multitude of devout affections; that I may be able hereafter to do and suffer all things for his sake, and never forget how good he is, and how good I have resolved to be. Without thee I cannot ascend up unto thee; and therefore I look for thy holy inspirations to accompany me in all my meditations, and prayers, and praises, and thanksgivings, and resolutions; that attending upon this sacred service with love, and zeal, and delight, and devotion of spirit, there may be a happy meeting between me and my SAVIOUR, and such an inseparable union contracted as may be at last consummated in his heavenly kingdom.

## THE THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER.

FOR ever hallowed be thy great name, O FATHER of Mercies, the GOD of love, the fountain of all blessedness. All the heavenly host delight to praise thee. O how great is thy goodness, who invitest us, who dwell in houses of clay, to bear them company in their praises and thanksgivings! They can add nothing at all unto thy fulness: but it is our happiness to spend our days here in loving thee, and doing thee honour and service; and to pass the life of the other world in admiration, love, and thanksgiving. Blessed be the name of GOD our FATHER, who hath raised us out of nothing, and “hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our LORD JESUS CHRIST;” and of GOD our SAVIOUR, who hath redeemed us from the hands of all our enemies, and purchased us with a great price unto himself; and of GOD our SANCTIFIER and ASSISTER, who keeps us every moment from destruction. I thank thee, O LORD of heaven and earth, for that liberal portion which thou hast given to me, thine unworthy servant, in thy grace and favour; for the knowledge of thy holy Gospel, which hath brought life and immortality to light; for all the good instructions I have received from thy Ministers, and the tender care, and religious education, of my Parents, Tutors, and Governors; for all seasonable reproofs, wholesome counsels, good admonitions, and every truth I have received from my friends or enemies; for the pious examples, and good conversation, of any of my neighbours; for all holy opportunities, and the leisure I have to attend upon this heavenly employment; for thy merciful chastisements, and thy wonderful deliverances; for all the good books thou hast brought to my hands, and the good advice which I have in any way received; for all my benefactors; for all those that love me, and pray for me; and, above all, for thy gracious inspirations from above, the holy thoughts thou hast put into my mind, and the pious desires and purposes thou hast stirred up in my heart; with all the

helps and assistances thou hast vouchsafed me in my way to heaven, particularly now at this holy feast, where thou hast made me know and feel how good thou art.

What shall I return unto thee for all thy love? What shall I give unto my LORD, who hath given himself for me? I have given thee my whole self, and now devoted all the powers of my soul and body to thy service; that all my thoughts, my words, my desires, my passions, and my actions, may be disposed according to thy will, and not my own. And I think myself happy, O blessed JESUS, in the choice I have made of thee for my LORD and Master. I rejoice in the disposal I have made of myself to thy service and obedience. For a world I would not revoke my consent to be absolutely ruled and governed by thee, as long as I live. "Sin shall not reign in my mortal body, that I should obey it in the lusts thereof."

I come again to yield myself unto thee, my GOD; to profess thy service to be the most perfect freedom; and to beseech thy pardon for all mine unfaithfulness, and the constant power of thy HOLY SPIRIT to assist me in the doing thy will here on earth, as it is done in heaven; that all my resolutions may be persevering, my endeavours successful, and my obedience perfect in all things.

LORD JESUS, do what thou plearest in me, and what thou plearest with me. "Truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant;" and I will make my boast continually in this, that "I serve the LORD CHRIST." May I but ever love thee, and steadfastly cleave unto thee, and cheerfully obey thee, and faithfully live to honour thee; I desire nothing else. Come prosperity or adversity, come sickness or health, life or death, so that I may but glorify thee; and be made conformable to thee, and bear thine image in holiness here, and in glory hereafter.

And let all the earth stand in awe of thee, thou LORD and ruler of the whole world. Let the hearts of all people submit themselves to thy kingdom and authority. "In thy Majesty ride on prosperously, O thou most mighty, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness;" till all thine

enemies fall under thee, and think themselves happy in thy just and merciful government. I commend thine own family to thy gracious and powerful protection; and that part of it especially which is in these kingdoms; that we thy servants, being hurt by no persecutions, may evermore give thanks unto thee in thy holy Church, and triumph in thy praise, saying, "This God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death."

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#### THE NINTH MEDITATION BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

SHALL we not be too bold in going so often to the table of the LORD? May we not offend him by our forwardness to approach his presence? No, surely; if we consider how forward he was to do that which we remember. When he came to offer himself a sacrifice for us, he saith, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O God." And when he ate the last meal with his Disciples, he said again, "With desire, I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." Behold what a hearty vehemence there was in his love! What an ardour in his desire to be made an offering for us, and to be remembered by us! With what desire then should our souls approach to his holy table in remembrance of him, who took such content in dying for us, and was so desirous to institute this holy feast, for a perpetual remembrance of his death?

Awake, awake then thy faith, call up thy love, quicken thy desires; excite all that is within thee to bless the LORD, and speak good of his name. Say, with joy, "Lo, I come according to thy command, and delight to do thy will, O God. With desire I have desired to do this in remembrance of my LORD, to declare thy mighty acts, and show

forth the greatness of thy love; to profess myself thy servant, and to glory in the holy name of my Master, **JESUS**; to offer up myself unto thee an oblation of love; to renew my covenant with thee, and with all my brethren; to give thee thanks that I am one of thy family, and for all the benefits I have received, and for all which thou hast still in store for thy faithful servants." But who is able to tell how much he hath done already for us, or find out all that he designs unto us? Who can praise him according to his excellent kindness, and his wonderful works for the children of men? The thoughts of Angels are not wide enough to comprehend them. "O give thanks therefore unto the **LORD**; for he is gracious, for his mercy endureth for ever." O give thanks unto him, who is so desirous of us, such little hearts, that can hold so little love unto him. Let us go to him, and desire that he would enlarge them, and that he would fill them to the height with his. Since he is content, if he may but dwell in our breasts, and have the government of us in his hands; let us go and vow, that he shall possess us solely; that no affection, no desire, shall dwell in us without his leave, and all be ordered by him just as he pleases. And let us show him now, that we have prepared no less gift than our whole selves, to be bestowed on him; that we are desirous to be commanded by him, and to do him service; and that if he will make us more desirous, more resolved and steadfast in these holy purposes, we will never cease to thank him in this manner as long as we live.

And approaching thus with all humility to him, may we not hope that he will accept us, and receive us as his friends, and embrace us with love, and inclose us, as we desire, unto himself?—Nay, that he will hold us fast tied in the cords of his love; not to fetter and imprison us, but to unlock and open our narrow hearts by the power of it, that they may be enlarged into the true liberty of love to him, and to all the world. We may hope at last, that it will become as unnatural to offend him, as it is to kill ourselves; that obedience shall be our delight; that all good things



on earth, which have been our hinderance, shall prove our encouragement to a holy life; and that our watchfulness over ourselves shall be so strict and severe, that we shall not be easily surprised, but continually worship him, by presenting him with a spirit like his own, innocent, and delighting to do all good.

#### THE PRAYER SOME TIME BEFORE.

O MOST mighty LORD, the high and holy One, who possessest eternity, who dwellest in the purest light, and whose Majesty is enthroned in the midst of all the heavenly host, who are continually celebrating the praises of thy name: The light of thy countenance is better than life, and one day in thy courts is better than a thousand. If thou wilt graciously shine upon me when I go to thy table; if thou wilt fill me with the joys of faith, and love, and holy hope, I shall account that day the beginning of eternal life, and remember as long as I live how gracious thou art. But I have little reason to expect to be so highly favoured by thee, who have forgotten oft-times that reverence which I owe to thee my Creator, and that dutiful affection which I owe to my Redeemer, and been disobedient to many good motions of the HOLY SPIRIT of Grace. I have thought so much how to please myself, and so little of pleasing thee, and spent so much time in the affairs of my body, and so little in those of my immortal soul, that I may rather sink into dejection of spirit toward the place of darkness, than hope to be lifted up toward heaven.

