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FARTHER
THOUGHTS

UPON

Christian PERFECTION.

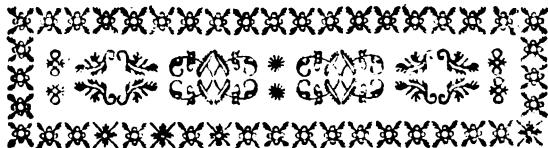
by
John Wesley.

In^o Marlow's Book

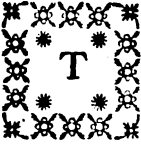


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FARTHER
THOUGHTS &c.


TWO or three Years ago I published a few Thoughts which then occurred to me concerning Christian Perfection. In most Particulars I think now as I did then : In some, I do not. My present Thoughts I now offer to your Consideration ; being still open to farther Conviction ; and willing, I trust, to be taught of God, by whatever Instrument he shall chuse.

Question 1. How is CHRIST the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth ? Rom. x. 4.

Answer. In order to understand this, you must understand what Law is here spoken of. And this, I apprehend, is, 1. The *Mosaic Law*, the whole *Mosaic Dispensation* which *St. Paul* continually speaks of as One, tho' containing three Parts, the Political, Moral and Ceremonial : 2. The *Adamic Law*, that given to *Adam* in Innocence, properly called, "The Law of Works." This is in Substance the same with the *Angelic Law*, being common to Angels and Man. It required, that Man should use to the Glory of God, all the Powers with which he was created. Now he was created free from any Defect, either in his Understanding or his Affections. His Body was than no Clog to the Mind : It did not hinder his apprehending all Things clearly, judg-

ing truly concerning them, and *Reasoning* justly; if he reasoned at all. I say, "If he reasoned:" For possibly he did not. Perhaps he had no Need of Reasoning, till his corruptible Body prest down the Mind, and impaired its native Faculties. Perhaps till then the Mind saw every Truth that offered as directly, as the Eye now sees the Light.

Consequently this Law, proportioned to his Original Powers, required that he should always think, always speak and always act precisely right, in every Point whatever. He was well able so to do. And God could not but require the Service he was able to pay.

But *Adam* fell: And his incorruptible Body became corruptible: And ever since it is a Clog to the Soul, and hinders its Operations. Hence at present no Child of Man can at all Times apprehend clearly or judge truly. And where either the Judgment or Apprehension is wrong, it is impossible to reason justly. Therefore it is as natural for Man to mistake as to breathe; and he can no more live without one than without the other. Consequently no Man is able to *perform* the Service, which the *Adamic* Law requires.

And no Man is obliged to perform it: God does not require it of any Man. For *CHRIST* is the End of the *Adamic* as well as of the *Mosaic* Law. By his Death he hath put an End to both: He hath abolished both the one and the other, with regard to Man, and the Obligation to observe either one or the other is vanished away. Nor is any Man living bound to observe the *Adamic*, any more than the *Mosaic* Law

In the Room of this, *CHRIST* hath established another, namely, The Law of Faith. Not every one that doth, but every one that believeth, now receiveth *Righteousness*, in the full Sense of the Word, that is, he is justified, sanctified and glorified.

Q. 2. Are we then dead to the Law?

A. We are dead to the Law by the Body of *CHRIST* given for us, *Rom.* vii. 4. to the *Adamic* as well as *Mosaic* Law. We are wholly freed therefrom by his Death: that Law expiring with him.

Q. 3. How then are we *not without Law to GOD,* but *under the Law to CHRIST?* 1 Cor. ix. 21.

A. We are *without* that *Law*. But it does not follow, that we are *without* any *Law*. For GOD has established another *Law* in its Place, even the *Law of Faith*. And we are all *under this Law to GOD* and *to CHRIST*. Both our Creator, and our Redeemer require us to observe it.

Q. 4. Is *Love* the *fulfilling* of this *Law?*

A. Unquestionably it is. *The whole Law*, under which we now are, is *fulfilled by Love*, Rom. xiii. 9, 10. *Faith working* or *animated by Love*, is all that GOD now requires of Man. He has substituted (not *Sincerity*, but) *Love*, in the Room of *Angelic Perfection*.

Q. 5. How is *Love* the *End of the Commandment?* 1 Tim. i. 5.

A. It is the *End of every Commandment of GOD*. It is the Point aimed at by the Whole, and every Part of the Christian Institution. The Foundation is *Faith*, purifying the Heart, the End *Love*, preserving a *good Conscience*.

Q. 6. What *Love* is this?

A. *The loving the LORD our GOD with all our Heart, Mind, Soul and Strength*: And the *loving our Neighbour*, every Man, *as ourselves*, as our own Souls.

Q. 7. What are the *Fruits* or *Properties* of this *Love?*

A. *St. Paul* informs us at large, *Love is Long-suffering*. It *suffers* all the Weaknesses of the Children of GOD, all the Wickedness of the Children of the World. And that not for a little Time only; but as long as GOD pleases. In all it sees the Hand of GOD, and willingly submits thereto. Mean time it is *kind*. In all, and after all it suffers, it is soft, mild, tender, benign. *Love envieth not*: It excludes every Kind and Degree of Envy out of the Heart. *Love esteemeth not rivalry*, in a violent headstrong Manner, nor passes any rash or severe Judgment. It *doth not behave itself indecently*, is not rude, does not act out of Character: *Seeketh not her own Ease, Pleasure,*

sure, Honour or Profit : *Is not provoked* ; expells all Anger from the Heart : *Thinketh no Evil* : Casts out all Jealousy, Suspiciousness and Readiness to believe Evil : *Rejoiceth not in Iniquity*, yea, weeps at the Sin or Folly of it's bitterest Enemies, *but rejoiceth in the Truth*, in the Holiness and Happiness of every Child of Man. *Love covereth all Things*, speaks Evil of no Man ; *believeth all Things*, that tend to the Advantage of another's Character. *It hopeth all Things*, whatever may extenuate the Faults which cannot be denied, and it *endureth all Things*, which God can permit, or Men and Devils inflict. This is the *Law of CHRIST, the perfect Law, the Law of Liberty*.

And this Distinction between the *Law of Faith* (or Love) and the *Law of Works*, is neither a *subtle*, nor an unnecessary Distinction. It is plain, easy and intelligible to any common Understanding. And it is absolutely necessary, to prevent a Thousand Doubts and Fears, even in those who do *walk in love*.

Q. 8. But do we not in many Things offend all, yea, the best of us, even against this Law.

A. In one Sense we do not, while all our Tempers and Thoughts, and Words, and Works Spring from Love. But in another we do, and shall do, more or less, as long as we remain in the Body. For neither Love nor the *Union of the Holy One* makes us infallible. Therefore thro' unavoidable Defect of Understanding, we cannot but mistake in many Things. And these Mistakes will frequently occasion something wrong, both in our Temper and Words, and Actions. From mistaking his Character, we may love a Person less than he really deserves. And by the same Mistake we are unavoidably led to speak or act with regard to that Person, in such a Manner as is contrary to this Law, in some or other of the preceding Instances.

Q. 9. Do we not then need CHRIST, even on this Account ?

A. The Holiest of Men still need CHRIST as their Prophet, as *the light of the World*. For he does
not

not give them Light, but from Moment to Moment, the instant he withdraws, all is Darknes. They still need CHRIST as their King. For GOD does not give them a Stock of Holiness. But unless they received a Supply every Moment, nothing but Unholiness would remain. They still need CHRIST as their Priest, to make Atonement for their holy Things. Even perfect Holiness is acceptable to GOD only thro' JESUS CHRIST.

Q 10. May not then the very best of Men adopt the dying Martyr's Confession, "I am in myself nothing but Sin, Darknes, Hell: But thou art my Light, my Holiness, my Heaven?"

