

T H E  
H O L I N E S S  
O F

Times, Places, and People,

U N D E R T H E  
J E W I S H and C H R I S T I A N  
D I S P E N S A T I O N S,

Considered and compared in several DISCOURSES.



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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

WHEN I tell the world the various occasions of writing these papers which are here collected, my design is rather to gratify the curiosity of my readers, than to add any particular illustrations to the subjects here treated of.

The first of these essays, *viz.* “ On the perpetuity of the sabbath, and the observation of the Lord’s day,” owes its rise to a practical discourse on that subject, which is printed among the sermons preached at *Berry-street*, in the year 1733. While I was composing it, my thoughts were drawn out too largely in the argumentative part, which I therefore cut off and laid aside, reserving it for some other opportunity of publication.

Since that time I had occasion to review this discourse, and though I think the scheme there proposed to be just and right, yet if there be any weakness in any of the distinct parts of it, I pointed them out in the second appendix; and if they should upon the strictest examination prove insufficient to support my conclusions, I there take the freedom to inform the world, what would be my succedaneous sentiments on this theme. But still I cannot but conclude that the great expediency of a sabbath through all ages of mankind, comes very near to a necessity: And if the observation of a Lord’s-day be not directly an institution of *Christ*, yet it comes as near as possible, that is, the direction and example of the apostles.

“ The second essay on the hour of the day for the administration of the Lord’s-supper,” arose from the scruples of a pious soul now with God, who found some uneasiness of conscience about receiving the holy communion at noon, according to the custom of many churches. This was written about the year 1710.

“ The third discourse was a sermon preached on *Thursday* the 20th of *October*, 1737. at the opening of a new meeting-house, built near *Wapping*, by the congregation under the pastoral care of my worthy and esteemed friend Mr. DAVID JENNINGS;” and when I transcribed it in order to be published at the earnest request of many of my friends, it received a considerable enlargement both in the doctrinal and the practical part.

The fourth arose from my own meditations and anxious enquiries, “ Why the forms and rites of all the *jewish* worship were much more exactly prescribed by *Moses* to the *Jews*, than the forms of worshipping in christian assemblies seem to be prescribed by *Christ*, or his apostles?” This has lain by me near 30 years, according to my best remembrance.

The last dissertation, *viz.* “ On the difference between the visible and invisible church, and the distinct holiness of the *jewish* church and the christian, written in  
Vol. II. E e e the

the year 1732," took it's rise from a growing opinion which I found in the world, *viz.* that the language of the prophets, both in divine threatenings and promises, addressed to *Israel* and *Sion*, must be extended no further than the *jewish* church; and that the discourses of the apostles to the converted gentile churches concerning their former state, refer only to the idolatrous heathens; and that some of the duties prescribed to them with such earnestness, particularly that of faith in *Christ*, must almost intirely be construed to the use of those primitive converts from superstition and idolatry. Now if these opinions prevail, the writings of the prophets and apostles will seem to me to be too much impoverished and curtailed, and a great part of the advantage of these writings, both of the prophets and the apostles, will be cut off from christians in the present age, because they never were of the seed of *Israel*, nor have ever been idolatrous heathens, or utterly ignorant of the true God, and *Christ Jesus* his son.

The consideration of the holiness of places of worship in my late sermon being urged to the press, inclined me to review many of my manuscripts, and to take these papers out of them which had any cognation or affinity to the same subject, *viz.* "The holiness of times, places, or people, and to publish them together under this title.

If my meditations on any of these arguments shall so far find acceptance with my readers, as to lead them into any clearer ideas of some parts of our common christianity, let every degree of knowledge awaken some thankfulness to God, and some happy improvement in the christian life.

Newington,  
May 4, 1738.

I. WATTS.

T H E

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Times, Places, and People, &c.

D I S C O U R S E I.

*The perpetuity of a sabbath, and the observation of the Lord's-day.*

**I**T is an unhappy thing indeed, that that very day, which God originally designed for a sacred rest here on earth, and appointed it to be a pledge and emblem of eternal rest in heaven, should become a matter of noisy dispute and contention in his church; but God hath seen fit to exercise our faith and patience with some darkneses and difficulties even in his own worship in this world, that we may breathe and long after light and glory of the future state, with that more perfect rest, and more exalted worship, which is enjoyed and practised in the world above.

Several of the controversies which have risen, with regard to the sabbath, whether *jewish* or christian, and the holiness of it, though they are not of the highest importance among the doctrines and duties of christianity, yet neither are they mean and trifling; for as we ought not to release the souls and consciences of men from any of the obligations which God and *Christ* have laid on them; so neither should we lay any yokes on the necks of disciples, from which *Christ* hath released them. However, since there seems to have been one day in seven appointed for rest from labour, or separated for divine worship, from the beginning of the world, through every dispensation of God to men, I cannot but think there is something of a moral nature in it; and on this account, I suppose God was pleased to begin a sabbath, as soon as he had made a creature who could observe it, and that he designed there should be a sabbath as long as that creature continued on earth, *Gen. ii. 2.* "God rested on the seventh day from all his work, which he had made, and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, or pronounced it holy."

But that we may go on in a regular train of argument, and yet be as brief as possible, I shall sum up my best thoughts on this subject, in the following propositions.

PROPOSITION I. "Though man be placed on the earth for labour, or business in this life; yet he ought sometimes to enjoy rest from his earthly labours, and sometime pay worship to the God of heaven." Both these are taught us by the light of reason. There will be some seasons wherein the animal nature of man and beast require some rest from their toil, and that besides the mere sleep of the night. Constant and unceasing toil and labour, from morning to evening, throughout our whole life, would wear out natures made of flesh and blood too fast, and this would

not be dealing well with our bodies, our servants, or our cattle. There must be some seasons also, wherein God our creator must have worship paid him by his creature man; and as he is a creature made for society, he ought to acknowledge God in societies, and to pay him some public worship; and there must be some certain times appointed for this purpose. This also the light of reason requires.

Let it be observed further, there is some natural connexion between these two, *viz.* rest and worship; for when man is at rest from his own labours, he is more at leisure for religion, and the service of God: And when he performs worship to God, he must rest from his common labours. A vigorous employment of the head and hands, in the works of the natural life, is not consistent at the same time with such devotion as God requires of men, either in public or private, which I shall have occasion to mention again before I conclude.

PROPOSITION II. "The light of nature and reason doth not evidently teach us what part of time, or how much should be devoted to bodily rest, and to divine worship." Can we absolutely determine, whether some part of every day is sufficient and most proper for both these purposes, or whether we should separate on this account one whole day out of five or ten, seven or seventeen? Who can assign the just medium between too much and too little? Human prudence indeed, and common experience will teach us in the main, that since social or public worship should be performed to God by many persons, or families at once, it seems to be more convenient that a whole day should be separated now and then, rather than to make perpetual interruptions of the business of life, by separating a small part of every day for this purpose; and prudence will also teach us, that this whole day should be publicly known and appointed, at least by consent, and common agreement. But there would be endless differences of opinion what day this should be, and how often it should return, if it were left merely to the fancies, conveniencies, and agreements of men. Some of a covetous and cruel temper would scarce allow one day in twenty for rest to their servants or cattle: some have so little love to religion, that they would think one in forty enough for God. Others of a different make would perhaps incline to one day in four or five: And thus there would be probably a continual confusion in this matter, and neither the seasons of rest, nor of worship, well proportioned to the days of labour.

PROPOSITION. III. "To guard against all those inconveniences, as soon as God had made man, and set him to labour in the garden of *Eden*, he appointed him one day in seven to be a day of rest from labour, and also a season of religion and worship," *Gen. ii. 3.* "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it God rested from his works." This secured our first parents from any doubts of this kind; and had this been faithfully observed by their posterity, it would have maintained labour and rest, business and worship, in their due proportions, and have secured mankind also from many doubts and contentions on this subject.

Reason teaches us to rest, and to worship; and though we cannot determine, with any certainty, by our reasonings, the precise quantity of time which is necessary to relieve animal nature by rest, after it's labours, nor can we tell which is a just proportion of time to be assigned to God, and employed for worship and holy purposes; yet God in his infinite wisdom well knew the nature and relations of things, all the necessities of our animal natures, and the dues of his worship, and by the same wisdom he has ordained one day in seven for both these. And I am persuaded there is something perfectly proper, just and reasonable in the very nature of things in the appointment of this proportion of time, *viz.* one day in seven, for religious worship,

as well as for bodily rest, which divine reason sees plainly, and because man's reason cannot find it out, God has revealed it to him from the beginning of the world. Reason teaches us to honour our parents; but which are our parents, must be told us by men, before we can honour them. It is a moral law, yet we need information of the object before the law can be obeyed: So it is with the sabbath.

The chief thing expressly mentioned in the institution of the sabbath, is a day of rest from the common labours and businesses of life; and by comparing this with other texts of the old and new testament, it seems to be designed for these several ends.

1. To give our natures proper refreshment, as well as to relieve the cattle from their toils, which could not well bear incessant labour.

2. To imitate the great God our maker, who, after six days spent in creating the world, rested from his work on the seventh, and is represented as surveying the works of his hand, and pronouncing them good. And as man was made in the image of his maker, so he was appointed to act like him in this respect, that is, to rest from his labours, and spend that time in contemplating, and honouring his creator.

3. To preserve a lasting remembrance of the creation of the world in six days among the following generations of men, and hereby secure mankind against idolatry, or forgetting the true God who made the world.

4. To be a token and pledge to *Adam*, of the state of peace and rest which God would give him, after he had fulfilled his labour of perfect obedience in a state of innocence. But I add also

5. That since this day was sanctified, or made holy, and was blessed of God in it's first appointment to *Adam*, as appears from that text, it intimates to us, that the day should not be devoted intirely to sloth and idleness, but should be employed in some holy exercises, some performances of divine worship, and also a divine encouragement to expect and hope that the great God might bless his creatures with peculiar blessings at that time, or make it a blessed day to them.

Both these appointments of a seventh day for rest, and for worship, since the light of nature could not determine them, are here mentioned as appointed by God himself, and built on God's own resting the seventh day from his own work, which he had created. And what fitter time could there be for *Adam* and *Eve*, just created, to celebrate the praises of their maker for his works, than while God is represented as reviewing his own works with a peculiar approbation and delight; when the morning stars of heaven sang together on this celestial festival, and all the sons of God on high shouted for joy, as it is expressed in *Job xxxviii. 7.* How proper was it for *Adam*, the son of God below, to join with this holy choir in his creator's praise?

I have observed that this appointment of the sabbath, or one day in seven for rest, and for worship, might be a sort of moral \* command, rising from the order of things, and the natural relation of such creatures to a God, and of six days labour to one day's rest, and so a natural and perpetual duty, though it is here expressed only as derived from the revelation, or discovery of God's resting day, and as a positive institution.

Nor are these two things at all inconsistent; for there are other duties which are acknowledged to belong to the order and law of nature, and are of a moral kind, though  
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\* Note, the word moral is used here in a larger sense, than when it signifies only what the light of reason can find out. If the term offend, I do not insist on it.

it would be very hard for every man to have found them out by mere reason; and therefore they were kindly revealed and prescribed to man at first, and that in a way of correspondence with some transactions of God in his creation of the world. So the law of monogamy, or taking but one wife, is argued by the prophet *Malachi*, because God made but one woman for one man at first, *Mal. ii. 14, 15*. So the pre-eminence, or headship of the man above the woman, the institution of marriage, and the various suitable duties required on both sides, are laid on this foot, *viz.* because God made man before he made the woman, because he made the woman for the man, and formed the woman out of the flesh and bone of the man, see *Gen. ii. 23, 24. 1 Cor. xi. 3, 8, 9. 1 Tim. ii. 12, 13. Matth. xix. 5.* and yet all these things seem to be moral and perpetual: And then why may not the sabbath be so too, which being hard to be found out by the light of reason, was revealed and prescribed to man in the same manner as these?

In short, a set time for divine worship seems to be a natural duty, or a moral law: That it should be one day in seven, is revealed and positive, yet in some sense moral and perpetual also: And that it should be the seventh day, from the beginning of God's creation, is merely positive, and therefore not perpetual, but changeable, as will better appear afterward.

PROPOSITION IV. "It is very probable that the pious patriarchs, in the beginning of the world, actually kept this seventh day, though there be no very plain and particular account of it, in so brief a history as that of *Moses*." Let us observe, that the reasons of it are perpetual, *viz.* a remembrance of the creating work of God in six days, and his rest on the seventh; the necessary rest that belongs to our bodies, our servants, and our cattle; as well as the necessity of the worship of God at certain seasons; all which are contained in the fourth commandment, where we are required to keep the sabbath holy.

It may be doubted, indeed, whether all the patriarchs, in their pastoral manner of life, could conveniently keep a sabbath, by meeting in large public assemblies: But as each master of a family was a priest to his own house, so it is most likely they worshipped God in large families assembled on that day in an eminent manner, and their neighbours might attend, though the bible be silent or obscure as to any notices of it.