But thy gracious pardon, O LORD of Love, will make me admire and love thee; and it is already the hearty desire of my soul, that I may love thee above all things, and that all my love may run in free and cheerful obedience to every one of thy commands: they are all holy, just, and good; they are most lovely and gracious in mine eyes. I esteem thy precepts to be most highly conducive to the perfection and happiness of my nature, and joyfully submit myself to

the sovereign authority of such tender love. O pity an humble suitor unto thee, that his heart may ever be under the power of thy holy commands, and, being saved from the love of all things here below, may become a subject of thy love.

I am sensible how often I fall short of my own desires and resolutions, and therefore again look up to thee with an humble faith for thy powerful presence with me. Enlighten my mind more clearly; settle my wandering thoughts; awaken the conscience of my duty towards thee and toward all men; compose and quiet all my turbulent passions, and confirm and strengthen all the holy purposes which thou workest in me. Vouchsafe, most gracious LORD, to accept and assist the faint endeavours of my soul to please thee, to encourage and further every good inclination, to fortify me against the most importunate temptations, and to enable me to quell and bring under the strongest oppositions to thy will. May I deliver up myself absolutely unto it; desiring and purposing to live in steadfast conformity to it, to maintain an humble and reverent sense of thy greatness and goodness, soberly to use all the good things which thou indulgest to me, to exercise righteousness, charity, meekness, and gentleness to all men, to possess my soul in patience, to be contented with my portion, to pray without ceasing, and in every thing to give thanks, which is thy will in CHRIST JESUS concerning me. Sanctify, I beseech thee, the greatest worldly blessings to me; support me under the heaviest afflictions; fit me for the most sudden or lingering departure out of this life, and for whatever thy wise providence shall order for me while I stay in it; and by these means prepare me for everlasting glory. And O that the nearer I approach unto it, the brighter sense of it may shine into my heart, chasing away the fears of death, and the cares of life. O that I may now begin it, by praising thee in the company of thy saints with joyful lips; and every day praise thee better, and long more for that happy state, where we shall have nothing else to do but to love and praise thee for ever.

## THE MEDITATION AFTERWARD.

Is there any need, after all thou hast heard, and thought, and said of thy blessed SAVIOUR, that I should call upon thee, and bid thee love him? Need I entreat and earnestly beseech thee, my soul, to preserve the memory of his kindness, and exhort thee to go again and again, to praise him in this manner? Methinks we may turn our thoughts and our speech to him, thanking and admiring the excess of his love, that he will let us approach thus near unto him. It is his love, that he will at all regard us, and receive the love we offer to him. But it is a great marvel of his love, that he hath entreated us so often, and laid upon us so many obligations to love him. What are we, that he should seek after us on this fashion, who had a mind to lose him? It is strange that he will address himself to our very senses, so that our dull flesh may not hinder us from loving him. Good LORD! that thy delight should be with the sons of men! Couldst thou not live unless we lived also? Canst thou be at all the better for us? Have we been kind unto thee, since thou hast done this for us? Or do we use half so many entreaties to thee, to do us good, as thou hast done to us, to be good to ourselves? But think withal, what a hopeless condition that soul is in, which the love of GOD in CHRIST JESUS cannot move to love him. And what may all thy brethren expect from thee, who are partakers of the common salvation together with thyself? Canst thou find in thy heart to offend him for whom CHRIST died? Wilt thou not open thy bowels of compassion towards others, when thou standest in so great need even of infinite mercies thyself? Shall some small differences between you sour thy heart; or blunt the edge of that affection, which is sharpened by the divine love to us, when we were strangers and enemies to him by evil works? How canst thou but be ready to do good, and to forgive even those that have done evil to thee? To

bless them that curse thee, and pray for them that despitefully use thee; remembering that thy reward then shall be great, and thou shalt be the child of the Highest; for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil? Be thou therefore merciful, as thy heavenly FATHER also is merciful.

#### THE THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER AFTERWARD.

O most holy and ever blessed LORD of heaven and earth, who only hast immortality, shining in the glory of thine own perfections, and not needing any reflections from thy creatures: Thou art full beyond our thoughts; and ever communicating out of thy fulness, abundantly beyond all that we can conceive. We cannot comprehend the vast number of creatures which thou hast made, who all praise thee, and declare thy goodness: nor are we able to fathom the least part of that bounty which feeds them, and provides for them, and takes care of them every where. Much less can we comprehend thee, in whom they all live, and move, and have their being; and from whom they are continually supplied without diminishing thy full goodness. We, the children of men, have received a more liberal share in thy blessings than the rest of our fellow-creatures, and had most large experience of thy never-ceasing love and kindness to us. For after we had wasted those great treasures wherewith thou didst endue our natures, thou hast been pleased to grant us a new and better portion, and to raise us up again with the addition of many talents; having sent thy SON to redeem us, to be the author of a supernatural birth to us, to declare to us all the will of thee our heavenly FATHER, and to give us exceeding great and precious promises. Thou hast sent him, blessed be thy goodness, to bring us life and spirit; to strengthen us against all the powers of hell and earth; to break the force of all temptations; to sanctify even our afflictions to us,

and the infirmities of our crazy bodies ; to take out the sting of death, and to make it an entrance into an immortal life. Thou hast advanced him to intercede for us at thy right hand ; to be our advocate with thee, when by our weakness we sin against thee ; to pardon us when we repent and return to thee ; and to bless us by giving us repentance, and turning us from all our iniquities. And to all other benefits thou hast added the comforts of thy holy table, where I have now partaken of his most blessed body and blood. Thou hast shown me the greatness of my SAVIOUR's love ; and tied me in new resolutions to love and serve thee for ever ; and given me strong assurance of thine everlasting mercies in CHRIST JESUS.

These very acknowledgments will witness against me, if I should carelessly throw away this new portion, which thou hast given me in thy love. The remembrance of them will be intolerable, if I should not improve this extraordinary grace, which I have now commemorated. I flee unto thee therefore, again, O most merciful FATHER, for the help of thy HOLY SPIRIT, to continue in me a perpetual memory of that love which thou hast bestowed on me, and of the professions I have made of an unmoveable love to thee. O thou Inspirer of all holy thoughts and desires ; O thou who delightest to encourage all those that seek after thee ; stop not the current of thy bounteous love ; but as thou hast drawn me to thee, and moved me to devote myself to thy obedience ; so preserve these thoughts and purposes in my heart for ever. I believe thou hearest me, and wilt be with me. And filled with power and might, and with constant hope in thee, I will walk and not be weary, and run the ways of thy commandments, and not faint. To that almighty goodness I commit myself, of which I have had such long experience. I will never doubt of thy readiness to assist me ; but always look up unto the heavens from whence cometh my help. " My help cometh from the LORD which made heaven and earth. The LORD shall preserve me from all evil ; he

shall preserve my soul. The LORD shall preserve my going out, and my coming in, from this time forth and even for evermore."

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THE TENTH MEDITATION BEFORE THE  
SACRAMENT.

How long is it since thou thoughtest of the best Friend thou hast in the whole world? And what were thy last thoughts of him? Didst thou not, a very little while ago, long for his company, and wish the time would come wherein thou mightest again enjoy him? Didst thou not count the days till that happy time, when he promised to return or send unto thee? And suppose he be dead, with what passion dost thou follow his memory? How art thou moved with the mention of his dear name? How oft dost thou look upon the lively picture of him, which is drawn in thy imagination? And dost thou think it could fail to put thee in mind of what he left thee in charge when he departed this world? Couldst thou forget the legacies which he left thee, or the inheritance which he bequeathed to thee, as the heir of his love?

How long then is it since JESUS was in thy thoughts? Canst thou not tell? Was there ever such a friend as he, who died to save thee? O how precious should the name of JESUS be unto thee? With what joy shouldest thou receive the news, that he is coming to visit thee? How welcome must this invitation be from thy blessed SAVIOUR, whom if thou lovest, thou canst not but long to see? It is the voice of thy Well-beloved, that calls unto thee, and saith, "Come and feast with me. Come and see by these sensible signs, which I have left to represent me, how much my love hath made me to suffer for thee. Behold the lively figure of my body and blood, which was broken and shed

to redeem thee. I have caused it to be made on purpose, that thou mightest not forget me."