A. Not exactly. But the best of Men may say, "Thou art my Light, my Holiness, my Heaven. Thro' my Union with Thee, I am full of Light of Holiness and Happiness. And if I were left to myself, I should be nothing but Sin, Darknes, Hell."

But to proceed. The best of Men need CHRIST as their Priest, their Atonement, their Advocate with the Father: Not only, as the Continuance of their every Blessing depends on his Death and Intercession, but on Account of their coming short of the Law of Love. For every Man living does so. You who *feel all Love*, compare yourselves with the preceding Description. Weigh yourselves in this Balance, and see if you are not wanting in many Particulars.

Q 11. But if all this be consistent with Christian Perfection, that Perfection is not Freedom from all Sin: Seeing Sin is the Transgression of the Law. And the Perfect Transgress the very Law they are under. Besides, they need the Atonement of CHRIST. And he is the Atonement for nothing but Sin. Is then the Term *Sinless Perfection* proper?

A. It is not worth disputing about. But observe in what Sense the Persons in question need the Atonement of CHRIST. They do not need him, to reconcile them to GOD *afresh*: For they are reconciled. They do not need him to *restore* the Favour of GOD, but to *continue* it. He does not *procure* Pardon for them *anew*, but *ever liveth to make Intercession*
for

for them. And by one Offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Heb. x. 14.

FOR Want of duly considering this, some deny, that they need the Atonement of CHRIST. Indeed exceeding few : I do not remember to have found Five of them in *England*. Of the Two, I would sooner give up Perfection. But we need not give up either one or the other. The Perfection I hold, *Love rejoicing evermore, Praying without ceasing, In every Thing giving Thanks*, is well consistent with it : If any hold a Perfection which is not, They must look to it.

Q. 12. Does then Christian Perfection imply any more than *Sincerity* ?

A. Not if you mean by that Word, Love filling the Heart, expelling Pride, Anger, Desire, Selfwill ; rejoicing ever more, praying without ceasing, and in every Thing giving Thanks. But I doubt few use *Sincerity* in this Sense. Therefore I think the old Word is best

A Person may be *Sincere*, who has all his Natural Tempers, Pride, Anger, Lust, Selfwill. But he is not *perfect*, till his Heart is cleansed from these, and all its other Corruptions.

To clear this Point a little farther : I know many that love God with all their Heart. He is their One Desire, their One Delight, and they are continually happy in Him. They love their Neighbour as themselves. They feel as sincere, fervent, constant a Desire, for the Happiness of every Man, Good or Bad, Friend or Enemy, as for their own. They rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every Thing give Thanks. Their Souls are continually streaming up to God, in holy Joy, Prayer, and Praise. This is a Point of Fact. And this is plain, found, scriptural Experience.

But even these Souls dwell in a shattered Body, and are so prest down thereby, that they cannot always exert themselves as they would, by thinking, speaking and acting *precisely right*. For Want of better bodily Organs, they must at Times, think, speak or act wrong : Not indeed thro' a Defect of
Love,

Love, but thro' a Defect of *Knowledge*. And while this is the Case, notwithstanding that Defect, and its Consequences, they *fulfill the Law of Love*.

Yet as even in this Case, there is not a *full Conformity* to the perfect Law, so the most perfect do on this very Account, need the Blood of Atonement, and may properly for themselves, as well as for their Brethren say, *Forgive us our Trespases*.

Q. 13. But if CHRIST has put an End to that Law, what need of any Atonement for their transgressing it ?

A. Observe in what Sense he has *put an End* to it, and the Difficulty vanishes. Were it not for the *abiding Merit* of his Death, and his *continued Intercession* for us, that Law would condemn us still. These therefore we still need, for every Transgression of it.

Q. 14. But can one that is saved from Sin be tempted ?

A. Yes ; for CHRIST *was tempted*.

Q. 15. However, what you call Temptation, I call the Corruption of my Heart. And how will you distinguish one from the other ?

A. In some Cases it is impossible to distinguish without the *direct Witness* of the Spirit. But in general one may distinguish thus.

One commends me. Here is a Temptation to Pride. But instantly Soul is humbled before God. And I feel no Pride : Of which I am as sure as that Pride is not Humility.

A Man strikes me. Here is a Temptation to Anger. But my Heart overflows with Love. And I feel no Anger at all : of which I am as sure, as that Love and Anger are not the same.

A Woman sollicit me. Here is a Temptation to Lust. But in the Instant I shrink back. And I feel no Desire or Lust at all : of which I can be as sure as that my Hand is cold or hot.

Thus it is, if I am tempted by a *present Object* : And it is just the same, if when it is absent, the Devil recalls a Commendation, an Injury, or a Woman to my Mind. In the Instant the Soul repels

pells the Temptation, and remains filled with pure Love.

And the Difference is still plainer when I compare my present State with my Past, wherein I felt Temptation and Corruption too.

Q. 16. But how do you know, that you are sanctified, saved from your inbred Corruption ?

A. I can know it no otherwise than I know that I am justified. *Hereby know we that we are of God, in either Sense, by the Spirit that he hath given us.*

We know it by *the Witness*, and by *the Fruit* of the Spirit, and first, by *the Witness*. As when we were justified, the Spirit bore witness with our Spirit, that our Sins were forgiven, so when we were sanctified, he bore witness, that they were taken away. Indeed the Witness of Sanctification is not always clear at first; (as neither is that of Justification :) Neither is it afterward, always the same, but like that of Justification, sometimes stronger and sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet in general, the latter Testimony of the Spirit is both as clear and as steady as the Former.

Q. 17. But what need is there of it, seeing Sanctification is a *real* Change? Not a *relative* only, like Justification?

A. But is the New Birth a *relative* Change only? Is not this a *real* Change? Therefore if we need no Witness of our Sanctification, because it is a *real* Change, for the same Reason we should need none, that we are born of, or are the Children of God.

Q. 18. But does not Sanctification shine by its own Light?

A. And does not the New Birth too? Sometimes it does. And so does Sanctification: At others it does not. In the Hour of Temptation, Satan Clouds the Work of God, and injects various Doubts and Reasonings. Especially in those who have either very weak or very strong Understandings. At such Times there is absolute Need of that Witness: Without which the Work of Sanctification, not only could not be discerned, but could

could no longer subsist. Were it not for this, the Soul could not then abide in the Love of GOD: Much less could it rejoice evermore and in every Thing give Thanks. In these Circumstances therefore a *direct Testimony* that we are sanctified is necessary in the highest Degree.

But I have no *Witness* that I am saved from Sin. And yet I have no Doubt of it! Very well. As long as you have no Doubt, it is enough: When you have, you will feel the Want of that *Witness*.

Q. 19. But what Scripture makes Mention of any such Thing, or gives any Reason to expect it?

A. That Scripture, 1 Cor. ii. 12. *We have received not the Spirit that is of the World, but the Spirit which is of GOD, that we may know the Things which are freely given to us of GOD.*

Now surely Sanctification is One of the Things which are freely given to us of GOD. And no possible Reason can be assigned, why this should be excepted, when the Apostle says, *We receive the Spirit* for this very End, *that we may know the Things which are thus freely given us.*

Is not the same Thing implied in that well known Scripture, Rom. viii. 15, *The Spirit itself witnesseth, with our Spirit, that we are the Children of GOD?* Does he only Witness this to those who are Children of GOD in the lowest Sense? Nay, but to those also who are such in the highest Sense. And does he not witness, That they are such in the highest Sense? What Reason have we to doubt it?

What if a Man were to affirm (as indeed many do) that this Witness belongs *only to the Highest Class of Christians?* Would not you answer, the Apostle makes no Restriction. Therefore doubtless it belongs to *all the Children of GOD?* And will not the same Answer hold, if any affirm, That it belongs *only to the lowest Class?*

Consider likewise 1 John v. 19. *We know that we are of GOD. How? By the Spirit that he hath given us. Nay, hereby we know that he abideth in us.* And what Ground have we either from Scripture or Reason, to exclude the *Witness* any more than the *Fruit of the Spirit*?