I say, obscure notices, because though there be no plain and evident examples of keeping the sabbath by the patriarchs; yet how many things are there of plain moral duty toward God and man, which the holy patriarchs without doubt practised, of which there is not the least hint in scripture? Must we conclude then they never practised them?

But, there are some texts which have been supposed by critics, to give hints of this practice. Some have thought that in *Gen. iv. 3.* "the end of the days" when *Cain* and *Abel* offered their several offerings, was the end of the week, which was the first, and perhaps the only regular and exact division of time then known in the world, besides day and night. They suppose also, that in *Job i. 6.* "the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord," was the sabbath, when pious families came to meet and worship God; for they are called sons of God, *Gen. vi. 2.* And there is reason to suppose that *Noah*, that just and holy man, might observe the sabbath in the ark; and on the sabbath send out the dove, hoping on that day, to find rest or relief from his tiresome, wandering voyage and imprisonment; for it is evident, that he divided his days by sevens in sending out this creature, *Gen. viii. 10, 12\**.

But

\* Besides former writers, doctor Hunt in his "Essay on revelation, &c. p. 46. is of this mind. Nor can



But suppose the bible were entirely silent on this subject; yet it may be justly remarked here, that as there is an express institution of a sabbath in the beginning of the bible, without any plain and uncontroverted example of the practice in the patriarchal ages, so in the first christian age, there are several plain examples of the practice of keeping the Lord's-day without any express institution of it in the new testament. But as from such christian examples we reasonably infer an institution, so from the antient institution, we as reasonably infer there were some patriarchal examples of the practice: But this is only a hint by the way.

Question. But may it not be reasonably supposed, as some writers have done, that *Moses* only mentions in the second chapter of *Genesis*, in the history of *Adam*, a certain sabbath by way of anticipation, which should be instituted in time to come among the *Jews*?

Answer 1. Can it be imagined, that in so short a history of the creation of the world, *Moses* should take such particular notice of a certain day, as blessed and sanctified by the creator, which should not be actually sanctified and blessed till two thousand and four hundred years afterwards? Could this be done only by way of anticipation?

2. Are not the finishing the creation and the institution of a sabbath expressly joined in close connexion, in both places of the *mosaic* history? And why should we not believe, that when "God rested on the seventh day from all his work, he blessed this seventh day, and sanctified it, at that very time?" *Gen.* ii. 2, 3. and *Exod.* xx. 11.

3. Did he bless and sanctify this day only for himself and his own rest? No surely, but for the rest of man, and to be kept holy by *Adam* and his posterity. "The sabbath was made for man," as our saviour expressly tells us, *Mark* ii. 27. And the reason given to man for the appointment of a sabbath, *viz.* God's resting from his works of creation, as it is expressed in the ii. of *Genesis*, is the same in the xx. of *Exodus*: And why then should we not suppose it to be given by God to *Adam*, as well as to the *Jews* by *Moses*? Yet again,

4. I ask leave to say, I can hardly persuade myself, that God ever left the world so many ages without so necessary, or at least so very important a means to preserve the true religion in it as the sabbath is. Any religion without some appointed seasons for the celebration of the rites of it, is in great danger of being lost and forgotten by the bulk of those who have learned it. Even all the false religions in the world that we know of, especially in every nation that is civilized, have some particular days or seasons set apart for the practice of some public ceremonies, or the performance of sacred things. The common light of reason shews men the necessity of it, where any religion is to be maintained; and why then should not the true religion enjoy the same advantage? Why should God be supposed so regardless of a matter of such importance? And I would add,

5. That even in very antient times, there was a knowledge of the sacredness of one day in seven among the heathens, who would not borrow their religion from the *Jews* whom they hated, and would never knowingly reverence any of their ceremonies; and therefore these heathen notices of it, and regards to it, must be originally derived from some more antient tradition of the divine institution of it. See the instances hereof in doctor *Owen* of the sabbath, page 74, &c. Days and nights, lunar months and solar years, are distinctions of nature, and therefore are in the general appearance and succession of them evident to all men by the sun, moon and stars; but

it be supposed here, that Noah by knowing the influence of the moon on the waters, sent out the dove at two succeeding distances of seven days: For he could never expect the waters to be abated from the face of the ground at the neap-tides, whatever he might do at the spring-tides; when as they rise the highest at the flood, they fall the lowest at the ebb.

but how the weekly period of just seven days should make it's entrance, can hardly be well accounted for, but by this tradition of a sabbath. The antient *Chaldeans* had this distinction of seven days, *Gen.* xxix. 27. "Fulfil her week, said *Laban* to *Jacob* at his marriage with *Leab*. And the *Philistines* had seven days festival at a wedding, *Judg.* xiv. 12, 15, 17. But the instances cited out of heathen writers, viz. *Homer*, *Hesiod*, *Callimachus*, &c. concerning their days divided by sevens, are much plainer, as well as concerning the sacredness of a seventh day.

The silence of scripture, or the doubtful notices of an actual observation of the sabbath by the patriarchs, are no sufficient proof that it was not observed: Or if they had forgot and lost it in any age, through the crimes and apostasy of their fathers, this does not prove it was not instituted at first to be always observed. The law of monogamy, or having but one wife, was lost among the patriarchs as well as the sabbath; and yet it was an original constitution from the beginning of the world. I will readily grant it very probable in some few ages before the flood, as well as in some ages after it, there was a degeneracy in this, as well as other parts of religion: The one day in seven might be lost among many nations, and it much wanted to be renewed among men.

PROPOSITION V. "As soon as God set apart a nation to be a peculiar church and people to himself in the world, he appointed again one day in seven for a day of rest and of public worship." If the day of rest was utterly lost, as probably it was among the slaveries of *Egypt* or before, yet what day God would have them keep for a sabbath was pointed out by the manna not falling. *Exod.* xvi. 23, 26. "The Lord hath said, to-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord. Six days shall ye gather it, but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, there shall be none." The notion of a sabbath seems to be mentioned here not as a new thing, or a thing utterly unknown, though the particular seventh day might be unknown and forgotten.

Let it be observed here, that in the appointment of the sabbath to the *Jews*, a day of rest seems to be the prime end of the institution; rest from labour seems to be the most obvious original design of it; this appears from the very name sabbath, which is a hebrew word and signifies rest. It appears also from the frequent repetition of the law of the sabbath peculiarly as a day of rest, both in the books of *Moses* and the writings of the prophets. See the words of the fourth commandment, *Exod.* xx. 8, 9, 10, 11. *Remember the sabbath-day to keep it holy: Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.* *Exod.* xxiii. 12. *Six days shalt thou do all thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest; that thy ox and thy ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger may be refreshed.* "And *Exod.* xxxi. 15. "the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord; whosoever doth any work on the sabbath day, shall surely be put to death." And in the lvi. and lix. chapters of *Isaiab*, "Promises of mercy are made to those who keep the sabbath from polluting it, and do not their own pleasure on the holy day of God." The *Jews* were sent into captivity for neglecting and profaning the sabbath-day, *Nebem.* xiii. 17, 18. And therefore in the history of *Nebemias's* reformation, after the return of the *Jews* from captivity in *Babylon*, you find frequent mention of his care, that they might rest from the labours of the week, and thus keep the sabbath. *Nebem.* xiii. 15, 16, 19, 21.

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The reason which is mentioned, *Exod. xx. 11.* for the institution of the sabbath, is, "because God rested from his work of creation on the seventh day." This was written on the tables of stone, and pronounced on mount *Sinai*. And in *Deut. v. 14, 15.* *Moses* gives another reason, *viz.* "because *Israel* was then delivered out of bondage, and rested from *egyptian* slavery. The Lord thy God brought thee out with a mighty hand, therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath-day." Thus it appears, that rest as a memorial of God's resting from his works of creation, and of *Israel's* rest and release from bondage, were the grand points kept in their view in the institution of their sabbath, or of the restoration of it to that people.

But the design of God herein was not that the *Jews* should wear away the day in lazy idleness; but since they rested and were released from common work, there were other sacred services appointed them; they were obliged to celebrate the worship of God: it was a day of holiness: "Remember the sabbath-day to keep it holy. God ordained on that day there should be a holy convocation or assembly, *Lev. xxiii. 3.* "The seventh day is a sabbath of rest, a holy convocation;" and therein the people were required to meet together for religious purposes, that is, to offer up prayers and praises to God. Thus saith the Lord in *Isa. lvi. 6, 7.* "Every one that keepeth my sabbath from polluting it, I will make them joyful in my house of prayer." And in *Acts xvi. 13.* "On the sabbath we went to a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made." And the *xcii. Psalm*, wherein God is greatly praised, is called "a psalm or song for the sabbath-day." The law also was to be read and explained on the sabbath, and all this not only at the tabernacle or temple, but in every place where they dwelt, *Lev. xxiii. 3.* "It is a holy convocation, ye shall do no work therein, it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings." And the scripture assures us, in following times this was constantly done, *Luke iv. 16.* "Jesus went into the synagogue, as his custom was, and stood up to read." verse 31. "He taught them on the sabbath-days." *Acts xiii. 21.* "The prophets are read every sabbath-day:" and *xv. 21.* *Moses* of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every sabbath-day." And this practice was perhaps more antient than some learned men allow for it. *Psalms lxxiv. 4, 8.* there is mention made of synagogues more than once.

There were also several sacrifices prescribed on that day expressly by *Moses*, *Numb. xxviii. 9, 10.* whereas there was one lamb offered morning and evening, every day, as a continual burnt-offering; "On the sabbath-day two lambs of the first year, and two tenth deals of flour and oil for a meat-offering, and drink-offering: This is the burnt-offering of every sabbath, besides the continual burnt-offering with it's meat and drink-offering."

Thus it is sufficiently proved, that both rest and worship were included among the designs of the sabbath, as renewed to the *Jews* by *Moses*.

PROPOSITION VI. "The *jewish* sabbath had many peculiarities in it, or a peculiar judaical holiness, which did not belong to a sabbath, before or after the *jewish* dispensation, and which made it a special part of their covenant at *Sinai*, or the political or national covenant between God and that people, which belonged to them chiefly, if not to them only." *Exod. xxxi. 13—17.* "Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep, &c. *Israel* shall keep the sabbath, it is a sign between me and you in all your generations."

We may give, for instance, these things following, which seem to be peculiarly appointed to the *Jews*, and to belong to the *jewish* sabbath, *viz.* That seventh day precisely, which indeed might be, or might not be, the same which the patriarchs had,

viz. the seventh from the creation; but that seventh day, or sabbath, which they should keep, was pointed out to them only by the manna withheld, *Exod. xvi. 23, 25*. Let me add here, the addition of numerous sabbaths, which were appointed them, besides the seventh day of every week, *Lev. xxiii*. And that absolute and universal rest, which was enjoined them on their sabbath, beyond what the necessity of the relief of nature, or the worship of God required, commemorates their resting from slavery, and may justly be reckoned the ceremonial holiness of the *jewish* sabbath; for there was contained in it a rigorous severity of abstinence from all common affairs, traffic and labours whatsoever, even for the conveniencies of life, *Exod. xxxi. 15*. Add also, the not making fires, or dressing victuals on that day, *Exod. xxxv. 3. and xvi. 23*. Not walking or travelling above one or two miles at most, which is called a sabbath-day's journey, *Exod. xvi. 29. Acts i. 12*. Not bearing any burthens whatsoever, *Jer. xvii. 21, 22*. The punishment of the profanation of the sabbath with death, *Exod. xxxi. 14. and xv. 35*. and the double sacrifice of lambs on that day, *Numb. xxviii. 9, 10*. These things, in their strict observance, do not belong to the natural and original law of God, they are not absolutely necessary either for giving due natural rest to creatures, or for the weekly worship of God, and improvement in religion; and therefore they may be reckoned among the peculiar laws of the *Jews*. As these things are plain scripture, so it would take up too much time to prove all this at present by citing particular texts at large.

PROPOSITION VII. "The new testament, or the dispensation of *Christ* by his apostles seems to have abolished every thing of the sabbath which was purely *jewish*, and which belonged to the ceremonial or the political laws given to the nation of *Israel* by *Moses*." This is the evident meaning of those texts wherein christians are forbid to subject themselves to the bondage of *jewish* rites and formalities, *Gal. iv. 3, 9, 10*. "When we were children, that is, in the state of *judaism*, we were in bondage under the elements of the world, that is, the rudiments and discipline of the *jewish* state; but when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son,—to redeem them that were under the law.—But, now, after that ye have known God, in the revelation of the gospel, how turn ye again to those weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days and months, and times and years," that is, the *mosaical* appointments concerning all their sabbath-days, and new moons, and sabbatical years, which were appointed to the *Jews*. To the same purpose speaks the same apostle to the *Colossians*, chapter ii. verses 14, 16, 17. "that God, or *Christ*, had blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances which was against us, and took it out of the way:—Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy-day, in greek a festival, or of the new moons, or of the sabbath-days, in greek sabbaths, of which the law of *Moses* had many besides the seventh day of the week, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of *Christ*." And verse 20. he speaks here in the same language which he uses to the *Galatians*, "Ye christians are dead with *Christ* from the rudiments of the world." The *jewish* manner of observation of the several sabbaths appointed in the law of *Moses*, with all these rigors and severities mentioned in the last proposition, is a mark of the state of the childhood of the church under strict discipline, and of the bondage of it under a yoke of ceremonies and numerous prescribed forms; but under the gospel or new testament, the church is grown to a maturer age, as the apostle, *Gal. iv.* describes it; and therefore christians are released from such yokes of bondage; and the apostle forbids christians to return to them again, but charges them to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith *Christ* hath made them free," *Gal. v. 1*. Now that it is the sabbaths and festivals of the *Jews* only

ly which are here abrogated, appears from the words used both in the epistles to the *Galatians* and *Colossians*, which describe their sacred-times, festivals, new-moons, sabbatical years, &c. But the original sabbath-day, as appointed to the patriarchs, is not expressed or included therein; for that was out of sight here, being not the matter of contest or imposition.