What dost thou answer him? Canst thou say, thou hast looked for this day? That thou thoughtest it long, till thou mightest go to his house, and see him set forth, crucified before thine eyes? Why? What good did the last sight of him do thee? Did it call all his commands to mind, and recommend them effectually to thy love? Did it stir thee up to his will, and make thee more zealous ever since in working that which is pleasing in his sight? Having him, did it make thee "purify thyself even as he is pure?" Go then now as a friend of his, and do the same again. Renew thy remembrance of him. Show him the belief which thou hast in him; the love which thou bearest to his name and word; how resolved thou art never to forget him; and how happy thou thinkest thyself, in the portion which he hath given thee in his grace and love. Profess to him that his commandments are dearer to thee than thy life; and that thou wilt sooner part with it, than not perform his holy will in every thing. Vow to him, again, that thou wilt be true and faithful to him. Embrace all thy brethren there assembled with a kind affection, because they are his friends and followers. Desire that all the world should know him, and become acquainted with him; and that a perpetual memory of him may be preserved, by doing this, as long as the sun and moon endure.

Then thou wilt hear him as good as say unto thee, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. All that I have is thine. I will be an everlasting friend to thee, and make thee inherit all things. It is my FATHER's good pleasure to give thee a kingdom: and here I give thee the earnest of that purchased possession. What reason hast thou to doubt of the enjoyment, if thou art my friend, by doing whatsoever I command thee? Do not friends partake in each other's goods? My power which I have over all things in heaven and earth shall assist thee. My Angels shall be thy guardians. My SPIRIT shall be thy guide

and director. My comforts shall encourage and support thee. Because I live, thou shalt live also. For I came that my sheep might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

#### THE PRAYER SOME TIME BEFORE.

O most holy and eternal God, who art good, and doest good : The whole earth is full of thy goodness. Thy mercy reacheth unto the heavens, and thy faithfulness unto the clouds. Thou art great in power, wisdom, and all other perfections ; and therefore greatly to be feared, honoured, and loved, by all understanding creatures. When I consider how much thou hast done for me, and how much I have often promised to do for thee, I am, on both hands, confounded and ashamed. Thou art my Creator, my Father, my Saviour, and constant Benefactor ; the God of my life, of all my present comforts and future hopes. I have promised often to be thy faithful servant, and thy dutiful child, and to glorify thee both with body and soul, and all the good things which thou hast bestowed on me. In my baptism I was dedicated unto thee, and have many times confirmed that gift, and renewed my engagements to continue in thy obedience. In my promises I have been liberal ; but how sparing in performance ! Thou, who art acquainted with all my ways, knowest, and I myself know, so much of my negligence, that I may justly wonder that thou still retainest me in thy family. Adored be thy great long-suffering and patience toward me and all mankind. Thanks be to the name of the LORD, who, after our abuse of so many blessings, hath added the gift of his dear SON, and sent him to pay a ransom for us. O the inconceivable greatness of that love, which hath so much befriended the most ungrateful enemies ! I lift up my hands unto thee in his name, to receive that gracious pardon which he hath purchased for me ; hoping, through him,



that thou wilt still continue thy love unto me, who am steadfastly resolved to love thee above all things. Far be it from me to think, that the love of our LORD shall maintain me in any rebellion against thee. No, love me so much, good LORD, as to change my will, and renew my nature into thine own likeness, that I may be truly a friend of God. I wish for no greater happiness, than to feel my soul at peace with thee, by an entire and unchangeable love to all righteousness, goodness, and truth. And I am going to remember his dying love; that I may devote myself wholly to thy love and service. I do as unfeignedly desire that all my sins may die, as I am glad that CHRIST died to be a propitiation for them. And I as sincerely offer up myself, my understanding, my will, my desires and passions, and all that I have, unto thee, as I really believe that he offered up himself for me. O that the power of the HOLY GHOST may accompany me, and unite my thoughts and affections to make a most thankful commemoration of his loving-kindness. Represent unto my mind most feelingly all that JESUS hath done and endured for our sake; fix my mind and heart upon the inestimable benefits which he hath obtained for me; that I may not only behold the outward figures of him, but receive those pledges of his love with the humblest reverence, with such a lively faith, and vehement love, and ready submission of my will to him, that CHRIST JESUS may be formed in me. I long for the happiness of knowing assuredly that I am a friend of his, of delighting greatly in his commandments, of trusting myself and all my concerns entirely in his hands, of contenting myself in his love and good-will toward me, and of rejoicing in the sovereign dominion, power, and glory; which thou hast given him; with most earnest desires that all the world may love and obey him. Amen.

## THE MEDITATION AFTERWARD.

WITH what unwillingness are we wont to leave the company of a friend in whom we delight? How doth the remembrance of him cleave unto our mind? How often do we think of the kind words which we heard from his mouth, and view the tokens which he hath left with us of his love? Do we not use to cast our eyes behind us when we go from him, and look after him as long as he is in sight? Are we not glad to see but his back, when we cannot behold his face? O "JESUS," then shouldest thou say, "who can be content to part with the thoughts of thee, when he sees the love which thou bearest to us, and all the blessings which thou impartest to thy friends and followers? I should look as far as heaven, rather than suffer thee to go out of my thoughts; and always be casting mine eyes to thy dwelling place, that I may behold, at this distance, ever so little of thy most excellent glory.

"I will not cease to be often looking after my SAVIOUR. What though I cannot always see him, so as I now see him in the sanctuary; yet I will never forget him. And the darkest apprehensions of his love and favour shall be dearer to me, than any object in this world. Blessed be his goodness, which hath given me such pledges of it, as engage me to remember him. I will be ever mindful to keep the covenant which I have made with him, and remember his commandments to do them. O sweet words which I have heard from the mouth of my SAVIOUR; 'Whosoever shall do the will of GOD, the same is my brother, and my sister, and my mother.' I have no other will, O LORD, but thine; and I will prove continually, 'what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will' of thine, that we may be eternal friends, by the constant union of our wills in one. Let my LORD command what he pleases, it shall be obeyed; let him do what he thinks good, my will shall be done as well as his.

"O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art

my LORD; but my goodness extendeth not unto him, but to the saints that are in the earth. They are his friends, and what thou doest to them he accounts done to himself. Think thyself happy that thou wilt never want him, whilst thou enjoyest them. Thou feedest him when thou feedest them. Thou goest to see him, when thou visitest them in their need. ‘Verily, I say unto you, (they are the words of the LORD,) inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.’

“Look on it as a great part of the riches of divine grace, that he is not only content to love us himself, but hath contrived means that all men else may love us, and commands them so to do. Begin this brotherly-kindness then thyself, that so thou mayest be able to say every day, O how great is thy mercy, O LORD, that thou lovest me thyself, and wouldest have all the world to love me! O how great is thy goodness, that thou not only chargest them so to do, but engagest them to love me by thy love! Yea, to love me so, as thou hast loved me and them, and so as they love themselves! How full, how incomprehensible is the love of my God, who would have me hated by none, but every man to be my friend, and, if I am in need, every man to do me good? How can I want who have such a father, who hath made all men to be my brethren? How happy would he make me, who labours to set all hearts open to me, that as many men as I see, so many lovers I may behold? Thou dwellest, O God, in love; and wouldest have me to do so too, by loving, and being beloved of all. What return shall I make to the LORD for his love! He tells me that ‘it is love. Love thy brethren, love them with a pure heart fervently. This is the thing which I would have thee to do; and this will make thee blessed for ever, by loving me and all others, and by being beloved of me, and of all men else that love me.’”

## THE THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER.

O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, which is, which was, and is to come; who art the happiness of men and angels, and hast an innumerable company of beautiful creatures always beholding thy glories, satisfied with thy love, and delighting themselves in thy praises! I cast down myself before thee, to join together with all that heavenly host, in lauding and magnifying thy great and holy name, and rejoicing in thee with thanksgiving.

Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. Thou hast redeemed mankind by the blood of thy SON, and raised us out of the dust, that we might sit with him in heavenly places. Thou hast sent the HOLY GHOST, the Comforter, in signs and wonders, and divers miracles; in gifts of knowledge, wisdom, and prophecy; and in abundance of thy grace, to renew and sanctify the hearts of thy faithful people. The Apostles and Ministers of reconciliation were thy gift; by whom thou hast brought the glad tidings of salvation unto these parts of the world. The Sun of Righteousness, praised be thy goodness, hath enlightened our eyes, who sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death. I have been thy constant care from my first conception and entrance into the world until this moment. Innumerable blessings thou hast bestowed on me; and I still hear the voice of joy and gladness. I behold my guides and instructors, and have the liberty to go into thy house; and I see my SAVIOUR himself in the remembrances and pledges which he hath left me of his dying love. I will never cease to adore and extol thy mercy, who hast kept me from going down into the pit, and saved my soul from the nethermost hell. Blessed be thy goodness for the constant provision of thy house; the comforts of thy HOLY SPIRIT; the society of thy children; the hopes of heaven; and the tastes which thou hast given me of immortal joys in this holy feast with my SAVIOUR. As thou hast begun,

good **LORD**, out of thine own undeserved love to make me happy; so continue thy loving-kindness to me, till it be finished in perfect friendship with thee. Preserve in me a constant and prevailing sense of thy goodness, that I may willingly obey thee, and cheerfully do thy will in all things; that the very same mind may be in me, which was also in **CHRIST JESUS**, whose meat it was to do thy will, and to finish the work of thee who sentest him. O that **GOD** would count me worthy of this calling, and fulfil in me all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power; that I may stand perfect and complete in all the will of **GOD**; and that the name of the **LORD JESUS** may be glorified in me, and I in him, according to the grace of our **GOD**, and the **LORD JESUS CHRIST**. I have given myself now again unto thee, and professed the strictest friendship with thee: **LORD**, help me to keep it without spot, and unrebukable, until the appearing of the **LORD JESUS**; that both body and soul being preserved pure and undefiled, as the temples of the **HOLY GHOST**, he may be my constant guide, strength, and comfort, and lead me safely through all the difficulties and dangers of this world, the enticements of the flesh, and the crafts and subtleties of the Devil, to a place of peace and safety in the regions above, where I may for ever dwell in thy love, and sing thy praise.

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#### THE ELEVENTH MEDITATION BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

**WITH** what wonder do we entertain things which are strange and unusual? The very news of them carries great numbers to see them, and the sight of them fixes their eyes on them, as if they could never have enough of them. Behold here the wonder of wonders, which thou

art called to feed thine eyes and heart withal. **GOD** is come to dwell in flesh. This flesh is made a sacrifice for the sins of the world. And he invites thee now to a feast upon that sacrifice, that thou mayest dwell in him, and he in thee. O marvellous love! What eyes ever saw such a sight as the **SON of GOD** dying on a cross, the **ONLY-BEGOTTEN** of the **FATHER** bleeding as a malefactor? The glorious **KING** of heaven laying down his life freely for his own subjects:—rebels I should have called them, and enemies to him? Where are all my thoughts? Where is my admiration? Whither are all my desires gone? Strange that my thoughts should be so heavy, and my affections so cold; that my hunger and thirst, my love and my joy, should be no more excited, at the very motion to go to the house of **GOD**, to make a thankful remembrance of his death! We think the Angels lead a happy life in their blessed employment of giving continual praises to **GOD**; why do I not go then with a more forward joy into the courts of the **LORD**, to do this in remembrance of **CHRIST**, which those heavenly creatures do not do? “For he hath not taken hold of the nature of Angels, but of the seed of **ABRAHAM**,” for whom he hath prepared also this sacred food, of which *they* never tasted. Behold the treasures of grace and glory which he offers thee, and by these signs of his body and blood would make over to thee. Is not love the very life and soul of the world? Is it not the joy and satisfaction of hearts? Behold here the worthiest object of it that ever was. See how he would fill and possess thy whole soul with perfect contentment. And lest thou shouldest be so unhappy as not to dwell in love, see how he would engage thee by these bonds, in which thou art going to tie thyself, to love the **LORD** thy **GOD** with all thy heart, soul, and strength, and thy neighbour as thyself. How doth he study to gratify thee in thy most noble desires! Call up thy best and purest thoughts. Endeavour to forget all other things, and only to look upon **JESUS**. If any thing can make thee love **GOD**, it must be his love. If any thing can make thee hate sin, it must be this sacrifice

for it. If any thing can make thee willing and obedient, it must be his obedience to the death. Think then, when thou comest into his presence, that thou seest him hanging on his cross. Think that thou seest him spreading out his arms, and resigning himself to the will of GOD : that thou beholdest his gaping wounds, and the blood trickling down his sacred body : that thou hearest him cry unto thee ; —“ Did I not love thee, when I bled to death for thee ? Did I not love thee, when I endured this pain and sorrow to redeem thee ? Could I do more than give myself, to deliver thee from death, and open the kingdom of heaven and eternal life ? ” — And then what heart is there, that need be taught what it should say, and what it should do on this occasion ? Who can refrain from giving blessing, and praise, and glory, in the highest to him ? Who can want thanks to render him for such invaluable benefits ? Nay, who would not rejoice to think of serving one, that hath merited thus of him, and intends to reward his duty with that very glory which the FATHER hath given to himself ? Our LORD cannot but expect to see thy mind fraught with heavenly thoughts, thy will bowing and submitting wholly to his disposal. And to all such he saith, by his Ministers, “ Come to my Supper, for all things are ready ; come and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort. Rejoice with me, and be exceeding glad ; for I love you, and will love you to the end.”

#### THE PRAYER SOME TIME BEFORE.

O MOST holy LORD of heaven and earth ; whom to know is the beginning of life ; whom to love is our perfection upon earth ; whom to possess is heaven itself : It was thy great goodness to make us to know thee, and love thee, and be like unto thee ; and a greater to sue unto us, and entreat for our affections. But it is the greatest of all, that thou hast sent thy SON JESUS, to beseech us, and to add mighty importunities to his entreaties, that we would do

that, of which we ought to be desirous, as the greatest happiness of which we are capable. **LORD**, what is man that thou art thus kind unto him? We are very little things; far below thy notice. We are naturally infirm and crazed in our bodies; and our understandings are shortsighted, our reasonings weak and childish, our passions easily disordered, our resolutions inconstant; and by sin we have made ourselves worse, and turned those into greater mischiefs. So that if thou hadst been pleased to show but a little compassion to us, what could we have expected more from thy goodness? But that thou shouldest advance such wretched things as we are, who know not how to value and esteem thy benefits, to the dignity of thy children; shouldest make us like thyself in righteousness, goodness, and truth; and at last shouldest give us a blessed immortality;—O how astonishing is this love, which thou hast shown to us in the **SON** of thy love, the **LORD JESUS**! I am ashamed to think that this grace hath waited so long upon me, and been no better entertained and improved; and that my apprehensions of it are still so dull, and of so little force to constrain my whole soul to love thee, and live to thee for ever. I most humbly flee to that grace, which hath abounded thus towards me, for the pardon it hath promised to those who yield themselves to be governed by it. O let not thy unwearied goodness be provoked yet to cast off the care of me: but continue to hold before mine eyes thy love in **CHRIST JESUS**, till my heart be overcome, and subdued perfectly to his obedience. May I abandon every evil way; and may it be the very business of my life to purify myself, as thou art pure, from all inordinate cares and fears; from sensual lusts and brutish passions; from anger and hatred; envy and malice; pride and vanity; falseness and dissimulation; murmuring and discontent; and whatsoever is opposite to thy blessed nature and will, declared by **CHRIST JESUS**. O that the faith of **CHRIST**, which thou hast planted in my heart, may take a deeper root; that as I believe him to be the **LORD** of all, who died for me, and bought me with a price, and is risen again to



be the Author of eternal salvation to those that obey him, so I may constantly reverence him, and religiously keep his holy commands, and steadfastly trust him, and make him my hope, and love his appearing : and now that I am going to make to him my renewed acknowledgments, and to devote myself to his holy obedience ; LORD, fill me with such worthy thoughts, affections, and resolutions, that I may know that I love him, and may rejoice in hope of his eternal love. O that nothing may interpose, when I am at thy table, to hinder the effect of these holy desires ; that no cloud may arise in my mind, to obscure my sight of his love ; no vain thought, to draw me aside from meditating on his death and passion : but may I be carried then and always with a strong and irresistible inclination to do his will.