Spirit from being here intended? By this then also we know that we are of God, and in what Sense we are so. Whether we are Babes, young Men or Fathers, we know in the same Manner.

Not that I affirm, That all young Men, or even Fathers, have this Testimony every Moment. There may be Intermissions of the direct Testimony that they are thus born of God. But those Intermissions are fewer and shorter, as they grow up in CHRIST. And some have the Testimony both of their Justification and Sanctification, without any Intermision at all: Which I presume more might have, did they walk humbly and closely with God.

Q 20. May not some of these have a Testimony from the Spirit, that they shall not finally fall from God?

A. They may. And this Persuasion, that *neither Life, nor Death shall separate them from Him*, far from being hurtful, may in some Circumstances be extremely usefull. These therefore we should in no wise grieve, but earnestly encourage them, to hold the beginning of their Confidence stedfast unto the End.

Q 21. But have any a Testimony from the Spirit, that they shall never Sin?

A. We know not what God may vouchsafe, to some particular Persons. But we do not find any general State described in Scripture, from which a Man cannot draw back to Sin. If there were any State wherein this was impossible, it would be that of those who are sanctified, who are Fathers in CHRIST, who rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every Thing give Thanks. But it is not impossible for these to draw back. They who are sanctified, may yet fall and perish. Heb. x. 29. Even Fathers in CHRIST, need that Warning, *Love not the World*, 1 John ii. 15, *They who rejoice, pray and give Thanks without ceasing, may nevertheless quench the Spirit*, 1 Thes. v. 16, &c. Nay, even they who are sealed unto the Day of Redemption, may yet grieve the Holy Spirit of God, Eph. v. 30.

Altho³

Altho' therefore God may give such a Witness to some particular Persons, yet it is not to be expected by Christians in general, there being no Scripture whereon to ground such an Expectation.

Q. 22. By what *Fruit of the Spirit* may we know that we are of God, even in the highest Sense ?

A. By *Love, Joy, Peace* always abiding ; by *invariable Long-suffering, Patience, Resignation ; by Gentleness, triumphing over all Provocation ; by Goodness, Mildness, Sweetness, Tenderness of Spirit ; by Fidelity, Simplicity, Godly Sincerity ; by Meekness, Calmness, Evenness of Spirit ; by Temperance, not only in Food and Sleep, but in all Things natural and spiritual.*

Q. 23. But what great Matter is there in this ? Have we not all this when we are justified ?

A. What ! *Total Resignation to the Will of God, without any Mixture of Self-will ? Gentleness, without any Touch of Anger, even the Moment we are provoked ? Love to God, without the least Love to the Creature, but in and for God ? Excluding all Pride ? Love to Man, excluding all Envy, all Jealousy and rash Judging ? Meekness, keeping the whole Soul inviolably calm ? And Temperance in all Things ? Deny that any ever came up to this, if you please. But do not say, all who are justified, do.*

Q. 24. But some who are newly justified do : What then will you say to these ?

A. If they really do, I will say, they are sanctified, saved from Sin in that Moment : And that they never need lose what God has given, or feel Sin any more.

But certainly this is an exempt Case. It is otherwise with the Generality of those that are justified. They feel in themselves, more or less, Pride, Anger, Self-will, and an Heart bent to backsliding. And till they have gradually mortified these, they are not fully renewed in Love.

Q. 25. But is not this the Case of all that are justified ? Do they not *gradually* die to Sin and grow in Grace, till at, or perhaps a little before Death, God perfects them in Love ?

A. I believe this is the Case of most, but not all. God usually gives a considerable *Time*, for Men to receive *Light*, to grow in *Grace*, to *do* and *suffer* his Will, before they are either justified or sanctified. But He does not invariably adhere to this. Sometimes he *cuts short his Work*. He does the Work of many Years in a few Weeks: Perhaps in a Week, a Day, an Hour. He justifies, or sanctifies both those who have *done*, or *suffered* nothing, and who have not had *Time* for a gradual Growth either in *Light* or *Grace*. And may he not do what he will with his own? *Is thine Eye Evil, because he is Good?*

It need not therefore be affirmed over and over, and proved by forty Texts of Scripture, either that most Men are perfected in Love *at last*, that there is a *gradual Work* of God in the Soul, or that, generally speaking, it is a *long Time*, even many Years, before Sin is destroyed. All this we know. But we know likewise, that God *may*, with Man's good Leave, *cut short his Work*, in whatever Degree he pleases, and do the usual Work of many Years in a Moment. He does so, in many Instances. And yet there is a *gradual Work*, both *before* and *after* that Moment. So that one may affirm, the Work is *gradual*, another, it is *instantaneous*, without any Manner of Contradiction.

Q. 26. Does St. Paul mean any more by being *sealed with the Spirit*, than being *renewed in Love*?

A. Perhaps in one Place, 2 Cor. i. 22. he does not mean so much. But in another, Eph. i. 13. he seems to include both the Fruit and the Witness; and that in an higher Degree than we experience, even when we are first *renewed in Love*. God *seals us with the Spirit of Promise*, by giving us *the full Assurance of Hope*; such a Confidence of receiving all the Promises of God, as excludes the Possibility of doubting: With that *Holy Spirit*, by universal Holiness, stamping the whole Image of God on our Hearts.

Q. 27. But how can those who are thus *sealed*, *grieve the Holy Spirit of God*?

A. St. Paul tells you very particularly, 1. By such *Conversation* as is not profitable, not to the *Use of Edifying*, not apt to minister *Grace* to the *Hearers*; 2. By
re-

relapsing into *Bitterness* or *Want of Kindness*; 3. By *Wrath*, lasting *Displeasure*, or *Want of Tender-heartedness*, 4. By *Anger*, however soon it is over, *Want of instantly forgiving one another*; 5. By *Clamour* or *bawling*, loud, harsh, rough *Speaking*; 6, By *Evil-speaking*, *Whispering*, *Tale-bearing*; needlessly mentioning the *Fault of an absent Person*, tho' in ever so soft a *Manner*.

Q 28. What do you think of those in *London*, who seem to have been lately *renewed in Love*?

A. There is something very peculiar in the Experience of the greater Part of them. One would expect, that a *Believer* should first be filled with *Love*, and thereby emptied of *Sin*: Whereas these were emptied of *Sin* first, and then filled with *Love*. Perhaps it pleased *God* to work in this *Manner*, to make his *Work* more plain and undeniable; and to distinguish it more clearly from that overflowing *Love*, which is often felt even in a justified *State*.

It seems likewise most agreeable to the great *Promise*, *Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. From all your Filthinesses I will cleanse you; A new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you.*

But I do not think of them all alike: There is a wide Difference between some of them and others. I think most of them with whom I have spoken, have much *Faith*, *Love*, *Joy* and *Peace*. Some of these I believe are renewed in *Love*, and have the direct Witness of it: And they manifest the *Fruit* above described, in all their *Words* and *Actions*. Now let any *Man* call this what he will. It is what I call *Perfection*.

But some who have much *Love*, *Peace* and *Joy*, yet have not the direct Witness. And others who think they have, are nevertheless manifestly wanting in the *Fruit*. How many I will not say: Perhaps one in ten, perhaps more or fewer. But some are undeniably wanting, in *Long-suffering*, *Christian Resignation*. They do not see the *Hand of God* in whatever occurs, and cheerfully embrace it. They do not in every thing give *Thanks*, and rejoice evermore. They are not happy: At least, not *always* happy. For sometimes they complain. They say, "This *er* that is *hard*!"