PROPOSITION VIII. "Notwithstanding the abolition of all the *jewish* sabbaths, and of that rigorous observance of an absolute rest on the seventh or sabbath-day; yet under the christian dispensation one day in seven, that is, the first day of the week, has been always observed from the beginning as a day of assembling for pious and religious purposes; and it is very reasonably supposed, to be appointed by *Christ* himself." Christians under the liberty of the gospel, are not to suppose themselves released from the stated returns of a day of worship. When the *jewish* dispensation ended, the paradisiacal command seems still in force to all the race of *Adam*. Yokes of bondage were broken, but natural religion and moral laws are of everlasting obligation. Christians must have a day to worship their God as well as the patriarchs; and therefore they must rest from the common works of men.

The evidences which persuade us of the truth of this practice among the first christians are such as these.

1. On the very day of the resurrection of *Christ*, the disciples were assembled, probably for worship, with the doors shut for fear of the *Jews*: This was the first day of the week, and *Jesus* came and stood in the midst of them," *John* xx. 19. and he pronounced his peace upon them, convinced them of his resurrection, repeated his commission to them, breathed on them, and said, "receive ye the holy Ghost;" and as he took all occasions to instruct them, so no doubt he gave them larger instructions and exhortations about the things which concerned his kingdom and gospel on this first christian sabbath, than the short history of the evangelists could well repeat, *John* xx. 19—23. As soon as the Lord rose from the dead, he became their preacher on this glorious day, and blessed the whole assembly.

2. The very next first day of the week, that is, after eight days inclusively, the disciples were met together again, and *Thomas* was with them, when *Jesus* appeared to them, gave them farther proofs of his resurrection, with suitable remarks on the unbelief of *Thomas*. And doubtless, he spake many other words to them, as well as wrought many other signs in their presence, after his resurrection, as in *John* xx. 30.

3. "The apostles and other brethren were met together on the day of *Pentecost* in one place, when they were all filled with the holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance," *Acts* ii. 1—4. Now by an easy computation of *Pentecost*, which is seven weeks, or fifty days from the passover, it is justly supposed by learned men, that this also was the first day of the week, when the Spirit fell on the disciples, and the gospel was preached to great multitudes, and three thousand souls were converted to the faith, as it is recorded in *Acts* ii. 14, 41. Blessed success of the word preached on that same first day of the week when the Spirit was given! These actions and blessings seem to prepare the way for the apostolic appointment of the first day of the week, though it was not then publicly appointed.

4. We are informed also, that *St. Paul* observed this day, *Acts* xx. 7. "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together at *Troas* to break bread, *Paul* preached to them." This coming together on the first day must probably be an apostolic appointment, and is recorded as a customary practice.

It is granted indeed, that the apostle went often to the synagogues and places of worship on the *jewish* sabbath, to teach the people the gospel, because that was the

chief opportunity that he could have of addressing a great many persons at once, and of giving particular instructions to the *Jews*, his kinsmen after the flesh; but when christians who were not *Jews* nor judaizing, came together to worship, it was usually, if not always on the first day of the week, so far as appears in scripture.

In this and the following particular we justly suppose the greek words *μία τῶν σαββάτων* to signify the "first day of the week." - But if it should signify what some would have it, the first of the two sabbaths, thence it is evident that there were two days accounted sabbaths; the seventh day by the *Jews* and judaizing christians, and the first by the pure and more complete christians: And as the *jewish* converts were very hardly brought off from every judaical rite and ceremony, there was a connivance or permission during the standing of the temple and *jewish* polity, to indulge many *mosaical* rites as part of their civil or political law: so that the *jewish* christians might have two sabbaths, *viz.* the seventh day and the first; though the first only for the pure christians.

5. St. Paul gives order concerning a "collection for the saints, upon the first day of the week; at least, that every one should lay by him in store according as God had prospered him; and this same order he gave to the churches of *Galatia*, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. Now their public meetings on this day gave them more conveniency of gathering their charity, than on any other. Besides, the word *ἐκκαλιζέω* may intimate a weekly collection; for it was designed to prevent collections when Paul came. And it was on the old sabbath or seventh day on which collections were made in the *jewish* synagogues; for the giving of alms was ever reckoned a proper duty for the sabbath; and the apostle seemeth hereby to transfer the duties of the *jewish* sabbath to the first day of the week.

6. The religious observation of the first day of the week among christians was so general and well known, that so early as in the days of the apostle *John* it acquired a honourable title, and was called the Lord's-day. This name of honour, was given in scripture to nothing else, but the Lord's-supper and Lord's-day. Then it was also that *John* was favoured with the prophetic spirit, *Rev.* i. 10. "I was in the spirit on the Lord's-day," and he had the visions of *Christ* in his glory, and the discovery of things to come. This is called the Lord's-day, as relating to the honour of *Christ*, and to his appointment, as the Lord's-supper obtained that name, from it's reference to the appointment and honour of our blessed saviour, 1 Cor. x. 21, 22. and xi. 20. Here it may be proper to enquire, what good reason can be given, why in all these appearances of *Christ*, and meetings and transactions before-mentioned, there should be such particular notice taken by the holy writers, on what day of the week they were done, if it were not to point out a christian sabbath to us? We do not find the third or fourth, fifth, or sixth day of the week mentioned for worship, or any other transactions in the new testament, as I remember; Nothing but the Lord's-day or the *jewish* sabbath are specified; one when the *Jews* worshipped, and the other when the christians met for worship.

7. The primitive writers give us a clear account of the usual observation of this first day of the week by those who professed the christian religion; and they were known and distinguished from the heathens as well as from the *Jews*, by this particular character of observing the Lord's-day. It would be too tedious in this place to cite all the testimonies of *Ignatius*, *Justin Martyr*, *Theophilus of Antioch*, *Clemens of Alexandria*, *Tertullian*, and others\*, which give us an account of this matter of fact in the second and third ages of christianity; and they speak of it as a very early custom or practice, if not from the beginning of the christian church, as planted by the apostles

\* See the appendix to this first discourse.

stles, even while they expressly renounced the *jewish* sabbatizing. Now from all these matters of fact put together, we may derive two good remarks toward the support of the observation of the Lord's day as a christian duty.

Remark I. Apostolical practice, and the custom of the primitive churches, when joined together, are in themselves a good direction to the conscience of christians under any difficulty. When the apostle *Paul* seems to find it difficult to give sufficient evidence of the duty of a woman's wearing long hair, and a man wearing of shorter, so as to satisfy the scruples and consciences of christians, observe what he says, "if any man seem to be contentious, let this determine these lesser disputable points, that we the apostles of *Christ*, have no such custom for men to wear long hair, nor the churches of God in the world," 1 *Cor.* xi. 16. And why should not apostolical and primitive custom be a sufficient direction for our practice in regard to a sabbath, where clearer discoveries of duty are wanting?

Remark II. The custom of primitive churches supported by the apostles practice, makes it appear probable, that the observation of the Lord's-day was a divine institution, and that it was the will of our Lord *Jesus Christ* himself, manifested to his apostles, who were the prime ministers of his kingdom.

Is it not highly probable, that this early and general practice was derived from the authority of *Christ*, who after his resurrection, continued forty days on earth, and was often assembled with the apostles, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, *Acts* i. 3? Was not the observation of such a day necessary to his kingdom, that is, to the institution and support of his visible church?

Is it not also unreasonable to suppose, that the apostles, who received their commission from *Christ*, to teach the nations to observe whatsoever he commanded them, *Matth.* xxviii. 20. should so zealously pronounce all the *jewish* sabbaths abolished, in so many places, and such express language, as *St. Paul* does; and that they should so frequently practise and encourage the assembling together on the first day of the week, as a day of christian worship, if they had received no hint of any order, or particular commission, or so much as a direction from *Christ Jesus*, their Lord, for both these things? In the Lord's-supper *St. Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, that he received from the Lord what he delivered to them, 1 *Cor.* xi. 23. And why should we not believe also concerning the Lord's-day, that he received of the Lord the appointment of this first day for christian worship, which he seems to have delivered to the churches where he preached?

It is granted that none of these considerations before mentioned, if taken separately, will prove the duty of observing the Lord's-day, yet all joined together, are sufficient to direct our practice, where we have not clearer light. I grant also, that all these considerations here proposed, do not amount to a direct and plain institution of the Lord's-day; but the united force of them all goeth so far toward the proof of such an institution, that renders it highly probable: And where inferences and probabilities are so many and weighty, they must determine our conduct in a thousand affairs of human life, if we would act like reasonable creatures.

PROPOSITION IX. "If one day in seven be appointed in the new testament for christian assemblies, and religious worship, it is most highly expedient, if not necessary, that it should be a day of rest from the common labours of this life." It is certain, the very hours, or minutes, spent in the outward exercises of christian worship, must necessarily be free from earthly business; we cannot in this respect actually serve God and this world at once, nor mingle our solemnities of worship with earthly cares and labours. This is granted on all hands.

Yet

Yet some think the sabbath itself begins and ends with the public worship; whereas it is sufficiently evident, that unless the whole day be separated from earthly affairs, and labours, and pleasures, the hours and minutes of worship will be, for the most part, but poorly improved, and will become much less profitable to our spiritual interest. It is hardly possible to attain the highest and best ends of christian worship, of preaching and hearing, of praying and praising, and celebrating of the Lord's-supper, if we come into the sanctuary with our heads and hearts full of the affairs of this life, and with all our earthly cares buzzing about our minds. How much less good will a sermon do us, if when the hour of worship is ended, we run immediately from God into worldly business, without giving our thoughts leisure and leave to reflect on what we have heard? What poor proficients shall we be in the school of *Christ*, if we plunge ourselves all over into the cares and businesses of this world, as soon as ever we have heard the blessing pronounced, and the assembly is separated? And much worse would it be, if we spent the rest of the day in recreations and sports; for these carnalize the spirit, and estrange it from God and things heavenly, more than the common labours of life.

Again, let it be considered, what multitudes there are among mankind, who have very little relish for religion, and have as little opportunity of retirement from the world, and meditating on the things of God and eternity. On the six days of the week, they are ever labouring. How very necessary then is the cessation from earthly affairs, to allow them due leisure to mind the important concerns of religion? Cut off the sabbath's-hours of rest and leisure from them, and you cut off both opportunity and encouragement from godliness: And under such disadvantages, it must be some very extraordinary influences from God, that must change such poor, earthly and sensual creatures to a spiritual and heavenly temper of soul, must bring them to the saving knowledge of God, and *Jesus Christ* his Son, and make them his disciples. As bad as the world is now, it would be much worse, if there were no observation of a sabbath-day, or weekly rest, no Lord's-day among us, even though there were a weekly sermon or two preached in public assemblies.

I might even venture to leave the decision of this controversy to the consciences of all that are truly religious in our nation: Blessed be God! there is a day separated by the ruling powers of this kingdom from the businesses of this life, and that earthly labours are not suffered to intermingle themselves with the work of religion, so as to prevent or destroy the chief design for which that day is appointed. Tell me, ye devout souls, even ye best of christians, tell me, how difficult a matter do you find it to cast off all the cares and concerns of this world intirely, when you come into the presence of God, to celebrate his public worship? Though the whole day be appointed for God and religion, yet how hard is it to shake off all the dust of this earth, and to disengage yourselves from the bonds and burdens of it, when you would ascend to heaven in devotion? Though you have bid farewell to your secular concerns the night before, and have had a long interval of sleep to divide your thoughts from this vain and busy life, yet how do the crowding cares of it press in upon you, and hang continually upon your spirits, or the trifles and amusements of it hover and play about your souls, and how wretchedly do they divert your hearts from the exercises of godliness, and sadly interrupt those very acts of worship in which you are engaged? Though you have a day allotted for this very purpose, and time to compose your thoughts before-hand, yet how very difficult a thing has it been to secure to your souls one hour together of complete absence and abstinence from all that is carnal and earthly?