#### THE MEDITATION AFTERWARDS.

WHERE hast thou been ? At any ordinary meal, or a common entertainment ? What wentest thou out to receive ? A piece of bread and a cup of wine ? That we have in our own houses. Or what wentest thou from home to see ? A dumb show, a company of men with serious looks, and sad behaviour ? Those we may see among them that mourn for any dead friend : or, what wentest thou out for to see ? Bread broken, and the wine poured out, in a solemn and holy manner by the appointment of CHRIST JESUS ? Yea, and much more than so ;—CHRIST himself, the SON of the blessed, under those signs and figures of his death. This is He of whom it is written, “ Behold the LAMB of GOD, that taketh away the sins of the world.” Verily, there is none born of women like unto him, the only-begotten SON of GOD, the Heir of all things. And thou hast been at his table ; thou hast beheld the astonishing love of GOD in delivering him up to suffer for thee ; thou hast received the pledges of his dearest love, and the earnest of all those goods that he possesses.

Couldst thou see no beauty in him, that thou shouldest desire him? Is it nothing to partake of the merits of his sufferings? To be made the Son of the King of heaven, and the Heir of his love, by being made partaker of a divine nature? Where were thine eyes then? What were thy thoughts doing? None ever believed this love that God bears to us, who was not moved by it to love him. For the Creator and Possessor of heaven and earth to love thee, what a word is that! Who can hear it, and not be amazed? Especially when he loves thee so much as to send his SON unto thee, yea, his only SON, the SON of his love; who hath so loved thee, as to spend his dearest blood in thy service; and all this freely, without any motive but his own love; and to procure us the greatest blessings? And need he entreat thee not to forget the love he hath shown unto thee? To spend a few thoughts every day on such a friend, that hath deserved so much of thee?—A mean request, which should be granted, one would think, without the asking. And wilt thou be at no pains to preserve his memory? Shall he slip out of thy mind, unless he force himself into thy company? That little all which he desires of thee is, that thou wouldest love him best; and then do even what thou wilt.

It is the nature of all love, not to let our heart be joined to any other object, which shall in any degree prejudice that which is loved. Whatsoever is honoured and admired by us above all others, will not permit any thing to be entertained, that shall injure it in our thoughts and affections. If thy Redeemer therefore be seated in thy heart by unfeigned love, it will render every thing despicable, which would draw thy heart from him. Thou wilt look upon it as a base temptation, and an unworthy offer; which is not only to be slighted, but hated and loathed. Thou wilt say, “I am dead to sin, I cannot live any longer therein. I have done with all your adulterate pleasures. JESUS is my joy, my life, and my crown; what pleases him, pleases me. His love is a law within my heart; and therefore I delight to do thy will, O God.”

And the more to fortify thyself, thou mayest often meditate, all this week, upon the courage and constancy, the fortitude and magnanimity of JESUS in asserting the truth of GOD. For this is particularly remembered by ST. PAUL, as a part of his character, that "he witnessed before PONTIUS PILATE a good confession." By this we should excite ourselves, out of love to him, to follow after "righteousness, godliness, faith, charity, patience, and meekness," whatsoever it cost us. Let the dangers be what they will, we should "still fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life. For herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, so are we in this world."

#### THE THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER AFTERWARDS.

I HUMBLY offer unto thee, O LORD, together with the whole company of heaven, the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. The whole world was made by thee of nothing. The heavens, the earth, the seas, and all that are therein, confess themselves the work of thy infinite wisdom and power. Out of the dust thou hast framed our comely bodies; and hast inspired into them immortal spirits, on which thou hast engraven thy own image. Thou didst put thine own majesty upon us, that all thy creatures here should be obedient to us, and we be obedient only to thee, the great Lord and Governor of all. O how great was the honour which thou conferredst upon us! And how much more wonderful the grace thou hast given us in CHRIST JESUS, after our disloyalty and shameful disobedience to thee! Thou hast sent him to redeem us from hell and death, by his precious blood: and thou hast given thy HOLY SPIRIT to sanctify our hearts, and assist us in our duty; thy Gospel to be our rule; thy SON to be our example; thy Ministers to be our remembrancers; thy Sacraments to be our signs and seals of thy blessing. I have now tasted of thy great and abundant love. Thou hast feasted me at thy table;

and satisfied me of thy good-will towards me. What shall I render unto thee, and do for thee, who hast done all this for me, who am less than the least of all thy mercies? . My heart burns within me, until I have offered up myself again unto thee; and resolved to spend my days in praising, loving, and serving thee, to the best of my power. O that this holy sense of thee may never vanish out of my mind: but may I always think of thee, declare thy loving-kindness, and approve myself to thee by new bonds and engagements, which I desire may be never loosed. O that my vows and promises may stand as fast as thine everlasting Covenant. May nothing make me break my faith, which I have given to thee; but may I always, as I stand bound, most heartily continue to “believe in thee, to fear thee, and to love thee with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship thee, and give thee thanks; to put my whole trust in thee; to call upon thee; to honour thy holy name and word; and to serve thee truly all the days of my life.” And assist me by thy heavenly grace to do my duty also faithfully towards my neighbour; “to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me; to love, honour, and succour my Father and Mother; to honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him; to submit myself to all my Governors, Teachers, Spiritual Pastors, and Masters; to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters; to hurt nobody by word or deed; to be true and just in all my dealings; to bear no malice nor hatred in my heart; to keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering; to keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity; not to covet nor desire other men’s goods; but to learn and labour truly to get my own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me.”

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THE TWELFTH MEDITATION BEFORE THE  
SACRAMENT.

NEED I be told now, what that duty is which I am going to perform? Am I not preparing to make a solemn commemoration, before God, Angels, and men, of CHRIST's unheard-of love in dying for us; to engage to him my fidelity; to renew the covenant that is between us; to open my heart to him, and to confirm to him the most absolute possession of my soul and body; to wait on him for his continued grace; to show him my willingness to take up his Cross, and to be his follower to death; to testify the love I bear unto, and the communion I desire to hold with, all the Christians that are throughout the world; to exalt the name of the LORD, who hath condescended to a treaty of peace with us, and upon such easy terms to become friends with us, yea, and do great things for us? O how sweet is the remembrance of these blessings! How happy am I that he will not let me forget them, but with a continued kindness invites me again to this delightful employment! I will go and give him thanks for all his benefits, and for this, amongst the rest, that he hath made me so often partake of his blessed body and blood, and now gives me a new opportunity to celebrate in this manner the memory of his love. And O that my heart was lifted higher than ever, after so long acquaintance with him, in admiration of his grace, in faith, in love, in joy, in praise and thankfulness, in strong and vehement desires, and in cordial resolutions to be his devout and faithful disciple. O that the hearts of all men else, who shall approach his table, may be disposed to the like fervent affection to his service; that so many souls as are then present, so many living sacrifices there may be to God, so many wills resigned into his hand with ardent love;—that so, those holy spirits which, the Apostle tells us, were present in their christian assemblies, may be invited to come into ours; and beholding nothing but what is reverent, serious, pure, and full of

true devotion, may be excited to rejoice and praise God together with us!

“THE LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all. Bless the LORD, ye Angels of his: bless him, all his hosts: bless him, all ye works of his, in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.” Stir up thyself to bless the name of God our SAVIOUR; who hath not cast us out of his sight, when we threw off our obedience to him, but sent his SON to gather us up again to him, to invite us by precious promises, to endear himself to us by shedding his heart’s blood for us, to open the gate of Paradise once more, and restore us to immortality, to make us equal with the Angels, and rank us among the eldest sons of glory. Let us go, with a greater love in our hearts towards him, than ever we felt before. Let us offer up ourselves to him with a stronger flame of devotion; which may always burn, and rise up higher and higher, till it touch heaven, and lift us up thither where our SAVIOUR is in the high and holy place, “God blessed for ever.” Amen.