Some are wanting in *Gentleness*. They resist Evil, instead of turning the other Cheek. They do not receive Reproach with Gentleness; no, nor even Reproof. Nay, they are not able to bear Contradiction, without the Appearance, at least, of Resentment. If they are reprov'd, or contradicted, tho' mildly, they do not take it well. They behave with more Distance and Reserve than they did before. If they are reprov'd or contradicted harshly, they answer it with Harshness; with a loud Voice, or with an angry Tone, or in a sharp or surly Manner. They speak sharply or roughly, when they reprove others, and behave roughly to their Inferiors.

Some are wanting in *Goodness*. They are not kind, mild, sweet, amiably soft and loving at all Times, in their Spirit, in their Words, in their Look, and Air, in the whole Tenor of their Behaviour; and that to all, High and Low, Rich and Poor, without Respect of Persons: Particularly to them that are out of the Way, to Opposers, and to those of their own Household. They do not long, study, endeavour by every Means, to make all about them happy. They can see them uneasy, and not be concerned: Perhaps they make them so! And then wipe their Mouths and say, "Why they deserve it. It is their own Fault."

Some are wanting in *Fidelity*, a nice Regard to Truth, Simplicity, or godly Sincerity. Their Love is hardly without *Dissimulation*; something like Guile is found in their Mouth. To avoid Roughness, they lean to the other Extreme. They are smooth to an Excess, so as scarce to avoid a Degree of Fawning, or of seeming to mean what they do not.

Some are wanting in *Mekness*, Quietness of Spirit, Composure, Evenness of Temper. They are up and down, sometimes high, sometimes low; their Mind is not well balanced. Their Affections are either not in due Proportion; they have too much of one, too little of another: Or they are not duly mixt and tempered together, so as to counterpoise each other. Hence there is often a Jar. Their Soul is out of Tune, and cannot make the true Harmony.

Some

Some are wanting in *Temperance*. They do not sted-
dily use that Kind and Degree of Food, which they
know, or might know, would most conduce to the
Health, Strength and Vigour of the Body. Or they
are not temperate in Sleep: they do not rigorously
adhere to what is best both for Body and Mind. Other-
wise they would constantly go to Bed and rise *early*
and at a *fixed Hour*. Or they sup late, which is neither
good for Body, nor Soul. Or they use neither Fast
nor Abstinence. Or they prefer (which are so many
of Intemperance) that Preaching, Reading or Con-
versation, which gives them transient Joy and Com-
fort, before that which brings godly Sorrow, or *In-
struction in Righteousness*. Such Joy is not sanctified.
It doth not tend to and terminate in the Crucifixion
of the Heart. Such Faith doth not center in *Christ*,
but rather in itself.

So far all is plain. *I believe* you have Faith, and Love,
and Joy, and Peace. You who are particularly con-
cerned, *know*, each for yourself, that you are wanting
in the Respect abovementioned. You are wanting
either in Long-suffering, Gentleness or Goodness;
either in Fidelity, Meekness or Temperance. Let us
not then, on either Hand, fight about Words. In the
Thing we clearly agree.

You have not what I call *Perfection*. If others will
call it so, they may. However hold fast what you have,
and earnestly pray for what you have not.

If any who hear or read this are disgusted, I can-
not think those are perfect. There is something wrong
within, or you would rejoice to be searched, and count
it a Mark of the truest Affection.

Q. 29. Can those who are perfect grow in Grace?

A. Undoubtedly they can. And that not only
while they are in the Body, but to all Eternity.

Q. 30 Can they fall from it?

A. I am well assured they can. Matter of Fact puts
this beyond dispute. Formerly we thought, one
saved from Sin, could not fall. Now, we know the
contrary. We are surrounded with Instances of
those, who lately experienced all that I mean by
Perfection. They had both the *Fruit* of the Spirit

and the *Witnesses*. But they have now lost both. Neither does any one stand, by Virtue of any Thing that is implied in the *Nature* of the State. There is no such *Height* or *Strength* of Holiness, as it is impossible to fall from. If there be any that *cannot fall*, this wholly depends on the Promise and Faithfulness of **GOD**.

Q. 31. Can those who fall from this State, recover it?

A. Why not? We have many Instances of this also. Nay, it is an exceeding common Thing, for Persons to lose it more than once, before they are established therein.

It is therefore to guard them who are saved from Sin, from every Occasion of stumbling, that I give the following Advices. But first, I shall speak plainly concerning the Work itself.

I esteem this late Work, to be of **GOD**: probably, the greatest now upon Earth. Yet, like all others, this also, is mixed with much human Frailty. But these Weaknesses are far less than might have been expected; and ought to have been joyfully borne by all that loved and followed after Righteousness. That there have been a few weak, warm-headed Men, is no Reproach to the Work itself, no just Ground for accusing of a Multitude of sober-minded Men, who are Patterns of strict Holiness. Yet (just contrary to what ought to have been) the Opposition is great; the Helps few. Hereby many are hindered from seeking Faith and Holiness by the false Zeal of others: and some who at first began to run well, are turned out of the Way.

Q. 32. What is the first Advice which you would give them?

A. Watch and pray continually against *Pride*. If **GOD** has cast it out, see that it enter no more: It is full as dangerous as Desire. And you may slide back into it unawares: especially if you think there is no danger of it. "Nay, but I ascribe all I have to **GOD**." So you may, and be proud nevertheless. For it is *Pride*, not only to ascribe any thing we have to our selves

selves, but to think we have what we really have not. Mr. L—— for Instance, ascribed all the Light he had to God. And so far he was humble. But then he thought he had *more Light* than any Man living. And this was palpable Pride. So you ascribe all the Knowledge you have to God; and in this Respect you are humble. But if you think you have more than you really have: or if you think you are so *taught of God*, as no longer to need Man's Teaching, Pride lieth at the Door. Yes, you have need to be taught, not only by Mr. M——d, by one another, by Mr. M——n, or me, but by the weakest Preacher in London: Yea, by all Men. For God sendeth by whom he *will* send.

Do not therefore say to any who would advise or reprove you, "You are blind: You cannot teach me." Do not say, This is your *Wisdom*, your *carnal Reason*: but calmly weigh the Thing before God.

Always remember, *much Grace* does not imply *much Light*. These do not always go together. As there may be much Light where there is little Love, so there may be much Love where there is little Light. The *Heart* has more Heat than the *Eye*: yet it cannot see. And God has wisely tempered the Members of the body together, that none may say to another, "I have no need of thee."

To imagine none can teach *You*, but those that are themselves saved from Sin, is a very great and dangerous Mistake. Give not Place to it for a Moment. It would lead you into a thousand other Mistakes, and that irrecoverably. No: *Domination* is not founded in *Grace*, as the Madmen of the last Age talked. Obey and regard *them that are over you in the Lord*, and do not think, you know better than them. Know *their Place*, and *your own*: Always remembering, Much Love does not imply much Light.

The not observing this has led some into many Mistakes, and into the Appearance, at least, of Pride. O beware both of the Appearance and the Thing. Let there be in you that lowly mind which was in CHRIST Jesus. And be ye likewise clothed with Humility. Let

Let it not only fill, but cover you all over. Let Modesty and Self-diffidence appear in all your Words and Actions. Let all you speak and do, shew that you are little, and base, and mean, and vile in your own Eyes.

As one Instance of this, be always ready to own any Fault you have been in. If you have at any Time thought, spoke or acted wrong, be not backward to acknowledge it. Never dream that this will hurt the Cause of God: No, it will further it. Be therefore open and frank when you are taxt with any Thing: Do not seek either to evade or disguise it. But let it appear just as it is, and you will thereby not hinder, but adorn the Gospel.