But



But how much harder would it be to fulfil the duties of the sanctuary with any good success, to improve public worship to your further acquaintance with God, and things heavenly, to your greater delight in him, to the mortification of sin, and growth of holiness, if there were no time devoted to religion, but merely that hour or two in morning, or afternoon, while you are at church? How would the words of the preacher run off from your souls, like a stream of oil gliding over a marble, if there were no recollection to fix it in your memory? How easily would *Satan* pluck up the good seed that was sown in the heart, if you join and assist him, by giving a loose immediately to the cares and delights of this life, and call them to break in upon you at the end of the sermon? How would all your good thoughts and holy desires vanish away like a cloud, and ascend and be lost like a vapour, or the morning dew?

A day of rest from the pleasures and toils of this life is necessary to render divine worship more effectual to our sanctification and salvation. We should therefore quit our heads and hands of worldly cares that day, that we may more easily converse with God and our own souls, and by secret and public devotion may be the better prepared for each other, in their turns, and improve more in religion by both of them. We may reasonably conclude then, if *Christ* appointed the first day of the week for a season of the worship of God, he appointed it also to be a season of rest from the concerns and labours of this life, that his worship might be better performed, and the great ends of it be best secured.

If it be enquired here, "Why the first day of the seven was appointed for the christian sabbath, rather than any of the others?" It is usually answered, and with good reason, that when God rested from his work of creation, he appointed the seventh day for the antient sabbath, to keep in mind the creator of the world; and so when *Christ* rested from his works of redemption, he might appoint the first day, even the day, on which he arose from the grave, as most proper to keep the great work of our redemption in memory. That the first day of the week was observed by the apostles, and first christians, in honour of the resurrection of *Christ*, is evident from it's being called by a new and honourable name, the Lord's-day, as well as from other hints of scripture, and many plain and express assertions in the history of the primitive church.

You will say, why should not his birth, or his death, be as much a reason for pointing out a new sabbath, as his resurrection?

I answer, because neither the day of his birth, or his death, have such a name, or such honours put on it, as that of his resurrection: no apostles or churches have recommended it by their practice or example.

Besides there are very great and learned men, who suppose that the apostle *Paul*, in the fourth chapter to the *Hebrews*, proves a christian sabbath on this principle of *Christ*'s finishing his work of redemption, and his rising from the dead, verse 4.

"He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, and God did rest the seventh day from all his works, verse 7. Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in *David*, to day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; for if *Jesus*, that is, *Joshua*, had given them rest, that is, if he had given them all that complete rest in the land of *Canaan*, which was typified by the *jewish* sabbath, then he would not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest, or sabbatism, as the greek word is, there remaineth the keeping of a sabbath to the people of God; for he that is entered into his rest, which they refer to *Jesus Christ*, in his work of redemption, he hath also ceased, or rested, from his own works, as God slid from his." See doctor *Owen*, in his treatise of the sabbath\*. Thus the Son of

\* I do not pretend to enter into this debate, or to support the argument drawn from the fourth of the *Hebrews*, as sufficient to prove the christian sabbath; yet so many congruities between the creation and redemption, in this respect, deserve our notice.

God, the redeemer, is supposed to have appointed a day, or sabbath, to celebrate his rest from his labours and sufferings, as God the Father, the creator, did, when he rested from his works.

I might add here also, that as the redemption, or rest from *egyptian* bondage, given them by God, and *Moses*, is mentioned in *Deut. v. 15.* as one reason of the *jewish* sabbath; so our greater redemption by *Christ*; or rest from the bondage of sin and *Satan*, being on this day completed, seems to be a proper reason for a christian sabbath.

Consider also, that our redemption from sin and hell was typified by the *Jews* redemption from *Egypt*, and as the type had it's commemorative day of rest appointed, so should the antitype have it's day of commemorative rest also.

Besides, it is worthy of our notice, that by appointing the first day of the seven for a sabbath, after the seventh day was abolished, there remains still one day in seven, to perpetuate the memory of the creation, and it is the first day of the seven, to perpetuate the memory of the work of redemption; Thus our Lord's-day includes both. And by the appointment of the first day also, it comes to pass, that as soon as ever the *jewish* sabbath was ended, and buried with *Christ* in the grave, the christian sabbath arises, when he arose from the dead. The first day of the week is consecrated to God, and if duly celebrated, will spread a blessing over the following week, as the first-fruits did upon all the harvest; though we must remember that any public promulgation or injunction of it upon christians, does not appear till a considerable time afterwards, and even this is manifested chiefly by example.

PROPOSITION X. Upon the whole survey of things, it seems highly probable, "that there is some sort of sabbath, or one day in seven divinely appointed for the rest of man, and for the worship of his God, which has run through all the dispensations both before and after *Moses*, and must remain to the end of the world\*:" which will appear if we look back and consider,

1. The time of the first notice, and appointment of a sabbath, and the persons to whom it was given." It was in paradise, as soon as man was made: God having formed the world, and it's inhabitants, in six days, and rested the seventh, he distinguished the days of the year into weeks, and claimed one day in seven for his own worship, as well as gave it unto *Adam* for his rest, or release from earthly business. He sanctified it and blessed it, he separated it for the purposes of rest and worship, and pronounced a blessing upon it, and upon them that observed it. Now there is as much reason, and as much need for all the sons of *Adam*, in all ages and nations, in their feeble and sinful state, to have a day appointed for their own rest, and for the worship of their God, as there was for *Adam* himself in paradise, and in a state of innocence; for his body was then in perfection of health and vigour, and his mind more inclined to remember God, and worship him.

2. "The original reason that is given for one day in seven to be sanctified, seems to confirm the perpetuity of it, *viz.* God's own rest from his work of creating the world in six days. The sabbath was given to man, to put him in mind of the creation of the world by the true God; and to do honour to God the creator; but all mankind, in all ages, should preserve this in memory, and the continual return of a seventh day of rest is an everlasting memorial of it, and gives new opportunities continually for paying this homage to that almighty being that made us, and this habitable world.

3. "The

\* Though I have inserted most of the following particulars in a sermon on the Lord's-day, published among many others; yet I thought it necessary to repeat the chief substance of them here also, because they are necessary to complete the argument.

3. "The place which this command of the sabbath bears in the law of God, when it was renewed and enjoined to the nation of *Israel*, doth," in the opinion of most divines, add considerable weight to this argument. It is one of the commands of the moral law, which was pronounced by the mouth of God himself on *Sinai*, with much glory and terror: It stands amongst those laws which are generally conceived to be moral and perpetual, except in some small limitations and accommodations to the *jewish* state: It was written with the rest in tables of stone, which perhaps in that typical dispensation might denote perpetuity, and that it must last, like a rock, for ever. It was written by the finger of God himself, which gives a peculiar honour to it; and it was laid up in the ark of the covenant, on which God dwelt in a bright cloud, or a blaze of glory behind the cloud, and thus it was put under God's own eye and care. These considerations carry some weight in them, though I must confess, I do not build my opinion and practice chiefly on the fourth commandment.

4. "Consider the actual observance of one day in seven for christian worship, as appears by the practice of the apostles, and the church, from the earliest days of it, even when the *jewish* ceremonies, and their absolute rest, in all the rigours and severities of it, were abolished." This is another probable proof, at least, of the appointment of the christian sabbath by our blessed Lord, to be observed by his church, as I argued before.

5. "The reasonableness, if not the necessity, of such appointment, in order to keep up religion in the world, as well as to give rest to the animal bodies of men and beasts, adds further proof of the morality or perpetuity of it." The seasons of worship which men would have chosen, and even of natural rest which some men would have allowed, would probably have been short and few enough, if God had not always devoted one day in seven to these purposes.

It is evident in common experience, and by observation made upon persons, and churches, and nations, that where no sabbath is observed, that is, where one day in seven is not separated to God, by a rest from the usual labours of life, and a dedication to his service, religion is in a very decaying state, and in great danger to be lost. As it is a common confession of persons, who fall into the vilest crimes, and are executed by the public justice of the magistrate, that their disregard of the sabbath, was the beginning of their guilt and ruin, and made way to all iniquity; so a careful observation of one day in seven, for religious purposes, has been the great spring and support of virtue and piety amongst mankind, and the constant guardian of it, in it's purity and power.

And there is reason to believe, that the nations before the flood, as well as for many ages after it, had not run into such universal corruption, such a forgetfulness of the true God, and such vile idolatry, if they had not neglected and lost that one day in seven, which God appointed from the beginning, to be observed in memory of the creation of the world by himself, in six days.

6. I know not whether it be improper to add in the last place, "that the spiritual or prophetic signification of the sabbath, or of this appointed day for rest and worship, seems to run through every dispensation of God to men." There seems to be an emblematical promise contained in it, that is, a heavenly rest promised by God to man, after his labours and services here on earth, and an everlasting day of final joy and worship in his own presence; and this both under the covenant of innocency made with *Adam* in paradise, and under the covenant of grace made with fallen man.

in every dispensation of it. The language which the apostle uses in the iv. chapter to the *Hebrews*, seems to denote thus much, *viz.* That a sabbath-day, to commemorate God's ceasing from his works of creation, was appointed to be observed by the seed of *Israel*, as a figure, pledge and promise of the land of *Canaan*, where the *Jews* should have rest, not only from the bondage of *Egypt*, but from their tiresome travels in the wilderness: And yet further it was a token and pledge of the rest which christians would enjoy under the gospel, that is, a release from the bondage of sin, as well as a figure of the final rest in the heavenly state, which all the people of God should be partakers of in the world to come. Now since the promise of this heavenly rest, and glorious state of divine worship, is not yet accomplished, I have not yet met with sufficient reason why one day of worship and rest, after six days of labour, which is a figure and emblem of it, should entirely cease. There are some figures and emblems in every dispensation, till all the graces and blessings signified thereby are fulfilled.

Now, if all these considerations put together, will but go so far as to make it highly probable, that one day in seven has been always the proportion of time which God has appointed for a sabbath, that is, for rest from labour, and for divine worship, this probability, as to the time and manner of a duty, should go for evidence, where no further evidence can be procured, and where the duty itself seems clear and certain. And since some rest from labour, and some seasons for worship are necessary, we cannot do a more reasonable thing, than to separate that proportion of time, which the wisdom of God has certainly separated in some of his dispensations to men, and most probably in all of them: Nor can we chuse a fitter day than that, which, by very probable reasons, is recommended to us by the example of the apostles, and primitive churches, when all *jewish* sabbaths are entirely abolished.

Yet here I ask leave to make this remark, That though both rest and worship run through the law of the sabbath in all ages; yet by diligent reading the old testament, and the history and laws of the *Jews*, we find that rest from their own labours, and business, and pleasures, on the seventh day, is the grand point kept chiefly in view, in the commands and threatenings relating to the sabbath, and that not only as an advantage to spiritual worship, but as being in itself the most noted and visible part of their sabbatizing. But in the new testament, assembling for christian worship, is most frequently represented as the design of the first day of the week, or Lord's-day. Which, of these two, is most noted and visible in the original and paradisaical sabbath, is doubtful.

Now, may it not be inferred, that the *Jews* were required to worship God on their sabbath, because God had appointed it a day of rest from labour; and that christians should rest from their labour on their Lord's-day, because God has appointed it a day of worship. And perhaps this may be one reason, why the rest, or release from work, on the *jewish* sabbath, was more strict and absolute, as being a ceremony primarily in view, or at least most express and obvious in the command: But in the christian sabbath, or Lord's-day, worship being the primary design of it, no more rest is necessary, than may attain the best ends and advantages of christian worship\*, and that will be such sufficient relief or rest for animal nature, as was designed from the beginning, and made perpetual.

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\* Though worship be the chief design, yet I do not pretend, that actual worship should fill up the whole day; but the best ends and advantages of worship, cannot be obtained, where there is not a day of rest from the businesses and labours of human life, as I have shewn before.

The *jewish* state, was the childish age of the church, as St. Paul to the *Galatians* represents, chapter iv. the christian dispensation, is it's more mature age: Now children are trained up in religion, by being brought early into the public assemblies of worship first to teach them to sit still, and rest from labour, and from play and bodily exercises; but when they grow up to mature years, they learn and practise the worship of God in public assemblies. In younger childhood, the chief design of their observation of a sabbath, or their coming to church, is a separation or abstinence from the things of the world: In their growing years, and riper age, it is, that they may honour and glorify their creator and redeemer.

I confess, this is but a similitude, but, it is borrowed from St. Paul's description of the *jewish* and christian states: yet, to confirm this general remark, I would take notice, that the *jewish* day for worship and rest is always called the sabbath, which signifies rest: The day for christian rest and worship is never called a sabbath in scripture, but the first day, or the Lord's-day, to denote it's reference to our risen Lord, and his honour.

Here are several questions which arise on this subject, but I shall only give a brief answer to three or four of them here.

Question I. Since it is granted, that at the abolition of *judaism*, the paradisiacal or patriarchal command for observing the sabbath in general abides still in force, and since the seventh day from the creation was appointed in the same original command, why does not that abide in force too? And why is not the seventh day the only true sabbath, now as well as it was in the days of the patriarchs, or from the beginning of the world?