#### THE PRAYER BEFORE THE SACRAMENT.

ETERNAL GOD, whose omnipotent word brought me and this whole world of creatures into being; out of the fulness of whose goodness we are all fed and maintained; and by whose rich and abundant grace it is, that our souls are not in a desperate and forsaken condition, but may approach with some confidence to thee our Maker, who in thy SON hast revealed thyself unto us, a most merciful FATHER: I fall down before thee in humble reverence, to perform that duty which I owe to thee as thy creature, and much more as thy redeemed one, through the purchase thou hast made of us by the blood of JESUS. I extol and praise thy wisdom, thy bounty, thy holiness, and thy truth, which endureth for ever. I acknowledge myself beholden to thee beyond all my words, or conceptions. I reproach

myself for this base ingratitude, and all the wrongs I have done thee. I confess the justice of thy proceedings, shouldest thou strip me of all those goods thou hast bestowed on me. I give thee the glory of thy ineffable love in thy SON, CHRIST. I disclaim all opposition to thy will, as base, unjust, and unaccountable. I vow to thee my entire service and obedience; and approve all thy commandments as righteous, wise, and good. I lay new bonds upon myself, to keep them with my whole heart; and rejoice in thy precious promises, accounting them better than thousands of gold and silver. My hope, my satisfaction, my comfort, is in thy word; which encourages me to wait on thee for the grace of thy SPIRIT; blessing thee for that portion of it, which I have already received. I thank thee for all thy other goodness to me, and trust thee for the continuance of it, as far as thou seest profitable in thy wise Providence, to which I heartily refer myself. I hope thou wilt accept of these poor, but sincere acknowledgments, and not condemn me out of my own confessions; but pardon my errors and miscarriages, confirm my holy purposes, pity my infirmities, and strengthen my pious endeavours. May I perfectly mortify all sinful desires, faithfully discharge my duty in my several relations, thankfully and soberly use all thy mercies, patiently bear the heaviest afflictions, and improve my soul in wisdom and goodness by all the helps thou affordest me;—by thy holy Gospel, by the good counsels of others, by thy many remarkable providences about me, and by whatsoever courses thou takest with me, to bring me safe through this world into a happy eternity. And now that I am about to address myself to the table of the LORD, O that I might have such a sweet remembrance of his love, as may revive my spirit, encourage my hope, excite me to all my duty, and put an humble confidence into me, for the grace of thy HOLY SPIRIT, to enable me to please thee better ever hereafter. Thou who knowest all things, seest that my soul waits for thee, O GOD; and longs to be more like thee; and is ready to offer up its understanding, will,

and all its affections unto thee; that I may remain steadfast and unmoveable in justice and charity, meekness and humility, temperance and purity, contentedness and patience, devotion and piety, with all other fruits of thy SPIRIT. Suffer nothing to appear in my soul before thee, but reverent thoughts of thee, zealous love to thee, and passionate desires that CHRIST JESUS may live in me, and appear in all the actions of an innocent and useful life; that so the day when I approach unto thee, may be a day of good tidings of great joy; a day of peace and reconciliation, of feasting and refreshment, of comfort and encouragement to walk before thee with a perfect heart as long as I live. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise help me always to think of these things. And the GOD of peace be with me; and supply all my need according to his riches in glory, by CHRIST JESUS.

#### THE MEDITATION AFTERWARD AT HOME.

“THOU art my portion, O LORD; I have said that I would keep thy word.” Why should I repent me of my choice, or start from my resolution? Thy counsels and commands are the surest guide; thy power the strongest defence; thy good Providence the fullest store-house; thy eternal justice and holiness the best security; thy promises the richest treasure; and love of thee our highest happiness. It is enough, enough, O LORD, to be beloved of thee, the all-sufficient good, who comprehendest all things in thy mind, and canst do all things by thy power, and delightest in raising such monuments of thy wisdom and greatness, as thy almighty love may dispense endless blessing unto. I am well satisfied now that I can say, “Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.” The LORD is my portion: for what shall I be discontented? The



**LORD** is my portion ; of whom shall I be afraid ? “ **Why** art thou cast down, **O** my soul, why art thou disquieted within me ? ” How can his friends fail to partake of his bounty, who treats even his enemies with so much kindness ? “ **My** soul, wait thou only upon **GOD** ; for my expectation is from him. Trust in the **LORD**, and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the **LORD**, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart. Cast thy burthen on the **LORD**, and he shall sustain thee ; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. Wait on the **LORD**, and keep his way. For the eyes of the **LORD** are upon them that love him : he is their mighty protection, and strong stay, a defence from the heat, and a cover from the sun at noon : a preservation from stumbling, and a help from falling. He raiseth up the soul, and lightneth the eyes : he giveth life, and health, and blessing. **My** heart shall rejoice in him, because **I** have trusted in his holy name. Let thy mercy, **O LORD**, be upon me, according as **I** hope in thee.”

And **I** hope that **I** shall never forget thy word ; the revelation of thy wisdom ; the declaration of thy will ; and the description of thy most holy and happy life. **My** **GOD**, “ **I** have taken thy precepts as my heritage for ever : for they are the rejoicing of my heart. **I** have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end.” This day **I** have added one vow more of consecration to thee. **I** have made over myself entirely to thee, to be thy portion. Whom shall **I** love, whom shall **I** serve, to whom shall **I** resign my will and ways, but only to thee, the Father of Lights, and the Father of Mercies, who hast not thought thy **SON** too much to give to me ? Never will **I** forget this happy day, which hath brought me a taste of the joy and peace which spring from the beginning of a god-like nature. **I** will always be devoted to him. Let his will be done on earth, as it is in heaven ; for it is the will of my heavenly **FATHER**. Let these words remain upon record against me, if **I** do not endeavour to make him my pattern ; and, not only in that place where **I** have now

been, but in all my behaviour in this world, (that great temple of his,) to demean myself holily and purely;—with that humility, reverence, meekness, and submission, which become his presence. What have I here to do, but to show forth the glorious perfections of righteousness, mercy, and truth, which I behold in him; and to declare the esteem I have of him, and my satisfaction in my portion, by modesty, contentedness, thankfulness, faith, patience, hope, and joyful resignation of all my concernments, with an equal mind, to his wise disposal? This is my will, this is my resolution.

#### THE THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER AFTERWARD.

O most high and holy LORD of heaven and earth, the Author of every good and perfect gift; Who art for ever to be humbly acknowledged, worshipped, loved, and obeyed, by me, and by all that know thee: I have often made thee my acknowledgments for my being, and all the comforts of it; for the hopes I have both in this life, and hereafter: and now I come to renew them, that I may be more firmly united to thee in hearty love, and entire affection. I cast myself down before thee, being even oppressed with the great load of thy mercies and benefits, which will not suffer me to dispose of my heart otherwise than to thy obedience. As I owe my very being to thee; so all those good things which have made it not to be a burthen to me. I have enjoyed a long measure of health, and cannot tell that ever I wanted my daily bread. The days of pain and sorrow, which I have endured, have been but few, in comparison with the many years of ease which thou hast vouchsafed to me. I find now all my senses entire and perfect; and I have many friends and kind neighbours; and also a great deal of time to think of all this, and to prepare myself for thy eternal favour. How much am I indebted to thee for the continued use of my understanding, reason, and

memory; and that I can take notice of all thy goodness, whereby my heart may be excited to love thee, which is the greatest happiness and pleasure of all. This, this, O LORD, is the greatest of thy mercies, that thou hast given me the knowledge of thy love in JESUS CHRIST; and that thy HOLY SPIRIT hath shone so often into my mind, and breathed so often on my will and affections; that thou hast pardoned so many faults, and waited so long for my amendment, and so earnestly importuned my return, and afforded me so many helps, and such a long time to perfect my repentance. Thou hast added also now new pledges of thy love, and earnestness of immortal life. "O how precious are thy thoughts towards me: how great is the sum of them! If I would go about to number them, they are more than the sand." I cannot count the least part of them; nor ever see any end of thy goodness; for even whilst I am thinking of it, I receive new favours from thee. Every moment is big with thy mercies, both to my soul and my body, for this life and that which is to come. But I know enough to make me admire and love thy goodness, and to make me ashamed of my forgetfulness and ingratitude; enough to oblige me eternally to thee; enough to make me fully contented, and to rejoice in thee, as my portion. Behold, O LORD, I here again sincerely devote myself to observe thy commands, and keep thy holy word; I have chosen it as the rule and the comfort of my life, and I will ever cleave unto thy testimonies with my whole heart. I would not abuse thy mercies, nor grow careless, wanton, and secure under the abundance of thy goodness; but look upon them as engagements, and mighty arguments, to love, acknowledge, and obey thee for ever. Blessed be thy goodness that I have such thoughts, and am so inclined. Accept of my good desires, purposes, and vows, which I have made; and accompany me always by thy gracious assistance, that I may accomplish what I have begun, and perfect holiness in thy fear. To thee I recommend all mankind, especially thy Church and chosen people, with all the