Q. 33. What is the Second Advice which you would give them?

A. Beware of that Daughter of Pride, *Enthusiasm*! O keep at the utmost Distance from it: Give no place to an heated Imagination. Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose Dreams, Voices, Impressions, Visions or Revelations to be from God. They may be from Him. They may be from Nature. They may be from the Devil. Therefore *believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they be of God.* Try all things by the written Word, and let all bow down before it. You are in Danger of Enthusiasm every Hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture: Yea, or from the plain, literal Meaning of any Text, taken in connexion with the Context. And so you are, if you despise or lightly esteem Reason, Knowledge or Human Learning: Every one of which is an excellent Gift of God, and may serve the noblest Purposes.

I advise you, never to use the Words, *Wisdom, Reason or Knowledge*, by Way of Reproach. On the contrary, pray that you yourself may abound in them more and more. If you mean *worldly Wisdom, useless Knowledge, false Reasoning*, say so: And throw away the Chaff, but not the Wheat.

One General Inlet to Enthusiasm is, Expecting the End without the Means: The expecting Knowledge, for Instance, without searching the Scriptures, and consulting

sulting the Children of God : The expecting Spiritual Strength without constant Prayer, and steady Watchfulness : The expecting any Blessing without hearing the Word of God at every Opportunity.

Some have been ignorant of this Device of Satan. They have left off searching the Scriptures. They said, " God writes all the Scripture on my Heart. Therefore I have no need to read it." Others thought, they had not so much need of Hearing, and so grew slack in attending the Morning Preaching. O take warning, you who are concerned herein. You have listened to the Voice of a Stranger. Fly back to CHRIST, and keep in the good old Way, which was *once delivered to the Saints* : the Way that even an Heathen bore Testimony of, that the Christians rose early every Day to sing Hymns to CHRIST as God."

The very Desire of *growing in Grace* may sometimes be an Inlet to Enthusiasm. As it continually leads us to seek *New Grace*, it may lead us unawares, to seek something else new, beside *New Degrees of Love to God and Man*. So it has led some to seek and fancy they had received Gifts of a *New Kind*; after a New Heart, As 1. The loving God with all our Mind, 2. With all our Soul, 3. With all our Strength, 4. Oneness with God, 5. Oneness with CHRIST, 6. Having our Life hid with CHRIST in God, 7. Being dead with CHRIST, 8. Rising with Him, 9. The sitting with him in heavenly Places, 10. The being taken up into his Throne, 11. The being in the New Jerusalem, 12. The seeing the Tabernacle of God come down among Men, 13. The being dead to all Works, 14. The not being liable to Death, or Pain, or Grief, or Temptation.

One Ground of many of these Mistakes is, the taking every fresh, strong Application of any of these Scriptures to the Heart, to be a Gift of a *New Kind* : Not knowing, That several of these Scriptures are not fulfilled yet ; That most of the others are fulfilled when we are justified; the rest, the Moment we are sanctified. It remains only, to Experience them in *higher Degrees*. This is all we have to expect.

Another Ground of these, and a thousand Mistakes is, the not considering deeply, that Love is the highest Gift of God, humble, gentle, patient Love: That all Visions, Revelations, Manifestations whatever, are little Things compared to Love: And that all the Gifts above-mentioned are either the same with, or infinitely inferior to it.

It were well you should be throughly sensible of this; The Heaven of Heavens is Love. There is nothing higher in Religion: there is, in effect, nothing else: If you look for any thing but *more Love*, you are looking wide of the Mark, you are getting out of the Royal Way. And when you are asking others, Have you received this or that Blessing? If you mean any thing but *more Love*, you mean wrong: you are leading them out of the Way, and putting them upon a false Scent. Settle it then in your Heart, that from the Moment God has saved you from all Sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that Love described in the Thirteenth of the *Corinthians*. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into *Abraham's Bosom*.

I say yet again, Beware of *Enthusiasm*. Such is, the imagining you have the Gift of *Prophecy*, or of *discerning Spirits*, which I do not believe One of you has; no, nor ever had yet. Beware of judging People to be either right or wrong, by your own *Feelings*. This is no Scriptural Way of judging. O keep close to the *Law and to the Testimony!* Hear what one hath farther said on the Occasion.

“If CHRIST, the Lord of the Harvest hath been pleased to restore to us the Gifts of Healing and Prophecy, it is certainly to answer his one great Design, the same as when he poured out his Spirit at the first: even that the World might be convinced of Sin; and that Believers might be edified and perfected in the Faith.” *Eph. iv. 12.*

“And whenever the Spirit shall be thus given, we may safely expect these simple and scriptural Marks.”

“1st. Those that believed before, will be farther established in the Faith, and stirred up to stricter Conformity to the Will of God.”

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“ adly. The Faithful will, in general, be more closely knit together in Christian Fellowship, and receive an Increase of patient, humble Love towards all Men. They will be more ready to be advised, and become subject to one another. They will revere the Order of God in whomsoever He hath set over his Work, rendering them a more ready, and loving Subjection for Conscience Sake.”

“ But if the Gifts supposed to be given are of no Importance : if Scripture Prophecies are ridiculously expounded : if what is foretold proves false or is mean, and not worth Notice : if these miraculous Gifts, instead of promoting Holiness, bring it into Contempt, and make even the truly wise and serious ashamed : if they who seek the Power of Godliness, are turned out of the Way, and not being able to separate the Gold from the Dross, reject the whole Work of God because of these Revelations : if instead of making a right Division between the Wheat and the Chaff, (*Matt. x. 34*) the Union of the most Spiritual is broken : if these prophetic Persons by Means of their supposed Gifts, see less of their Want of Help from others : if they are less united to their Brethren, less subject to such as are over them in the LORD : if these Signs appear, then know these Gifts are not of God, but are the Tares which the Enemy has sown with the good Seed.”

Q. 34. What is the Third ?

A. Beware of *Antinomianism*, making void the Law, or any Part of it thro' Faith. Enthusiasm naturally leads to this : Indeed they can scarce be separated. This may steal upon you in a thousand Forms, so that you cannot be too watchful against it. Take heed of every Thing, whether in Principle or Practice, which has any Tendency thereto. Even that great Truth, that CHRIST is the End of the Law, may betray us into it, if we do not consider, that he has adopted every Point of the Moral Law, and grafted it into the Law of Love. Beware of thinking, “ Because I am filled with

with Love, I need not have *so much* Holiness. Because I pray always, therefore I need no *jet Time* for Private Prayer: Because I watch always, therefore I need no particular self-examination." Let us *magnify the Law*, the whole written Word, and *make it honourable*. Let this be our Voice, *I prize thy Commandments above Gold or precious Stones. O what Love have I unto thy Law. All the Day long is my Study in it!* Beware of *Antinomian Books*: Particularly the Works of Dr. Crisp and Mr. Saltmarsh. They contain many excellent Things. And this makes them the more dangerous. O be warned in "Time! Do not play with Fire: Do nor put your Hand on the Hole of a Cockatrice den! Beware of *Moravianism*, the most refined Antinomianism that ever was under the Sun! producing the grossest Libertinism, and most flagrant Breach of every moral Precept. And such as could only have sprung from the Abuse of true, Christian Experience. I cannot doubt but many of them were once, exactly as you are now feeling the living Power of Faith Divine, and experiencing CHRIST to be all in all. I am fully convinced there *was* amongst Them, the self-same Work which *is* among Us. They then spoke of a *Second Work* of Grace, of such a "Rest in the Blood of CHRIST, as implied the *Cessation* (not [meer] *Suspension*) of all Sin, inward as well as outward." But not being aware of Satan's Devices they first gave Way to *Pride*, then to heated *Imagination*, and afterwards sunk into the Depth of *Antinomianism*.