Answer I. We can never find with certainty, which is the seventh day from the creation; and God would never make it a necessary duty to observe such a day which is impossible to be found out.

It is generally granted, that the seventh-day sabbath was lost under the *egyptian* bondage, if not for many ages before: Now if there was so great an interruption, I think it is hard to be proved, that the *jewish* sabbath\* was the seventh day from the creation of the world: this is often made a doubt and matter of dispute in this controversy. Some learned men, by exact calculations have pretended to find, that the sabbath which God discovered and marked out for their future observation by providing a double quantity of manna the day before, was really the sixth day of the week, and not the seventh from the creation. And if so, then christians who keep the Lord's-day are actually returned to the antient paradisiacal or patriarchal sabbath, that is, the last day of the week of the creation †.

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\* Though the *jewish* sabbath may be called sometimes the seventh day, this can only mean the day of rest after six days of labour, which is the constant sense of it; but not the very seventh day on which God rested, and which he sanctified for a sabbath to Adam in paradise.

† Mr. Joseph Mede, that very learned Writer, in the last age, discourses on the sabbath, from *Exek. xx. 20.* "Hallow my sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between me and you, to acknowledge that I *Jebovah* am your God." And here he supposes, that as in the *xx. of Exodus*, the creation of the world in six days, and God's resting on the seventh, is given as the reason why the *Jews* were appointed to keep one day in seven; so in the *v. of Deuteronomy*, their deliverance from *Egypt*, and their rest from bondage, was the reason why they were required to keep that particular day for their sabbath, whether it were the seventh from the creation or no. Scripture no where tells us it was so, though men take it for granted. Certain I am, saith he, the *Jews* kept not that day for a sabbath till the raining of manna: And when it had rained manna six days together, it rained none on the seventh, which was the twenty-second day of the second month, and thus they were commanded to keep for their sabbath. Now if the twenty-second day of the month were the sabbath, the fifteenth should have been so too, if that day had been kept before as the seventh from the creation: But the text tells us plainly, *Exod. xvi. 1.* that they marched a wearisome march on that day, and this by God's own appointment, that

Whether these calculations of days, which I have here represented from the writings of learned men are just or no, yet still it seems that men of learning, even in our age, are not all agreed, and cannot certainly teach us, which was the true seventh day, or the sabbath of *Adam* and the patriarchs before *Moses*: And if it cannot be certainly known by the learned, it can never be known by the bulk of mankind, and therefore it is impossible to be observed; nor would God command all men to practise, what cannot be known, by the greatest part of them?

Do we not esteem it a sufficient reason against the absolute necessity of the succession of bishops, or ministers, in a right line from the apostles, that this line of consecration and succession, by running through all the ages of popery, and the contests of two or three popes at one time, has been so broken, that it can never be certainly known; and therefore such a sort of ecclesiastical succession and consecration, can never be absolutely necessary to furnish the christian church with ministers or holy ordinances? Now if this reason be good, in the case of persons who celebrate divine worship, why should it not be good also in cases relating to the time or day of divine worship?

On the other hand, the true day of the resurrection of *Christ* on the first day of the week, has certainly been conveyed down to us, by the christian churches without interruption: And since, there are no such doubts about this day, as are about the seventh day after the creation, why should we not rather keep that day, which has so much encouragement and countenance in the new testament, and may certainly be known by us?

Answer 2. But I add yet further, that the observation of one day in seven for rest and for worship, seems to be so far of a moral nature, as to be of perpetual obligation; as I have before proved: for it hath a necessary and very important influence, both toward the honour of the great God, and the temporal and spiritual welfare of mankind, to keep one day in a short rotation or compass of time; and because man could not find out the due proportion, God himself had manifested it from the beginning of the world: But that this should always be precisely the seventh day from  
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that is, by the leading cloud; and therefore it is plain they did not keep it as a sabbath. Now since the beginning of their year was altered for a memorial of their coming out of *Egypt*, Exod. xii. 2. why might not their day of holy rest also be altered for a memorial of the same mercy? And thus God, as the creator of the world, and as their redeemer from the land of bondage, had his proper memorial of both in the *jewish* sabbath, even *Jehovah* their creator and redeemer.

There is a learned author has written a treatise, 1683. whose running title is, "The patriarchal sabbath;" and he also, by computation drawn from the xvi. chapter of *Exodus*, says, "As God at the institution of the passover appointed that month to be the first to the *Israelites*, which was not the first in respect of the creation, so he purposed to change the beginning of the week to the *Israelites*, and appoint that day their seventh, which was the sixth in the patriarchal account. And he left a plain note or character upon it perhaps he means, the with-holding the manna page 99. And in page 186. he says, "all communion with heathens is pathetically forbidden to the *Jews*, lest they should by that means be drawn to idolatry; and therefore, we have less reason to wonder that God should appoint the *Jews* another day for their weekly sabbath, than that which was instituted at first to all mankind, when the gentiles had perverted the consecration of that day to the worship of the sun. And for the like reason, the christian church changed the name of *Sunday* into that of the Lord's-day, that she might secure her children from the opinion of the heathen world, that it was in honour of the planet of the sun."

But besides this, he adds, page 188. "The more special reason of God's appointing the *Saturday* for their sabbath, was because *Saturday* was the first day of rest they had from *egyptian* bondage: For they marched from *Rameses* on *Friday* the fifteenth day of the first month, and set up their booths at *Succoth* on *Saturday*, which I suppose this author takes to be too laborious a work for a sabbath; and that therefore *Saturday* could not be the ancient sabbath, but the next day they rested there.

The learned doctor *Wallis*, in his controversy with mr. *Bampfield* on this subject in 1692. and 1694. says, "whether this new seventh day from the first raining of manna, be the same with that from the creation, no man can tell; but there is six to one odds, that it is not." And doctor *N. Homes* in 1673. wrote an essay to prove that our Lord's-day, is the same day of the week, which was the ancient patriarchal sabbath,

the creation, carries no such necessity in it, nor does nature or scripture tell us so; and it is beyond the power of my reason, to find out the morality of it, or what necessary influence it has toward the honour of God, or the welfare of man; and therefore I cannot see, that it is of perpetual obligation, or that it is unchangeable. And though God might once command it to the *Jews*, or to *Adam* and the patriarchs; yet he might make a change of it upon any proper occasion.

Since therefore, we christians obey the command of keeping one day in seven for rest and worship, which seems to be moral; and since in the mere nature of things there seems to be as good reason to observe the first day of the week in honour of our Lord's resurrection, and our redemption from sin and hell, as the patriarchs had to keep the seventh in imitation of God's resting from creation, or the *Jews* keeping their sabbath to commemorate their deliverance and rest from *egyptian* bondage; and further, since it was the direction and example of the apostles, and seems to be the most general opinion and practice, of the primitive christians and churches, to keep this day; I think our reasonings on this side are the strongest and most weighty.

There is, so far as I can find, no plain proof in all the new testament, of christians \* keeping the seventh day as a sabbath, after the christian dispensation began at *Pentecost*, *Acts* ii. and since the honours due to God for the creation of the world, as well as for the redemption by his Son, are paid to him one day in seven, by our resting and worshipping on that day, in conformity to apostolic example; we think the first day of the week bids much fairer for our observance, than the sabbath of the *Jews*.

But to make it yet plainer, that the keeping of the seventh day of the week has no morality in it, let us enquire whether there are not some cases, wherein it is impossible to be precisely observed, even though it were once known: As for instance,

If a nation kept their sabbath on the seventh day by supposed divine appointment, and a fleet of their ships should be sent round the world, travelling towards the west, this would make their days longer; and as they would find fewer days in compassing the globe, so they would find their own sixth day to be the sabbath of their nation at their return home. Or suppose they should travel towards the east, their days would be shorter and more in number, and they would find their own eighth, or first day of the week, to be the nation's public sabbath at their return. Now if either the first or last day of the week appear to have any thing moral in them, surely it ought to be observed: And thus in the nation there would be three sabbaths kept, *viz.* the *Friday* by those who went westward, the *Sunday* by those who went eastward, and the *Saturday* by those who tarried at home. And by another such voyage, the eastern travellers would bring their sabbath to *Monday*, and the western to *Thursday*. Can we think that the moral law of God requires this diversity of sabbaths?

Is it a moral command to the eastern travellers, that they should keep their seventh day, which is the eighth to the inhabitants of the nation? Is it a moral duty to the western travellers to keep their seventh, which is the sixth to all the nation besides? And if it were a moral duty, would it be lawful for either of them to resign

\* Some have supposed, that the apostle's argument in *Heb.* iv. it implies the seventh day sabbath observed by some christians. I have searched into that text, and I think *Paul's* argument is very good without that supposition. But if it be granted, that *Heb.* iv. intimates the *jewish* sabbath to be kept, it is only by converted *Jews*; and let it be remembered, that these *jewish* christians were very long a wearing from *judaism*.

sign their pretences to the custom of the nation when they came home, and to change their day? One day in seven may be moral, because it may be observed by all the dwellers and travellers round the earth; but the seventh day from the creation cannot be so, and therefore is not unchangeable.

Perhaps it will be replied here, does not this difficulty and uncertainty fall as hard and heavy on the first day of the week as it does on the seventh?

I answer; By no means, for I bring it only to prove, that the very seventh day of the creation is not a moral law: Now we do not pretend, that the first day is of a moral nature, but is a mere positive appointment; and since we find out that, rather by the custom of the churches and apostles, than by express words of scripture; so I would follow the custom of the churches also in any such difficulty, where the first day should be lost or become doubtful, since it is not a duty of the moral law, and it's institution by *Christ*, is not so express and evident, as could be desired.

I own I lay not much stress upon such geographical arguments about the change of the day by travellers; but I had a mind to shew, that God would not lay much stress upon such a changeable point, and that this change of the day to travellers, does not so much affect the christian Lord's-day, as it does the seventh day from the creation, if the one be insisted on as a moral law and unchangeable, and the other does not pretend to such a morality and unchangeableness.

Question II. If the christian sabbath depend on the command in paradise, as to the proportion of one day in seven, why did it not immediately take place upon the abolition of all *jewish* sabbatisms? And why was not this plain and original reason given for it by the apostles? And if the day was changed from the seventh to the first, what reason can be given, why the *Jews* did not raise a violent opposition to it, at it's first institution, who never failed to oppose every thing of that kind, contrary to the *mosaic* law? And why did christians themselves keep the seventh day, which it is plain from church-history, that many of them did long after the pretended institution of the first day.

Answer. I join all these questions in one, because I think one answer will serve for them all.

Though the original reason of a sabbath was the command in paradise, yet that idea had been probably lost before the days of *Moses*, and for many ages since it had been as it were overwhelmed with the various sabbatisms of the *Jews*, and the ceremonies depending thereupon: And though it stood in the *mosaic* history, yet as many *mosaic* laws were long forgotten and unpractised, during the state of *judaism*, so, this law of paradise, did not immediately emerge and arise again into clear light and practice, but might be mingled with *jewish* sabbatisms in the minds of men, nor appear even to christians themselves in a distinct light. It was by the wise providence of God, that it was permitted to lie un-noticed for a season, till the *jewish* christians were more brought off from their excessive fondness for *mosaic* rites.

And though the reasons of the change of the day, from the seventh to the first, came from the resurrection of *Christ*, and was plainly in many instances observed by the apostles; yet it was not, all at once, prescribed to christians as a new command, nor introduced into the churches. The first christians for many years were originally *Jews*, and the first great business and labour of the apostles, after preaching the essential doctrines of religion and the gospel, was to take them off from all *jewish* ceremonies, of which their sabbatisms were some of the chief: this appears from scripture, with great evidence. But afterwards, when the gentiles were converted,

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and *jewish* sabbaths not brought in among them, the importance and necessity of a certain fixed day for christian worship appeared more and more; and the observation of the first day, which had been intimated by apostolic example before, was more plainly taught and introduced among christians by degrees.

Nor is this strange that it should be so, when there are other doctrines and duties of more moment, such as the atonement of *Christ* for sin, faith in that atonement, &c. which our saviour and his apostles introduced among men in the christian dispensation, not all at once, but gently and obscurely at first, and by such degrees, as men were able to bear it.

And it is upon this account, that we do not read of any such signal opposition of the *Jews* to the observation of the first day of the week, as might have been expected: Yet the *jewish* christians might make some opposition to it, as it seems from *Rom. xiv. Col. ii. &c.* And they did possibly observe the seventh day for some time, perhaps together with the first, or perhaps without it, because they were not perfectly cured of judaizing; and the gentile converts might sometimes join with them, partly being entangled with *jewish* scruples, and partly by way of condescension and compliance with indifferent things for the sake of peace and charity, of which *St. Paul* gives us remarkable examples and rules on other occasions.