Rulers and Governors of them ; that they may remember that thou art higher than the highest,—the KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords, who wilt judge all men, without respect of persons. Give pure zeal and knowledge to thy Ministers ; the grace of contentedness to the poor, and of an open heart to the rich ; wisdom and discretion to those that are in their younger years, and holy hope to comfort the aged. And endue them all with humble meekness, that “laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil-speakings, as new-born babes, they may desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby ;” and “offer up continually spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to thee by CHRIST JESUS.” Amen.

## ADDITIONAL PRAYERS.



### I. A PRAYER FOR CHARITY.

I ADORE, O most high and holy One, who inhabitest eternity, thine infinite wisdom, power, goodness, and all the rest of thy glorious perfections. The heaven of heavens cannot contain thee ; much less canst thou be comprehended by the most enlarged thoughts of our shallow minds : and yet thy greatness and majesty doth not despise us thy poor creatures ; but gives us leave and encourages us to come into thy presence ; yea, forcibly draws us at many times towards thee, and makes us attend to thy kindness in those inestimable blessings which thou designest for us. O how much are we indebted to thee for this grace and favour, which comforts my heart when I am astonished at thy greatness. I rejoice to think of the greatness of thy power to protect me ; the greatness of thy bounty to supply me ; the greatness of thy wisdom to guide and govern me ; and the greatness of thy fatherly compassions to bear with my weaknesses, pardon my follies, pity my miseries, and reward my small services and sufferings for thy sake. O how amiable is this sight, which thou hast now given me of thy majesty ! And there are visible tokens of thy great love to us continually before mine eyes, which are innumerable ; especially those in CHRIST JESUS, the SON of thy love. O that I could love thee according to thine excellent goodness ! O that I could love thee according as thou hast loved us ! But, alas ! I am so far from this height of devout affection, that I am ready to sigh in

much dejection of spirit, and say, O that I did but love thee so well as myself, so well as I do other things; though thou justly expectest I should love even my neighbour as myself, from whom I never received such benefits, as I do from thee continually. I am ashamed of myself, and blush to cast mine eyes towards thee. Thy great goodness only gives me hope, that I shall love thee with all my heart, and soul, and strength, and my neighbour as myself. I feel my soul touched with ardent desire to be more like thee in doing good. And therefore I most humbly beseech thee to present thyself continually before me, and to preserve in my mind a lively sense of thy great love in CHRIST JESUS, whereby I may be powerfully moved to put on bowels of mercy, to be tender-hearted, rich in good works, ready to distribute, and willing to communicate, according to the ability which thou hast given me. I desire no greater treasure than abundance of this charity, which “beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things;” disposing me always to follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith I may edify others. Inspire me more and more with this excellent spirit which never faileth; but after it hath made me happy here, will lead me to a state of perfect love together with CHRIST JESUS. Blessed be God, who hath chosen us in him, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Go on, good LORD, to finish what is begun, and touch my heart with such a delightful sense of thy grace to me, that my “love may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment; that I may approve things that are excellent; that I may be sincere and without offence till the day of CHRIST; being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by JESUS CHRIST, unto thy praise and glory.” Amen.



## II. A PRAYER FOR PATIENCE.

**O FATHER** of Mercies, and **GOD** of all comfort, who to all thy other benefits, wherewith thou continually loadest us, hast bestowed upon us the Gospel of thy grace; that we “through patience and comfort of the Holy Scriptures might have hope.” I praise and magnify, with all my soul, the wonderful love of thy **SON** to us, and his perfect subjection to thee; beseeching thee to fix in my heart such an ardent love to him, that I may be inspired thereby with resolution to follow after him in all the paths of humble, meek, and patient virtue. O that I may feel myself pressed by the mighty power of that love, not only to be a doer of thy will, but for conscience towards thee my **GOD** to endure grief, suffering wrongfully; and to run with patience the whole race that is set before us, looking unto **JESUS**, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of **GOD**. Preserve in me such a reverence towards thee, “the Father of Spirits,” that I may neither despise nor faint under thy corrections: but, though thou bringest me into great and sore troubles, may I still be in subjection to thee, and live in hope of immortal glory. And not only so, but may I rejoice, and glory also in tribulations for **CHRIST**’s sake.”

And whatsoever the cross be, which lies in my way to heaven, O that I may never turn aside in the least from thee, to avoid it; but take it up willingly, and bear it as long as thou pleasest, without murmuring or repining, and with courage and cheerfulness of spirit. Endue my spirit with such wisdom, and help me to preserve it in such innocence and integrity, that it may be able to sustain whatsoever sicknesses, or pains, or other calamities befall me. Teach me in every thing to give thanks, which is thy will concerning us in **CHRIST JESUS**.

O blessed **LORD**, lead me whither thou pleasest, I will

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follow thee without complaint. I submit to thy orders ; I reverence thy wisdom ; I trust myself with thy goodness ; I depend upon thy almighty power ; I rely on thy promises ; beseeching thee to support me, till patience having its perfect work in me, I may be perfect, and entire, wanting nothing. I know the time is but short, and that thou hast prepared long joys to recompense our momentary sorrows ; help me therefore always to possess my soul in patience, that so I may at last, after I have done thy will, O God, inherit the promise. Amen, Amen.



### III. A PRAYER FOR FAITH IN GOD.

O ETERNAL GOD, the sovereign of the world, the perfection of beauty, the full and satisfying good, the joy of all those that know thee : I doubt not of thy merciful care and Providence over me, of whose tender love I have had so long experience. I depend upon thy word on which thou hast caused me to hope ; that thou wilt never leave me nor forsake me, but that all things shall work together for good to those that love thee. I stay myself upon thy almighty power, and commit myself to thy unerring wisdom, which disposes all things, and by the crossdest ways can conduct me to happiness. I put myself wholly into thy hands, with an humble faith in thy infinite mercies, trusting thee both with soul and body for ever. I wait on thee for thy gracious assistance to enable me faithfully to discharge my duty in every condition of life ; that so, when I leave the world, I may be able to commend my spirit into thy hands, hoping for a blessed resurrection of my body, and that my soul shall enter into rest and peace, and at last receive a crown of life. O that I may feel the power of this faith sweetly composing and quieting my spirit in all events ; that I



may never be afraid of evil tidings; but that my heart may be fixed, trusting in thee, O LORD. Dispel all care and solicitude for things of this life; and settle in me such a firm persuasion that thou art a sun and a shield, and wilt give grace and glory, and withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly, that my soul may dwell at ease, and I may never be distracted nor confused in my thoughts; but do my duty towards thee with evenness and constancy, and cheerfulness of heart. Bear me up by thy almighty love, that, in the worst of times, I may rest in thee, and wait patiently for thee, and never fret myself in any wise to do evil. Thou hast been my help; therefore I will still make thee my refuge, and in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. My soul waiteth for the LORD; he is my help and my shield. My heart shall rejoice in him; because I have trusted in his holy name. Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon me, according as I hope in thee. And keep me in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because I have trusted in thee. Amen.