Some of you have adopted unawares, a few of their Expressions. But why should we make Use of any Expressions, which are liable to just Exception? Let us not take to ourselves that pompous Title, *The Church*: Keep to the plain old Word, *Society*. Do not affectedly stile this or that Doctrine *The Thing, the Point, the Matter*. Do not direct your Prayers to CHRIST only, without either having, or seeking to have Access to the Father through him. It is our great Privilege, and Calling, to draw nigh to both

both the Father and the Son. The whole Trinity are engaged in our Redemption, each of the sacred Persons bear some peculiar Office; and have Blessings for all that draw nigh in full Assurance of Faith. Indeed in the infant State of our Conversion, it is usual to have an Intercourse with the Son of God only. And till he delivers up the Kingdom, as Messiah, and the Godhead be all in all, the Office he bears for us will always, in this respect, give us a nearer Access to himself, than to the Father and Holy Spirit: But as Faith increases, the Door in Heaven is opened wider, the Veil farther rent away; and perfect Faith will display the undivided Three in One; and give equal Access to the whole Triune-God. But these are comparatively small Things. With more Earnestness I intreat you, Beware of their *Bigotry*, their exquisite Bigotry to their own Party. Let not your Love or Beneficence be confined, to *Methodists* (so called) only; Much less to that very small Part of them, who seem to be renewed in Love: Or to those who believe yours and their Report: O make not this your *Sibboleth*. Beware of *Moravian Stillness*: *Ceasing*, in a wrong Sense *from your own Work*. To mention one Instance out of many, "You have received, says One of them, a great Blessing. But you began to *talk* of it, and to *do* this and that. So you lost it. You should have been *still*."

Beware of *Moravian Self-indulgence*: Yea, and making a Virtue of it, laughing at *Self-denial*, and *taking up the Cross daily*, at Fasting or Abstinence. Beware of *Moravian Censoriousness*: Thinking or calling them that any ways oppose you, whether in Judgment or Practice; *blind, dead, fallen*, or "Enemies to the Work:" Once more, beware of *Moravian Solifidianism*: crying nothing but "Believe, Believe:" and condemning those as *ignorant* or *legal*, who speak in a more Scriptural Way. At certain Seasons indeed, it may be right to treat of nothing but Repentance, or meerly of Faith, or altogether of Holiness: But in general our Call is to declare the whole Counsel of God, and to prophesy
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according to the Analogy of Faith. The written Word treats of the whole, and every particular Branch of Righteousness, descending to its minutest Branches, as to be sober, courteous, diligent, patient, to honour all Men. So likewise the holy Spirit works the same in our Hearts, not merely creating Desires after Holiness in general, but strongly inclining us to every Particular Grace, leading us to every individual Part of *whatsoever is lovely*. And this with the greatest Propriety: for as *by Works Faith is made perfect*, so the compleating or destroying the Work of Faith, and the procuring the Favour or Displeasure of God, greatly depends on every single Act of Obedience or Disobedience.

Q. 35. What is the Fourth ?

A. Beware of *Sins of Omission*: Lose no Opportunity of doing Good in any Kind. Be zealous of good Works: Willingly omit no Work, either of Piety or Mercy. Do all the Good you possibly can to the Bodies and Souls of all Men. Particularly *thou shalt in any wise reprove thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him*. Be *active*. Give no Place to Indolence or Sloth: Give no Occasion to say, "Ye are idle, ye are idle." Many will say so still: But let your whole Spirit and Behaviour refute the Slander. Be always employed: Lose no Shred of Time: Gather up the Fragments, that none be lost. And whatsoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with thy Might. Be *slow to speak*, and wary in speaking. *In a Multitude of Words there wanteth not Sin*. Do not talk much: Neither long at a Time. Few can converse profitably above an Hour. Keep at the utmost Distance from pious Chit-chat, from religious Gossiping.

Q. 36. What is the Fifth ?

A. Beware of *desiring* any Thing but God. Now you desire nothing else. Every other Desire is driven out: See that none enter again. *Keep thyself pure, Let your Eye remain single, and your whole Body shall be full of Light*, Admit no Desire of pleasing Food,

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or any other Pleasure of Sense: No Desire of pleasing the Eye, or the Imagination, by any Thing grand, or new, or beautiful: No Desire of Money, of Praise or Esteem; of Happiness in *any Creature*. You *may* bring these Desires back; but you *need* not; you need feel them no more. O stand fast in the Liberty wherewith CHRIST hath made you free.

Be Patterns to all, of denying yourselves, and taking up your Cross daily. Let them see that you make no Account of any Pleasure, which does not bring you nearer to God; nor regard any Pain, which does: That you simply aim at pleasing Him, whether by doing or suffering: That the constant Language of your Heart, with regard to Pleasure or Pain, Honour and Dishonour, Riches or Poverty, is

All's alike to me, so I
In my LORD may live and die!

Q. 37. What is the Sixth?

A. Beware of *Schism*, of making a Rent in the Church of CHRIST. That inward Disunion, the Members ceasing to have a reciprocal Love *one for another*, (1 Cor. 12. 25.) is the very Root of all Contention, and every outward Separation. Beware of every Thing tending thereto. Beware of a divisive Spirit; shun whatever has the least Aspect that Way. Therefore say not, *I am of Paul, or of Apollos*; the very Thing which occasioned the Schism at Corinth. Say not, "This is *my* Preacher; The *best* Preacher in England. Give me Him, and take all the rest." All this tends to breed or foment Division, to disunite those whom God hath joined. Do not extoll, or run down any Preacher. Do not exalt any one above the rest, lest you hurt both Him and the Cause of God. On the other Hand do not bear hard upon any, by Reason of some Incoherency or Inaccuracy of Expression: No, nor for some Mistakes, were they really such.

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Likewise if you would avoid Schism, Observe every Rule of the Society, and of the Bands, for Conscience Sake. Never omit meeting your Class or Band; never absent yourself from any public Meeting. These are the very Sinews of our Society: And whatever weakens, or tends to weaken our Regard for these, or our Exactness in attending them, strikes at the very Root of our Community. As one saith, "God only could have been the Author of that Part of our Economy, the private Weekly Meetings for Prayer, Examination, and particular Exhortation: It was above the Reach of meer human Thought, and has been the greatest Means of deepening and confirming every Blessing, that was received by the Word preached, and of diffusing it to others who could not attend the public Ministry: whereas, without this religious Connection and Intercourse, the most ardent Attempts by meer preaching, have proved of no lasting Use."

"In every Body there must be certain joints and ligaments to hold the several Members together: and by these every Part administers nourishment to the Rest. (Col. 2. 19.) To look for this Benefit without the Means approved of by God, or to think of a Body existing without that which alone can hold it together, is Enthusiasm: but to break through the Order and Appointment, which God hath borne Witness to by repeated Blessings, is to rebel against himself."

"There may be religious Individuals, without Connection, or any Grace of a Social Kind. There may be also, a dis-jointed Body of such Professors; and these may, for a while, exist without the Cement of Christian Fellowship, and retain some Degree of spiritual Life. But it will not be long before the feebleness of each Joint, will shew the Sickliness of the whole Body.

"There may be the Appearance of Gain at our first departing from any help to Watching, Prayer, and close walking in Holiness; but we shall soon find our supposed Gain, was Loss and our better Way, was but erring from the Path of Peace, and bringing

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on our Heads the Guilt of putting that asunder which God had joined together."

Suffer not one Thought of separating from your Brethren, whether their Opinions agree with yours, or not. Do not dream, that any Man sins, in not believing *you*, in not taking *your Word*: Or that this or that *Opinion*, is essential to the Work, and both must stand or fall together. Beware of *Impatience of Contradiction*. Do not condemn or think hardly of those, who cannot see just as you see, or who judge it their Duty to contradict you, whether in a great Thing or a small. I fear some of us have: Have thought hardly of others, merely because they contradicted what we affirmed. All this tends to Division. And by every thing of this kind, we are teaching them an evil Lesson against ourselves.

O beware of Touchiness, of Testiness, not bearing to be spoken to; starting at the least Word; and flying from those who do not implicitly receive mine or another's Sayings!