This will also give us a very fair answer to that argument for the continuance of the *jewish* sabbath, which is drawn from our saviour's advice to his disciples, relating to the destruction of *Jerusalem*, *Matth. xxiv. 20.* "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, nor on the sabbath-day," &c. This text will by no means prove that our saviour intended the *jewish* seventh-day sabbath should be observed by christians after the time of the destruction of the *jewish* polity: But he foresaw the prejudices both of *Jews* and *jewish* christians would be so strong, that christians might find very great inconveniencies thereby, both in their own consciences, and by the opposition of the *Jews*, if their flight from the destruction of the city, happened on the sabbath of the *Jews*. And if this signify their flight on the sabbath-day, it is certain that our saviour here can only mean to shew the hardships which might arise on this occasion from *jewish* customs or prejudices; for neither *Jews* nor christians were by any laws of God forbidden to fight, or fly, or do any thing necessary for the safety of their lives on a sabbath, either under *judaism* or christianity. But while the *jewish* polity was not yet absolutely and utterly dissolved, but only dissolving\*, the flight of his disciples might be, many ways, rendered exceeding troublesome on a sabbath.

Yet I think *Dr. Hammond's* conjecture is not utterly to be omitted here; for if the word *σαββατον* in this place can mean the sabbatical year, their flight would be doubly inconvenient both in the winter, when there was no food in the field, and on the sabbatical year, when the fields were not sown, and both war and famine would come together. Now if this be the sense, the sabbath-day has nothing to do in this text.

Question III. Is not the holiness of days and times, abolished under the new testament, as well as the holiness of places? Are not the expressions which abolish all sabbaths very plain and express? Does not the apostle severely reprove the *Galatians* chapter

\* Many of the *mosaical* precepts, are to be considered as political, as well as religious ceremonies. Now while the *jewish* polity subsisted, not only sabbaths but even circumcision, some sacrifices, and several other things seem to be left upon a foot of indifferency, as things decaying and vanishing away, as the apostle speaks; *Heb. viii. 13.* and as things lawful to be complied with, according as prudence should dictate to the *jewish* christians, in the places where they were; while at the same time the religious obligation was really finished at the setting up of the gospel-state, or christianity, at the day of *Pentecost*, when the Spirit was poured out.

chapter iv. 10. "for observing days and months, and times and years?" Does he not teach the *Colossians*, chapter ii. 16. "that no man should judge them in meats or drinks, or in respect of a holy-day, or new moons, or sabbaths? How can we suppose then, there is any holiness of days required, under the christian state? Or what holiness belongs to the Lord's day wherein christians meet to worship.

Answer. The holiness either of days or places, has very great degrees of difference in it. The land of *Canaan* was the holy land, because the people of God dwelt in it. *Jerusalem* was yet a more holy city, because God chose it for his habitation and his temple-worship. The inner courts of the temple were so holy, that the gentiles might not walk in them; and besides this, there was the holy place where none might enter but the priests; and the most holy, where the high-priest only might appear, and that but once in a year. So it is also in times; there are several degrees of holiness in them. God blessed the seventh day in paradise and sanctified it, or made it holy, that is, separated it from the other days by a peculiar appointment for the rest of man, and the worship of God; so that the common labours of life were not to be continued or carried on upon that day. But it was a much higher degree of holiness that God put on the *jewish* sabbath, by ordaining most peculiar ceremonies of worship, and by a more absolute and rigorous command, of resting from every purpose of human life, which was not absolutely necessary, and by severe penalties on the offender. Now all this *jewish* holiness of times is abolished by the authority of *Christ*, and the writings of *St. Paul* under the gospel, as I have shewn before. And indeed our saviour seemed to give hints of this kind to the *Jews*, that the rigorous observance of the ceremonial sabbath was vanishing, when he told them, the son of man was Lord of the sabbath, *Mark* ii. 38. and bid the paralytic whom he healed, take up his bed and carry it, on the sabbath-day, *John* v. 8—11.

These *jewish* sabbatizings being now abolished by many scriptures, and all their ceremonial holiness, I think the holiness of the Lord's-day, cannot rise higher than that of the paradisiacal sabbath before the *jewish* ceremonies and holy things were introduced; for we have no such new order given us in the new testament. If therefore we do but so far rest from the common businesses of life, as the due seasons of christian worship require, in order to render that worship most useful to the public honour of our blessed Lord, and to our own inward holiness and growth in grace, the chief designs of this day are complied with and obtained: Nor do I see any inconvenience in allowing that one day in seven, and particularly the Lord's-day, may have so much holiness as this in it; since we suppose the chief parts of it are to be separated from the common businesses of human life, in order to worship God, and our risen saviour, whose name the day bears; while all *jewish* sabbatizings, and holy days, are abolished and renounced for ever.

Question IV. If the observation of a holy sabbath, or one day in seven for worship and rest, be of such importance to preserve religion in the world, why is there not a more express and plain command for it under the new testament? Why should we be left in such obscurity, that we can only spell out our duty, by inferences from the old testament, and some examples and probabilities in the new, concerning the observation of one day in seven, as well as concerning the change of that day from the seventh to the first?

Give me leave to answer this two or three ways.

First, If our saviour, or his apostles, had insisted too early, and too plainly on the observation of one day in seven, as a day of holy rest from labour, they had been in danger of giving occasion to the *jewish* christians to have continued their  
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rigour of sabbatizing; for they were so fond of these yokes and ceremonies, that they were very hardly weaned from them. Many of the weaker disciples would scarce have known how to distinguish between the strict ceremonial holiness of days imposed in *judaism*, and the appointment of religious worship, under the gospel, with a merciful release from the labours of life on the Lord's-day. But I answer,

In the second place, by giving an instance of the like kind, wherein God has left a moral duty under the same obscurity. Was not monogamy, or the marriage of but one wife, as important, and as necessary to the peace of families, the regular and pious education of children, and the good order of the world in all ages and nations, as it is to christians under the gospel? And why then was the law, which prohibits more wives than one, left so obscure and so uncertain under the old testament in the patriarchal and *jewish* age, that it seems to be unknown, and was often violated both by *Jews* and patriarchs? Why was there a sort of permission for divorces given by *Moses* upon other causes, besides fornication, when our saviour forbids it under the gospel, and seems to declare it to have been an irregular thing even from the beginning of the creation, *Matth.* xix. 3—9? And yet there is no plain disapprobation of polygamy, nor divorces, till the days of *Malachi*, the last of the prophets, *Mal.* ii. 14—16.

But let it be observed, that our saviour gives us the reason of this doubtful and uncertain notice of this moral duty, where he tells us, “that *Moses*, because of the hardness of their hearts, suffered them to put away their wives, though from the beginning it was not so ordained,” that is, the general reason, why God left it under this obscurity, and gave no such plain and express precepts and prohibitions about some of these things to the *Jews* and patriarchs, might be, because he foresaw that strong temptations from within and from without, from the customs of the world, and the appetites and passions of nature, would render the duty difficult to be constantly practised in their circumstances, or the sin difficult to be avoided: Now, where a duty is not clearly known or discovered, the crime of neglecting it is proportionably diminished. Sins against the light of reason, or revelation, are scarce imputed, where there is not light enough to lead men into the knowledge of their duty, if there be but a sincere willingness to find out and practise every duty within the reach of their enquiries.

In like manner, when the religion of *Christ* was to be diffused amongst all ranks of people, rich and poor, bond and free, in heathen nations, where there were no sabbaths observed, our saviour knew it would be exceeding difficult, especially for persons in poor or servile circumstances, to keep a sabbath religiously, to rest from their labours one day in seven, and devote it to religious purposes: He might think it proper, therefore, to give no such express and solemn command about it, but introduce it by degrees into the churches, lest the consciences of his followers should be too much entangled and perplexed, between the express command, and the difficulty of practice.

The case of the sabbath was not the same in the *jewish* state: There was no such difficulty in keeping the appointed day. It was there commanded by God in express language, it was universally acknowledged by the people, taught by all the priests and preachers, and maintained by the high-priest, and all the magistrates of the country, both as a political law of the land, and as a religious ordinance, and was supposed to be publicly practised by all the nation.

Now this tenderness to weak christians is encouraged and exemplified in several instances in the conduct of our blessed Lord, when he was here on earth: He would not

enjoin hard and painful practices on young and tender disciples, *Mark* ii. 18—22. He preached the things of the gospel unto the people, “as they were able to bear them,” *Mark* iv. 33. *John* xvi. 12. and in some cases, neither God nor his son, neither prophets nor apostles, would press such duties too plainly and strongly on the consciences of good men, as would endanger the casting a snare upon them, that is, intangling their consciences, as the apostle speaks, *1 Cor.* vii. 35. or would burden young disciples with too many obligations. I mention this only as a conjecture, and if it be not approved, I am no way fond to support it. See more reasonings in answer to this question in discourse the fourth, “on the holiness of places of worship.”

To conclude, since all *jewish* festivals, new moons, and sabbaths, are abolished by *St. Paul's* authority, in such express and unlimited language, as may lead many sincere christians to believe that all manner of distinction of days whatsoever, whether *jewish* or patriarchal, is finished; since the religious observation of days, in the xiv. chapter to the *Romans*, in general, is represented as a matter of doubtful disputation; since the observation of the Lord's-day is not built upon any express and plain institution by *Christ* or his apostles in the new testament, but rather on examples, and probable inferences, and on the reasons and relations of things; I can never pronounce any thing hard or severe upon any fellow-christian, who maintains real piety in heart and life, though his opinion may be very different from mine on this subject. Nor does any man, who is humbly and sincerely studious of truth and duty, and desirous to find it, deserve any reproach or censure upon the account of different opinions about meats and days; unless he assume such haughty airs of assurance, as arise far beyond all his evidence and proof, or indulge a persecuting spirit, and reproach his brethren who differ from him.

Whatsoever we do in our distinct practices, on these dubious subjects, let us do it sincerely as to the Lord: “If we regard a day, let us regard it to the Lord; and if we neglect it for fear of superstition, let this also be with a desire to honour the Lord,” *Rom.* xiv. 6. Let religion be maintained in the life and power of it, by every one that names the name of *Christ*, and let him faithfully pursue those methods, which, according to the clearest discoveries of reason and scripture, will be most successful to obtain this end.

While upon a just survey of things I am satisfied, that the observation of the Lord's-day, as a christian sabbath, is most for the service of God, for the honour of my blessed saviour and his gospel, and for the increase of true religion and godliness, I am obliged to persist in this practice, though I have not so express and evident a command for it, as for many other things in the christian life: But I am persuaded, whosoever will take a faithful review of all that is written in this essay, will be inclined to confess, that I have not maintained this my opinion and practice, without some fair and just appearances, both of reason and scripture.

There are other questions relating to the Lord's-day, *viz.* When must the christian begin his sabbath, and when must it end? What works of labour may be performed on this day? And how should it be spent or improved, &c. For answer to which, “I refer the reader to doctor *Samuel Wright's* treatise on the Lord's-day; and to a sermon, a few years ago published on this subject, *viz.* Sermon xxxi. at *Berry-street*, on the principal heads of the christian religion.”

[ 419 ]

# A P P E N D I X

## T O T H E F I R S T D I S C O U R S E,

*Skewing the testimonies of the primitive fathers to the Lord's-day*

**D**OCTOR *Young*, and *Mr. Baxter*, in their discourses on the Lord's-day, *Mr. Placcette* in his "dissertation de morale et de theologie," doctor *Wright* on the "observation of the Lord's-day," and several others, have repeated these testimonies of the antients. And the late learned and honourable lord *King*, in his second part of the "enquiry into the primitive churches," has particularly given us this account, which I shall here represent, or rather epitomise, changing some of his translations a little nearer to the words of the original. See page 155. § 5, 6—11.

"That there are particular seasons appointed for public and solemn worship, appears from *Clemens Romanus*; he says, God hath required us to serve him in the appointed times and seasons: And in two other places of his first epistle, speaks of those "determined and commanded seasons," in which, when we worship, we may be blessed and accepted by him. And *Pliny*, the heathen, reports, "that the christians in his time met together on an appointed day, to sing praises to *Christ* as to a God, and to bind themselves by a sacrament."

"Now the chiefest of these appointed times was the first day of the week, on which they constantly met, to perform their religious services. So writes *Justin Martyr*. "On the day that is called *Sunday*, all that dwell in the cities or the country come together in one place, or for the same end: The writings of the apostles or prophets are read, &c." with other religious exercises. And upon this account those parts of God's public worship are stiled by *Tertullian*, the "Lord's solemnities, or dominica solemnities:" And *Cyprian* tells us, that the reader, or clerk, "reads on the Lord's-day:" And *Vistorinus Petavionensis* says, "On the Lord's-day we go forth to eat bread with giving of thanks," which is the eucharist, or Lord's-supper: And *Minucius Felix* mentions the christians assembling to a festival on a solemn day."

"*Clemens Alexandrinus*, calls it the chief of days, and our rest indeed." "On *Sunday* we give ourselves to gladness," saith *Tertullian*: And before him *St. Barnabas* says, "we keep the eighth day with gladness, on which *Jesus* arose from the dead:" And the learned author supposes, that *Ignatius*, means the observation of the Lord's-day, by banishing every appearance of grief and sorrow at that time, insomuch that *Tertullian* says, "on the Lord's-day we think it amiss, or sinful, either to fast or to kneel in worship:" And even when he was a *montanist* he excepted the sabbaths and the Lord's-days from fasting.