#### IV. A PRAYER FOR RESIGNATION TO GOD'S WILL.

O LORD, the Almighty Creator of the world, the most wise governor of all things which thou hast made, and our most gracious and loving Father in the LORD JESUS: How much do I owe thee that thou hast been pleased to call me to the knowledge of thy grace; that thou hast invited me by such precious promises; drawn me so often and so powerfully by the motions of thy HOLY SPIRIT; and marvellously disposed and provoked me, by many happy Providences, to seek my own eternal felicity! I see, O LORD, the strangeness of thy love; and am ashamed of my own backwardness and untowardness of spirit, that, after all this, I have so little mind to be happy, and am no

more serious about that which so infinitely concerns me, and by thy grace is made so easy to me. Be still so gracious, I most humbly beseech thee, as to touch my heart with such a lively sense of thy wonderful goodness, as may perfectly subdue me to thy love and obedience, and make me absolutely surrender both soul and body to thee, of whose care and kindness I am so abundantly assured. O that I may know more feelingly what a satisfaction it is to be "blessed of the LORD, which made heaven and earth;" to wait for thy salvation in CHRIST JESUS; to have thy HOLY SPIRIT for my guide and comforter; to be secure of thy good Providence here, and to live in hope of immortal glory hereafter. Strengthen me with might by the SPIRIT in the inner man, that I may be able to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of CHRIST which passeth knowledge, till I be filled with all the fulness of thee, my GOD; that being full of divine wisdom and knowledge, full of faith, and love, and hope, and all the fruits of righteousness, there may be no room for any trouble or disquiet in my heart; but with an equal mind and resigned will, I may pass through all the changes of this mortal life. I have frequently offered up, and devoted myself unto thee; and here again I renew the surrender, delivering up soul and body entirely to do and suffer thy holy will and pleasure. O preserve in my mind such a high esteem of thy infinite wisdom and goodness, that I may ever cheerfully commit myself and all I have into thy hands, to be disposed of as thou judgest most meet. And whatsoever thou art pleased to order for my portion, LORD, help me to be perfectly contented and well pleased with it; believing it to be the result of thine infinite understanding, and of thy fatherly care and tender mercy; and looking at those unseen enjoyments, to which thou knowest best by what ways to conduct me, all the time of my sojourning here. Lift up my thoughts still higher and higher towards that holy place, where the LORD JESUS is enthroned. Fix my mind steadfastly on

that bliss, which he is gone to prepare for us ; that I may feel it drawing my heart after him to follow his great example, and not only satisfying me in all conditions of life, but filling me with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Unto thee, O LORD JESUS, I commend myself. I trust thee with my health, my estate, my friends, and all I have. Allot what thou pleasest for us. Let it be unto us according to thy will. Not our will, but thy will be done. Amen.



#### V. A PRAYER FOR BROTHERLY-KINDNESS.

O GOD, who art good, and who doest good, and hast loved us, the children of men, so much as not to think thine only-begotten SON too great a gift to bestow upon us : I thank thee for thy abundant grace, and particularly that we are taught of thee our GOD to “love one another.” I rejoice in the beginnings of that heavenly life, which I feel in my heart, and that I have tasted any of the “consolation that is in CHRIST, the comfort of love, or the fellowship of the SPIRIT,” and have any bowels, any mercies, and commiseration of others. It is the earnest desire of my soul, that thy love may be perfected in me ; that I may know thou dwellest in me, and I in thee, because thou hast given me of thy SPIRIT. Possess me, O LORD, with such a full sense of thy infinite love towards us, that it may enlarge more and more the narrowness of my spirit, and make room for all mankind in my hearty affection, and that I may desire, and seek, and delight in their welfare and happiness. And especially endue me with a most ardent charity towards all christian people ; that I may love them as my brethren, and as heirs together of the grace of life in CHRIST JESUS. And seeing thou hast been pleased to love us so freely, so abundantly, and with such an everlasting kindness, inspire me, I beseech thee, with the like dispo-

sition, that I may “love the brethren with a pure heart fervently.” And the LORD make me to increase and abound in love towards them and towards all men, and to persevere and continue, notwithstanding all discouragements or ill requitals, to serve them in love; to the end that my heart may be established unblameable in holiness before thee our FATHER, at the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST with all his saints. Blessed be thy goodness, which hath shown us this most excellent way; and disposed me to love it, and walk in it. O incline my heart to excel in this, to be a cheerful follower of thee my GOD, and still to walk in love, “as CHRIST also hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to thee for a sweet-smelling savour.” Free me perfectly from all ill-will, from envy, from self-seeking, from anger, from evil-speaking, and all malice; that I may adorn the Gospel of our LORD JESUS; as I have opportunity, doing good unto all men, “especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” And O that all Christian People may be “like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind; that nothing may be done through strife or vain glory; and that there may be no schism in the body of CHRIST; but the members may have the same care one of another; and in lowliness of mind, each may esteem others better than themselves, not looking every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” O that this mind may be in us all, which was also in CHRIST JESUS; that we may have compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful and courteous, endeavouring to keep the unity of the SPIRIT in the bond of peace. And the GOD of love and peace be with us all. Amen.



## VI. A PRAYER FOR COURAGE IN THE PROFESSION OF CHRISTIANITY.

O LORD of heaven and earth, who art every where the rest and peace, the refuge and security, the strength, help, and salvation of all those who repose a holy trust and confidence in thee; for nothing, not death itself, can separate them from thee: I adore thy infinite love, which hath assumed our nature to such a nearness to thy own, and raised the LORD JESUS from the dead, and given him glory at thy right hand; that all his faithful followers might rest assured of thy eternal care of them. Blessed, blessed be thy name for these glad tidings of great joy, which raise our spirits above this world, and place them in quietness and safety amidst all the troubles and dangers of this life. I stand infinitely indebted to thee for the revelation which thou hast made of thy good-will to us in CHRIST JESUS, and for the glorious example that he hath set us; who before PONTIUS PILATE witnessed a good confession, and sealed thy truth with his blood, knowing that his “flesh should rest in hope,” and that thou wouldest “not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.” O that I may feel myself enlivened with the same spirit which was in our Head, “The Captain of our salvation, made perfect through sufferings,” being faithful to him to the very death, and not doubting that I shall receive “a crown of life.” It is but reasonable that I should part with all I have for him and his righteousness; who hath made himself so freely a sacrifice of inestimable value for us sinners. O that I may be “strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks to thee who hast made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” “It is a faithful saying,” I know, “that if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he will also deny us.” Defend me, O God, from so foul a wickedness, as the

thought of denying my Lord and Master; but keep me by thy power through faith unto salvation; that the trial of my faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of **JESUS CHRIST**. Settle, confirm, and strengthen me in the faith, that a steadfast belief, and a lively hope in thee, through the resurrection of the **LORD JESUS**, may not only bear me up with constancy and patience, under shame, reproaches, or loss of liberty and goods, but inspire me with courage and undaunted resolution in all dangers, and even in death itself. Fill my mind with such a powerful sense of those immortal joys, that nothing may appear so dreadful here as to terrify me from my duty, or turn me aside from the paths of righteousness, charity, truth, and piety; but suffering according to thy will, **O GOD**, may I commit the keeping of my soul to thee in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. And endue me, I beseech thee, with such a perfect love to my Lord and Master **CHRIST JESUS**, as may cast out all base fear of suffering. Fortify my heart with such a zealous affection to his religion, that I may not be terrified by any adversaries, nor afraid of their threats, neither be troubled; but sanctify thee, the **LORD GOD**, in my heart, not fearing those that can kill the body, but thee who canst destroy both soul and body in hell.

Regard, **O LORD**, the supplications of thy servant, who here hath made an oblation of himself wholly unto thee. And endue me with christian prudence as well as courage; that I may be both as wise as a serpent, and as innocent as a dove, and never dishonour my religion either by rashness or by cowardice; but with a discreet zeal cleave unto truth and righteousness, saying boldly, “The **LORD** is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. In **GOD** have I put my trust, therefore shall I never be confounded.” Amen.