Expect Contradiction and Opposition, together with Crosses of various Kinds. Consider the words of St. Paul. *To you it is given, in the behalf of CHRIST, for his Sake, as a Fruit of his Death and Intercession for you, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his Sake* Phil. i. 23. *It is given!* God gives you this Opposition or Reproach: It is a fresh Token of his Love. And will you disown the Giver? Or spurn his Gift, and count it a Misfortune? Will you not rather say, "Father, the Hour is come, that thou shouldst be glorified. Now thou givest thy Child, to suffer something for thee. Do with me, according to thy Will."

Know that these things, far from being Hindrances to the Work of God, or to your Soul, unless by your own Fault, are not only unavoidable in the Course of Providence, but profitable, yea necessary for you. Therefore receive them from God (not from Chance) with Willingness, with Thankfulness. Receive them from Men with Humility, Meekness, Yieldingness, Gentleness, Sweetness. Why

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Should not even your outward *Appearance* and *Manner*, be soft? Remember the Character of Lady *Cutts*: "It was said of the Roman Emperor, *Titus*, "Never any one came displeas'd from him." But it might be said of Her, Never any one went displeas'd to her, So secure were all, of the kind, favourable Reception, which they would meet with from her."

Beware of tempting others to separate from you. Give no Offence which can possibly be avoided: See that your Practice be in all Things suitable to your Profession, adorning the Doctrine of God our Saviour. Be particularly carefull in speaking of yourself: You may not indeed deny the Work of God: But speak of it, when you are called thereto, in the most inoffensive Manner possible. Avoid all magnificent; pompous Words. Indeed you need give it no *General* Name. Neither "Perfection, Sanctification, the Second Blessing, nor the having attained." Rather speak of the *Particulars*, which God has wrought for you. You may say, "At such a Time I felt a Change which I am not able to express. And since that Time I have not felt Pride, or Self-will, or Anger, or Unbelief: Nor any Thing but a Fulness of Love, to God and to all Mankind." And answer any other plain Question that is asked, with Modesty and Simplicity.

And if any of you should at any Time fall from what you now are, if you should again feel Pride or Unbelief, or any Temper from which you are now delivered; do not deny, do not hide, do not disguise it at all, at the Peril of your Soul. At all Events, go to one in whom you can confide, and speak just what you feel. God will enable him to speak a Word in Season, which shall be Health to your Soul. And sure He will again lift up your Head, and cause the Bones that have been broken to rejoice.

Q. 38. What is the last Advice which you would give them?

A. Be *Exemplary* in all Things: Particularly in outward Things (as in *Dress*) in *little* Things; in the laying out of your *Money*, (avoiding every needless

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Expence) in deep, steady *Serioufness*, and in the *Solidity* and *Usefulness* of all your *Conversation*. So shall you be *Lights shining in a dark Place*: So shall you daily grow in *Grace*, till an *Entrance be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord JESUS CHRIST*.

Most of the preceding Advices are strongly enforced in the following Reflections: Which I recommend to your deep and frequent Consideration, next to the Holy Scriptures.

1. We ought to honour those holy Ones whom God honours, and to expect more Assistance from Them than from others, at the Time when he manifests their Holiness: Because they are then as it were new Fountains, which God causes to appear in his Church; and who will soon (as other Saints have done) retire into God their Source, after they shall have water'd a few more of his Children.

The Sea is an excellent Figure of the Fulness of God, and that of the blessed Spirits. For as the Rivers all return into the Sea; so the Bodies, the Souls, and the good Works of the Righteous, return into God, to live there, in his eternal Repose.

Altho' all the Graces of God depend on his mere Bounty, yet is he pleas'd generally to attach them to the Prayers, the Instructions, and the Holiness of those with whom we are. By strong tho' invisible Attractions he draws some Souls thro' their Intercourse with others.

The Sympathies form'd by Grace far surpass those that are form'd by Nature.

The truly Devout shew, that Passions as naturally flow from true as from false Love: So deeply sensible are they of the Goods and Evils of those whom they love for God's Sake. But this can only be comprehended by those who understand the Language of Love.

The Bottom of the Soul may be in repose, even while we are in many outward Troubles; just as the Bottom of the Sea is calm, while the Surface is strongly agitated.

2. The *best Helps to Growth in Grace* are the ill Usage, the Affronts, and the Losses which befall us. We should receive them with all Thankfulness, as preferable to all others, were it only on this Account, that our Will has no Part therein.

The readiest Way to escape from our Sufferings is, To be willing they should endure as long as God pleases.

If we suffer Persecution and Affliction in a right Manner, we attain a larger Measure of Conformity to CHRIST, by a due Improvement of one of these Occasions, than we could have done merely by imitating his Mercy, in Abundance of good Works.

One of the greatest Evidences of God's Love to those that love Him, is to send them Afflictions, with Grace to bear them.

Even in great Afflictions, we ought to testify to God, that in receiving them from his Hand, we feel Pleasure in the midst of the Pain, from being afflicted by Him who loves us, and whom we love.

The readiest Way, which God takes to draw a Man to himself, is to afflict him in that he loves most, and with good Reason: and to cause this Affliction to arise from some good Action done with a single Eye: Because nothing can more clearly shew him the Emptiness of what is most lovely and desirable in the World.

3. True *Resignation* consists in a thorough Conformity to the whole Will of God; who wills and does all (excepting Sin) which comes to pass in the World. In order to this, we have only to embrace all Events, Good and Bad, as his Will.

In the greatest Afflictions which can befall the Just, either from Heaven or Earth, they remain immovable in Peace, and perfectly submissive to God, by an inward, loving Regard to Him uniting in one all the Powers of their Souls.

We ought quietly to suffer whatever befalls us, to bear the Defects of others and our own, to confess them to God in secret Prayer, or with Groans which
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cannot be uttered : But never to speak a sharp or peevish Word, nor to murmur or repine.

Be thoroughly willing, that God should treat you in the Manner that pleases him. We are his Lambs, and therefore ought to be ready to suffer, even to the Death without complaining.

We are to bear with those we cannot amend, and to be content with offering them to God. This is true Resignation. * And since he has borne our Infirmities, we may well bear those of each other for his Sake.

To abandon all, to strip ones self of all, in order to seek and to follow JESUS CHRIST, naked in *Bethlehem*, when he was born ; naked in the Hall where he was scourged ; and naked when he died on the Cross, is so great a Mercy, that neither the Thing, nor the Knowledge of it is given to any, but through Faith in the Son of God.

4. There is no Love of God without Patience, and no Patience without *Lowliness* and Sweetness of Spirit.

Humility and Patience are the surest Proofs of the Increase of Love.

Humility alone unites Patience with Love, without which it is impossible to draw Profit from Suffering ; or indeed to avoid Complaint, especially when we think we have given no Occasion for what Men make us suffer.

True Humility is a kind of Self-annihilation : and this is the Center of all Virtues.

A Soul returned to God ought to be attentive to every Thing which is said to him on the Head of Salvation, with a Desire to profit thereby.

Of the Sins which God has pardoned, let nothing remain but a deeper Humility in the Heart, and a stricter Regulation in our Words, in our Actions and in our Sufferings.

5. The bearing Men and suffering Evils in *Meekness*, and Silence, is the Sum of the Christian Life.

God is the first Object of our Love : Its next Office is, To bear the Defects of others. And we should begin the Practice of this, amidst our own Household.

We should chiefly exercise our Love, toward those who most shock, either our Way of thinking, or our Temper, or our Knowledge, or the Desire we have that others should be as virtuous as we wish to be ourselves.

6. God hardly gives his Spirit even to those whom he has established in Grace, if they donot *pray* for it on all Occasions, not only once, but many Times.