"*Dionysius*, bishop of *Corinth*, in his letter to the church of *Rome*, says, to day being the Lord's-day, we keep it holy, and therein we have read your epistle, and the first epistle of *Clemens*," who was pastor at *Rome*. *Clemens* of *Alexandria* writes,

that a true christian, " according to the commands of the gospel, observes the Lord's day, by casting out all evil thoughts, and entertaining profitable ones, glorifying the resurrection of the Lord thereby."

" That this was done to commemorate the resurrection of the redeemer, appears from the citations of *Barnabas*, and *Ignatius*, and *Clemens of Alexandria*, in the fore-cited places: And *Justin Martyr* relates, " that on *Sunday* the christians assembled together, because it was the first day in which God changed the darkness and the chaos, and made the world, and *Jesus Christ* our saviour in that day arose from the dead: For on the day before *Saturday* they crucified him, and the day after *Saturday*, which is *Sunday*, he appeared to his apostles and disciples, and taught them those things which we have given you." And *Origen* advises his auditors " to pray unto God, especially on the Lord's-day, which is a commemoration of the passion of *Christ*: For the resurrection of the Lord is celebrated not only once in a year, but every seven days."

" Hence it was, that the usual appellation of this day, both by the greek and latin churches, was the Lord's-day, *ημερα κυριακη*, or *κυριακη* alone; and " *dies dominicus*," or " *dominicus* alone," of which the author gives many instances from the primitive fathers: And sometimes they called it *Sunday*, that the heathens might particularly understand what day they meant.

" But though they so far complied with the heathens, as to call this day *Sunday*, yet I do not find that they ever so far indulged the *Jews*, as to call it the sabbath-day; for through all their writings, as may be seen especially in *Tertullian* and *Justin Martyr*, they violently declaim against sabbatizing, that is, the *judaical* observation of the seventh day, and not the Lord's-day, whose sanctification is approved and recommended by *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*: To which we may add that passage of *Ignatius*, " let us no longer sabbatize, but keep the Lord's-day, or live according to the Lord's life, on which day our life arose by him:" Or, as it is more fully expressed in his interpolated epistle, " instead of sabbatizing, let every one that loves *Christ*, keep the Lord's-day as a festival, the day on which he arose, the supreme of all days, on which our life arose, and there was a victory obtained over death in or by *Christ*."

" It is granted, that the eastern churches, in compliance with the *jewish* converts, who were numerous in those parts, sometimes at least, performed on the seventh day, the same public religious services that they did on the first day, observing both the one and the other as a festival: But on the contrary, some of the western churches fasted on *Saturday*, that they might not seem to observe any sabbath with the *Jews*." Thus far this learned writer; other testimonies have been adduced by other authors, and particularly that of *Theophilus of Antioch*, " the third day, which taking it's name from the resurrection of the Lord, is called the Lord's-day, is the first day of the week:" And some later fathers speak more plainly still.

There have been indeed some remarks upon two or three of these citations, which may render the force of the argument, drawn from them, a little doubtful; but most of these testimonies are so plain, that they cannot well be answered, nor fairly turned to any other sense.

THE SECOND  
 APPENDIX  
 TO THE  
 FIRST DISCOURSE.

**S**INCE this discourse was written, in the year 1733, I have resumed this controversy about the sabbath into an impartial examination, and have read all the papers since written, which have come within my notice. I confess, some of them contain several thoughts of great importance on this subject; but I do not find, upon the whole review, any sufficient reason to change my scheme or sentiments, though I hope I have been enabled to confirm and establish some parts of them, by relieving objections, which I had not met with before, and inserting, here and there, a further illustration.

If the scheme, which I have proposed, be deficient in any part of it, so far as I can judge, it must be in these three particulars.

1. In the proof of the patriarchal sabbath to be moral and perpetual.
2. In securing the appointment of the patriarchal sabbath from that general abolition of all manner of sabbaths, and all distinction of days, which *St. Paul* seems to pronounce in *Rom. xiv. 5, 6. Gal. iv. 9, 10. and Coloss. ii. 16.*
3. In proving the Lord's-day to be an actual solemn institution, or command of *Christ* and his apostles.

Now, if the proofs of these things should appear to be insufficient and defective, and if I were thereby constrained to change the present scheme, upon my closest survey of things, I think, I should do it, in this manner.

First, I would allow the institution of the patriarchal sabbath to be a mere positive command to the patriarchs, and re-inforced by *Moses* to the *jewish* nation, even as sacrifices were, or as circumcision, which were both abolished by christianity.

And though the law of the sabbath might have many rational expediencies in it, which look like moral duties, yet, perhaps, it is possible, they may not quite arise to an express moral command, and a law of perpetual obligation. So the *talion* law of punishment for injuries, received, amongst the *Jews*, viz. "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," has great appearances in it of rational expediency, and of a moral nature; yet it is not supposed to be made a moral and perpetual law: but together with all other peculiar laws of the *Jews*, it was abrogated when the *jewish* church and state were dissolved.

Secondly, I might then allow the utter abolition of the patriarchal, as well as the *jewish* sabbath, by the strong and unlimited expressions of *St. Paul*, concerning the abolition of all distinctions of meats, and days, and sabbaths; even as sacrifices were  
 begun

begun with *Adam*, and circumcision with *Abraham*, yet both were finished at the introduction of christianity. But then,

In the third place, it will appear there is so much expediency, and almost a necessity of solemn and certain days appointed for the preservation of all public religion, and for the celebration of christian worship, that the apostles thought it necessary, by their recommendation, and by their own example, to devote or set apart one day in seven for this purpose; since God, under all his former dispensations, had sanctified and appointed one day in seven for his public worship. And as the *talion* law, and some other parts of the *jewish* polity, seem to be grounded upon a very reasonable expediency, and may be a proper direction and advice to every state in their making of laws, so the reasonableness and expediency of appointing one day in seven for public worship, appearing evident to the apostles from all God's former dispensations, and almost from the nature of things, they gave it as their advice to the christian churches to follow this custom, and practised it themselves.

And since all the former distinctions of days, and their holiness were abolished, and even the observation of the seventh day, whereon God finished his creation, and since there must be some day agreed upon for public worship, they thought it very proper, that since the great work of the redemption of *Christ*, which lays a foundation for the new creation, was finished on the first day of the week by *Christ*'s resurrection from the dead, that this day should succeed in the place of the day appointed as a memorial of the old creation; and in order to keep both these important matters always within the view of christians, *viz.* both creation and redemption, therefore one day in seven, and particularly the first of the seven, was recommended by the apostles to be their constant day of public worship. And, thus the observation of the Lord's-day, of which we have not a plain and uncontroverted proof by way of divine solemn institution in the new testament, will stand upon the foot of a most reasonable practice, partly borrowed from the institutions of God in all former ages, ever since the creation, and partly from the apostolical advice, recommendation and example, in the last age of the church.

And if this should appear to be the case, then the only reason which I can think of, why so expedient and almost necessary a practice was not made an express and solemn institution, and why it was left rather upon the foot of apostolic advice and example, was, that the consciences of good christians, especially while the world was all *jewish* or heathen, might have some liberty indulged them, and might not be laid under so severe a yoke of bondage, as sometimes such an express institution might happen to lay upon them in *jewish* or heathen countries. This reason I have mentioned in the discourse itself, as one way of accounting for the obscurity and doubtfulness of such an institution, if the Lord's-day was really instituted.

I say again, if I were to change my present sentiments, so far as I can yet judge, I should fall into these which I have now expressed; but I acknowledge I have not yet seen sufficient reason to depart from the sentiments I have maintained in the discourse itself, nor to relinquish our obligations to observe one day in seven for a day of rest and worship as a perpetual law, and particularly the Lord's-day, as an appointment of *Christ* by his apostles. "We know but in part," and we should not be too positive beyond all our evidence. "Whereto we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing; and let us be followers of *St. Paul*, and the other apostles, and mark, or imitate them that walk so, as we have them for our example," Phil. iii. 16, 17. What appears a sufficient evidence to one man, does

not



not appear so to another: "Let us all follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14. "For the kingdom of heaven is not meats, and drinks, and days, but righteousness and peace," Rom. xiv. 17.

## D I S C O U R S E II.

*Of the time of day for administering the Lord's-supper: or an answer to that question, "May it lawfully be administered at noon?"*

**T**HERE have been some pious and devout persons, who would willingly fulfil all their duties of worship precisely according to the appointment of God, who have therefore scrupled to receive the Lord's-supper at noon, because it is called a supper, and it was instituted and celebrated by our Lord *Jesus Christ* in the evening of the day.

I will easily grant, that where the time of any duty is expressly instituted and commanded by God, it ought to be punctually observed; but it doth not necessarily follow, that every circumstance of time or place, which happened to attend any part of worship, when the prophets, apostles, or *Christ* himself performed it, must be observed also whensoever we perform that worship. *John* preached and instituted baptism at the river *Jordan*, with a hairy garment upon him, and a leathern girdle; but it is not necessary that we should be baptized by the river-side, nor that the minister who preaches or performs it, should wear such vestments of hair or leather. *Christ* prayed at midnight, and on a mountain, he preached from a ship to those on the shore, and ordained his disciples to go forth and preach and pray; but there was no necessity that they should always, or at any time, observe the same hour or place.

In some other essays, I have shewn, that there is a great difference betwixt religious ceremonies, and mere natural circumstances in worship. A religious ceremony is either an action, or a manner or circumstance of action by which some special honour is designed to be paid to God; and therefore God alone can institute it, who alone can determine what shall be honourable to himself: these religious ceremonies have generally a signification of something spiritual, inward and invisible belonging to them.

Mere natural circumstances are such as are necessary, or at least convenient to the performance of acts of worship, considered merely as natural actions, and abstracted from their religious design: Such are time, place, habit, gesture, &c. for no natural action can be put forth but it must be in some time, in some place, in some posture of body; and in public worship with some sort of garments on too. Now many of these, especially under the new testament, are not precisely determined in christian worship; they have no holy signification in them, and are left to the convenience of each single person, or of each single society or church of *Christ*.

Now let us apply these things to the Lord's supper, and see how many circumstances, attending the first administration thereof, are instituted ceremonies; and how many of them are mere natural circumstances, which seem to be rather accidental than essential at the first celebration of this ordinance.

First,

First, The time. 1. On *Thursday*. 2. The thirteenth or fourteenth day of the month. 3. In the evening. 4. After supper.

Secondly, The place. 1. A city. 2. An upper-room. 3. A large room. 4. A furnished room, as in *Mark* xiv. 15, 16. "a large upper-room furnished, &c."

Thirdly, The elements. 1. Bread, perhaps one loaf, as *1 Cor.* x. 17. 2. Wine, whether red or white, we know not.

Fourthly, The actions. 1. Blessing the bread and the wine distinctly and a-part. 2. Breaking the bread. 3. Distributing. 4. Receiving. 5. Singing a hymn.

Fifthly, The posture of the body, *viz.* sitting with their legs behind them, leaning upon the table with the left elbow, of which see *Pool's* annotations, *Matth.* xxvi. 20, &c.

Sixthly, The words spoken. *viz.* "Take, eat; this is my body.—Drink ye all of it, this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins," which are expressed in several varieties, by the several evangelists, and by the apostle *Paul*; and therefore the same precise form of words cannot be necessary.

It is evident to the reason of every reader, that some things among the fore-mentioned particulars are necessary to the essence or substance of the ordinance itself.

1. The elements; there must be bread and wine; but whether it is absolutely necessary, that it should be bread made of wheat, and wine made of the juice of the grape, may afford a doubt and scruple. Why not barley or oaten bread, and wine of the juice of currants be sufficient, especially in such regions, or such poor villages, where wheat and grapes are not found, nor hardly to be procured?

2. There must be also the action of blessing the bread and wine, or giving thanks before this sacred feast, and praying for a blessing on it: This was done by our saviour distinctly twice, that is, both before partaking of the bread, and of the cup. But is a distinct blessing of each element necessary whensoever we celebrate this ordinance? I own I like it best, because it seems as if it were singular and peculiar to this ordinance, and was not done at common meals: But I would not say, it is absolutely necessary at every administration, and that those who bless the bread and wine together do any thing unlawful.

3. There seems to be a necessity of breaking the bread, to signify that the body of our saviour was broken for our sins: "this is my body which is broken for you." Yet it may be queried, whether dividing the bread by cutting, may not be lawful and proper. For 1. As breaking bread was the usual way of dividing it among the *Jews*, so is cutting it among us. 2. Cutting the bread represents his body being wounded with nails and thorns, and a spear, as much as breaking. But however that be, it is agreed by all of us, that the bread may be cut almost through, to render the breaking it regularly more convenient and easy, as is usually practised in our churches.