God does nothing but in Answer to Prayer; and even they who have been converted to God, without praying for it themselves (which is exceeding rare) were not without the Prayers of others. Every new Victory which a Soul gains, is the Effect of a New Prayer.

On every Occasion of Uneasiness we should retire to Prayer, that we may give Place to the Grace and Light of God, and then form our Resolutions, without being in any Pain about the Success they may have.

In the greatest Temptations, a single Look to CHRIST, or the bare pronouncing his Name, suffices to overcome the wicked One, so it be done with Confidence and calmness of Spirit.

God's Command, *To pray without ceasing*, is founded on the Necessity we have of his Grace, to preserve the Life of God in the Soul, which can no more subsist one Moment without it, than the Body can without Air.

Whether we think or speak to God, whether we act or suffer for him, all is Prayer, when we have no other Object than his Love, and the Desire of pleasing him.

All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping is Prayer, when it is done in Simplicity, according to the Order of God, without either adding to, or diminishing from it by his own Choice.

Prayer continues in the Desire of the Heart, tho' the Understanding be employ'd on outward Things.

In Souls filled with Love, the Desire to please God is a continual Prayer.

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As the furious Hate which the Devil bears us is term'd the Roaring of the Lion, so our vehement Love may be term'd, Crying after God.

God only requires of his adult Children, that their Hearts be truly purish'd, and that they offer him continually the Wines and Yows that naturally spring from perfect Love. For these Desires, being the genuine Fruits of Love, are the most perfect Prayers that can spring from it.

7. It is scarce conceivable how *frail the Way* is, wherein God leads them that follow him; and how dependent on him we must be, unless we would be wanting in our Faithfulness to him.

It is hardly credible, of how great Consequence before God, the smallest Things are; and what great Inconveniences sometimes follow those which appear to be light Faults.

As a very little Dust will disorder a Clock, and the least Sand will obscure our Sight, so the least Grain of Sin, which is upon the Heart, will hinder its right Motion towards God.

We ought to be in the Church as the Saints are in Heaven, and in the House as the holiest Men are in the Church: Doing our Work in the House as we pray in the Church, worshipping God from the Ground of the Heart.

We should be continually labouring to cut off, all the useless Things that surround us. And God usually retrenches the Superfluities of our Souls, in the same Proportion as we do those of our Bodies.

The best Means of resisting the Devil is, to destroy whatever of the World remains in us, in order to raise for God upon its Ruins, a Building all of Love. Then shall we begin in his fleeting Life, to love God as we shall love him in Eternity.

We scarce conceive, how easy it is, to rob God of his Due, in our Friendship with the most virtuous Persons, until they are torn from us by Death. But if this Loss produce lasting Sorrow, that is a clear Proof, that we had before Two Treasures, between which we divided our Heart.

8. If after having renounced all, we do not *wait* incessantly, and beseech God to accompany our Vigilance with His, we shall be again intangled and overcome.

As the most dangerous Winds may enter at little Openings, so the Devil never enters more dangerously, than by little unobserved Incidents, which seem to be nothing, yet insensibly open the Heart to great Temptations.

It is good to renew ourselves from Time to Time, by *closely examining* the State of our Souls, as if we never had done it before. For nothing tends more to the full Assurance of Faith, than to keep ourselves by this Means in Humility, and the Exercise of all good Works.

To continual Watchfulness and Prayer, ought to be added continual Employment. For Grace flies a Vacuum as well as Nature, and the Devil fills whatever God Does not fill.

There is no Faithfulness like that which ought to be between a Guide of Souls and the Person directed by him. They ought continually to regard each other in God, and closely to examine themselves, whether all their Thoughts are pure, and all their Words directed with Christian Discretion. Other Affairs are only the things of Men, but these are peculiarly the things of God.

9. The Words of St. Paul, *No Man can call* JESUS LORD, *but by the Holy Ghost*. Shews us the Necessity of eying God in our *Good Works*, and even in our minutest Thoughts, knowing that none are pleasing to him, but those which he forms in us and with us. For hence we learn that we cannot serve him, unless he uses our Tongue, Hands, Heart, to do by himself and his Spirit whatever he would have us do.

If we were not utterly impotent, our Good Works would be our own Property; Whereas now they belong wholly to God, because they proceed from Him and his Grace, while raising our Works, and making them all divine, he honours himself in us, thro' them.

One of the principal Rules of Religion is, To lose no Occasion of serving God. And since he is invisible to our Eyes, we are to serve him in our Neighbour : which he receives as if done to himself in Person, standing invisibly before us.

God does not love Men that are inconstant, nor good Works that are intermitted. Nothing is pleasing to him, but what has a Resemblance of his own Immutability.

A constant Attention to the Work which God intrusts us with, is a Mark of solid Piety.

Love fasts when it can, and as much as it can. It leads to all the Ordinances of God, and employs itself in all the outward Works, whereof it is capable. It flies, as it were, like *Elijah* over the Plain, to find God upon his holy Mountain.

God is so great, that he communicates Greatness to the least Thing that is done for his Service.

Happy are they who are sick ; yea, or lose their Life, for having done a Good Work.

God frequently conceals the Part which his Children have in the Conversion of other Souls. Yet one may boldly say, that a Person who long groans before him for the Conversion of another, whenever that Soul is converted to God, is one of the chief Causes of it.

Charity cannot be practised right, unless, first, we exercise it the Moment God gives the Occasion ; and, secondly, retire the Instant after, to offer it to God by humble Thanksgiving. And this for three Reasons, the 1st. To render to Him what we have received from him ; the 2d. to avoid the dangerous Temptation, which springs from the very Goodness of these Works ; and the 3d, to unite ourselves to God, in whom the Soul expands itself in Prayer, with all the Graces we have received, and the Good Works we have done, to draw from Him new Strength against the bad Effects which these very

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Work

Works may produce in us, if we do not make Use of the Antidotes, which God has ordained against these Poisons. The true Means to be filled anew with the Riches of Grace, is thus to strip ourselves of it : And without this, it is extremely difficult, not to grow faint in the Practice of Good Works.

Good Works do not receive their last Perfection, till they, as it were, lose themselves in God. This is a kind of Death to them, resembling that of our Bodies, which will not attain their highest Life, their Immortality, till they lose themselves in the Glory of our Souls, or rather of God, wherewith they shall be filled. And it is only what they had of earthly and mortal, which Good works lose by this spiritual Death.

Fire is the Symbol of Love : and the Love of God is the principle, and End of all our Good Works. But as Truth surpasses Figure, the Fire of divine Love has this Advantage over material Fire, that it can ascend to its Source, and raise thither with it all the Good Works which it produces. And by this Means it prevents their being corrupted, by Pride, Vanity, or any evil Mixture. But this cannot be done otherwise than by making these good Works in a spiritual Manner die in God, by a deep Gratitude, which plunges the Soul in Him as an Abyss, with all that it is, and all the Grace and Works for which it is indebted to him : a Gratitude, whereby the Soul seems to empty itself of them, that they may return to their Source, as Rivers seem willing to empty themselves when they pour themselves with all their Waters into the Sea.

When we have received any Favour from God, we ought to retire, if not into our Closet, into our Hearts and say, " I come Lord to restore to thee what thou hast given, and I freely relinquish it, to enter again into my own Nothingness. For what is the most perfect Creature in Heaven or Earth in thy Presence, but

but a Void capable of being filled with thee and by thee, as the Air which is void and dark is capable of being filled with the Light of the Sun? Grant therefore, O Lord, that I may never appropriate thy Grace to myself, any more than the Air appropriates to itself the Light of the Sun, who withdraws it every Day, to restore it the next, there being nothing in the Air that either appropriates his Light, or resists it. O give me the same Facility of receiving and restoring thy Grace and Good Works ! I say, thine : for I acknowledge, the Root from which they spring is in Thee, and not in me."

F I N I S.