4. The words of the institution should be certainly pronounced, or words of much the same sense, at the distribution of the elements, *viz.* "This is the body of *Christ*," or this is an emblem or figure of the body of *Christ*, &c. and "this cup is the new covenant or new testament in the blood of *Christ*," or a sign and seal of the new testament, or of the new covenant, "in his blood, which was shed for many for the remission of sins." But it is by no means necessary to say always the very same words. For, it is certain, this ordinance was celebrated or performed by our saviour but once, and yet the several evangelists differ in their relation of the words used by *Christ*; and *St. Paul*, in his account of it, differs from them all. Therefore it is evident, that  
the

the spirit of *Christ* in writing the new testament, never designed to confine us precisely to one set of words, or the same phrases, but only to the same sense. Yet further;

5. The elements must be distributed that all may partake: But whether the pastor must distribute them to the hand of every communicant; whether the deacons, who serve tables, may distribute them, or whether they may be distributed throughout the congregation by the communicants from hand to hand, this is not any where determined certainly, and is no evident part of the institution itself, and I think it may be practised any way.

In the last place, a table-gesture was the mode in which *Christ* administered, and his disciples did first receive this ordinance; and I think a table-gesture is the most proper to represent a supper, or a religious feast and holy communion. But I dare not say, this is so much an instituted and necessary part of the ordinance, that it cannot be profitably celebrated without it. God forbid, that I should pronounce this sacrament null and vain to all the foreign protestant churches, most of which receive it standing, or to the english episcopal church, who receive it on their knees!

And let it be remembered, the *jewish* table-gesture was very different from our's, and yet we have changed it for sitting.

But as for some other of the circumstances which first attended this ordinance, it is impossible they should be necessary to our constant and repeated celebration of it. Does any christian think it necessary, that this sacrament should never be administered but in a large upper room? Is it not lawful nor valid, if performed in a little room and on a ground-floor?

Again, our saviour administered this ordinance to twelve persons who were all men, and just after another supper; but can any man think that we must never administer it, but where there are just twelve men to receive it, and that no woman must ever partake of it; and that we must always eat another supper before we receive this?

Yet further, what christian ever thought it necessary, that it should be performed on the same day of the week, that is *Thursday*, and on the same day of the month too, as it was first instituted, that is the thirteenth or fourteenth of *March*? Then it can be celebrated but once in five or six years, when the same day of the month happens on the same day of the week. And I believe, we all think it necessary to receive it oftener, than on the fourteenth of *March* only, even if that could possibly fall on the Lord's-day every year.

Yet again, if the Lord's-supper must be always administered in the evening, it cannot be always at the same hour of the day as we compute our hours in *England*. The evening hour or sun-set, which is six o'clock in *March* and *September*, will be complete night in *December*, and complete day in *June*. And thus if we receive the Lord's-supper every month, it will be sometimes perfect day and sometimes perfect night, if we keep to the same hour in which our Lord administered it.

Besides, *St. Paul* did not celebrate this ordinance always in the evening. See *Acts* xx. 7. "He continued his preaching at *Troas* till midnight. Then *Eutychus* fell down asleep, was taken up dead, was restored to life, and after all this they broke bread, and continued in discourse till break of day. And the primitive christians often celebrated this sacrament "horis ante lucanis," that is, "before break of day," as the antients inform us, most probably for fear of being disturbed by their persecuting enemies. Thus the conveniency of performance must determine the season or hour of administration, as well as the place and other circumstances.

I confess it is usually called the Lord's-supper, because it was in the evening that *Christ* instituted it, just after the *jewish* passover, which was a supper; but let it be observed, that supper was a very considerable, if not a chief meal, in many countries in those days, as dinner is now amongst us. Therefore, if we may change the posture of leaning at table into sitting upright, because it is our present table-posture, why may we not as well change supper-time, which was their chief meal, for the season of our chief meal, that is at noon? Especially, since we cannot find that the precise time is made any part of the worship itself, or has any holy or religious signification in it. "Let us stand fast then in the liberty wherewith *Christ* has made us free, and not be intangled with yokes of bondage," *Gal. v. 1.* nor impose hours and seasons upon our consciences, which we cannot find the word of God has imposed, but which *Christ* has left indifferent to the free choice and conveniency of his churches.

## D I S C O U R S E    I I I .

*The holiness of places of worship, considered in a sermon at the opening of a new meeting-house, October 20th, 1737.*

EXOD. xx. 24. *In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.*

**T**HESSE words were spoken to *Moses* at mount *Sinai*, and sent by him to the nation of *Israel*, just after the great God had pronounced the law of the ten commandments from heaven in lightening and thunder: And while the people lay under awful impressions of this fiery law, God takes further care to secure the honours of his own name and worship, and to appoint some of the earliest modes and ceremonies of it. verses 23, 24. "Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall you make to you gods of gold: An altar of earth shalt thou make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings and thy peace-offerings, and I will meet thee and bless thee."

But before I come to explain or improve this promise, I ask leave to make these three remarks on the connexion of these words with the context.

First remark. As the preface to those ten commands which God spoke to the people in thunder was this, "I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the house of bondage," *Exod. xx. 2.* therefore hear and obey; so the preface to those following commands which he sent to them by *Moses*, verse 22. was this, "I the Lord your God have talked with you from heaven," therefore attend and practise. A God of such mercy and of such majesty, who brings his people out of a long and painful bondage, and then pronounces his own laws in fire and thunder, ought to be heard and obeyed by sinful feeble creatures. Divine majesty and divine mercy united, carry with them a powerful demand of attention and obedience.

Second remark. As the blessed God begins his orders to his people by his own voice, with securing his own honour and worship in the first and second commandments; in the same manner he begins his message to them by *Moses*, by a sort of explication or comment on these two first commands. "Ye shall have no other gods with

with me, or besides me; no gods of gold or silver: and ye shall worship me by sacrifices upon an altar made of earth." Though God was just going to direct them to build a glorious tabernacle with altars of brass and gold, yet, "while ye are in this moving and travelling state, before I have built me a house or mansion to dwell in, ye shall worship me, saith he, upon an altar of earth, such as may be easily set up or took down without expence of time or money: This shall be more acceptable to me than altars of hewn or polished stone, with all the ornaments and fineries which you can contrive." It is God's own appointment of the forms and instruments of his own worship, that makes that worship acceptable to him, whether the materials be of earth or gold.

Third remark. When God had briefly mentioned this matter of duty to the people, he adds a rich promise of grace. "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee." St. Paul observes, *Eph. vi. 2.* "that honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land, is the first commandment with a promise," and a few hours or minutes after that command was given, this order to worship God according to his own appointment, was sent to them; and it may be properly called the second commandment with promise; and a glorious promise it is, indeed, of the presence of God with his people, to encourage to an exact and punctual performance of all his institutions in their worship.

Now let me take a short survey of these words of promise, and explain them briefly in general terms."

By God's recording his own name, we are here to understand, his appointing any thing relating to his honour by his own authority, or his giving some notice how or where he would be worshipped by men; what place he has fixed, or what forms of adoration he hath stamped with his own name and authority: And wheresoever these his institutions are celebrated in all their appointed forms, there the name of God is recorded.

By his own coming to his people, which he has here promised, we must understand, his favourable discoveries of himself to those who worship him in the place and manner which he ordains: and this he has often done by some signals of his own gracious presence with them. He will let them know that he approves them, favours them, and resides amongst them.

By his blessing his people, he intends to signify, that he will not only accept the worship which is paid to him according to his own appointment, but he will make their attendances upon him effectual for some blessed ends: He will bestow those blessings of the covenant of grace, which are sought for by his people in their attendance on his worship.

Now that we may raise such meditations from these words as may suit our present purpose of beginning to wait upon God in a new-erected place of worship, permit me to lead your thoughts along in order by the following propositions.

PROPOSITION I. "That God who has ordained his own worship, together with the special modes and forms of it, has often in ancient times appointed the particular place of his worship, on single or special occasions."

It was while *Adam* tarried in paradise after his fall, and before he was driven out of the garden of *Eden*, that he was doubtless taught and required to offer sacrifices of beasts; for since flesh was not then appointed to be eaten, what could it be but the skins of beasts which were offered in sacrifice, out of which God made coats or garments for him and his wife? And hereby paradise itself, where the first sin was committed, was the appointed place for that sort of worship by sacrifice, by which the first ty-

pical atonement should be made for sin. But it does not appear that there was any continuance of that appointment more than for one season of worship: For our first parents were quickly driven out of that delightful garden.

*Noah*, when he came out from the ark, at the order of God, upon mount *Ararat*, where the ark rested, there he offered sacrifices, and that doubtless by divine appointment; for the Lord smelled a sweet savour in them, and gave him a promise that "he would not again curse the ground." *Gen.* viii. 20, 21.

It was by the special appointment of God, in a certain spot of the land of *Canaan*, that *Abraham* sacrificed to God a heifer, a goat, and a ram, a turtle dove and a young pidgeon, and divided them asunder; and there God condescended to pass between these pieces, under the emblem of a smoking furnace and a burning lamp, and made a covenant with his servant, *Gen.* xv. 9—17. It was also upon mount *Moriab* that *Abraham* received orders from heaven to offer his own son *Isaac* as a burnt offering, and there he received a further blessing from the Lord, and the promise of the great *Messiah* to be derived from his seed, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. *Gen.* xxii. 2, 17, 18.

It was at mount *Sinai*, that God ordered the nation of *Israel* to worship him, when he had brought them forth from *egyptian* bondage, *Exod.* iii. 12. and again he appointed the "young men of the seed of *Israel*, to sacrifice oxen unto himself under the hill, with an altar and twelve pillars, and made a covenant with the people." *Exod.* xxiv. 5—8.

So in following times, *Gideon*, and *Samuel*, and *David*, under inspiration, were required sometimes to offer particular sacrifices, and pay solemn worship unto God, in places different from the general orders, which were given to all *Israel* for the public worship of the nation; otherwise, they would not have dared to have done it, nor would their sacrifices have been accepted, by such evident and illustrious testimonies from heaven, as some of them received. These few instances make it evident, that God sometimes appointed a particular place for his own worship.

PROPOSITION II. "Though the great God prescribed to several persons the particular spot of ground on which he would be worshipped on single and special occasions; yet when he appointed any special place for his own worship in the solemn returns of it at stated seasons, it was only to the nation of *Israel*, who were a peculiar people, chosen to himself from among the rest of the nations."

This he did first when there was a tabernacle built for him in the wilderness: For though that was a moveable house or building, yet it was always at the door of the tabernacle, that the brazen altar was to stand, where alone sacrifices were to be offered. *Lev.* xvii. 4, 8, 9, and incense was to be burnt no where at stated seasons but only in the tabernacle on the altar of gold, *Exod.* xxx. 1—10.

When the *Israelites* were come to *Canaan*, *Shiloh*, in the tribe of *Epbraim*, was the first appointed place for the settlement of the ark of God, and the tabernacle, and there only were sacrifices to be offered. *Josb.* xviii. 1. And the whole congregation assembled together at *Shiloh*, and set up the tabernacle there. Now, that this was done by divine appointment, see *Jer.* vii. 12. "Go ye now to my place, which was in *Shiloh*, where I set my name at the first." And this practice, of worshipping God in *Shiloh*, was repeated by the ancient saints at stated seasons. So *Elkanah* and *Hannah* worshipped God there yearly. 1 *Sam.* i. 3.

In some ages after this, the tabernacle, with the brazen altar was set up in a high place in *Gibeon*, upon what occasion, or at what time, is not known: The ark which had been carried long before into the camp of *Israel*, and taken captiye by the *Philistines*,

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was returned and brought to mount *Zion* at *Jerusalem*. When *David* carried the ark to *Zion*, which was called his city, because he had taken it from the *Jebusites* and fixed his own palace there, yet he left the tabernacle of *Moses* with the brazen altar in *Gibeon*, and priests were appointed to sacrifice there. See 1 *Cbron.* xv. 1—3. and xvi. 1, 37, \* &c. And though sacrifices were offered in *Zion*, on that occasion, yet, doubtless, *David* did this by divine appointment; for he was often directed by divine inspiration, and was accepted of God in these services. God himself says, he would dwell in *Zion*, for he had desired it. *Psal.* cxxxii. 13, 14. At the ark in *Zion* was the most sensible and glorious residence of God on the mercy-seat; this was the most illustrious part of all the building of *Moses*, and conveyed by God's own order to the city of *David*. "Thither all the tribes went up to worship in *David's* time," *Psal.* cxxii. 4. and cxxxii. 13. And, upon this account, *Zion* was mentioned, as the sacred and appointed place of worship, so often in the *Psalms* of *David*: And these *Psalms* being used in *Jewish* worship, the same name and language was continued, even after a temple was built, and used by the prophets in following ages, to signify the place of God's residence and of his worship: And *Zion* was the word they used to represent and typify the church of God in future ages.

When *Solomon* was ordered to build that glorious temple in *Jerusalem*, it was upon another mountain, even mount *Moriab*, not far off from *Zion*; 2 *Cbron.* iii. 1. "and the ark of the covenant was brought up thither out of the city of *David*, which is *Zion*," 1 *Kings* viii. 1. And this temple was the constant fixed place of the worship of the Lord for many generations, even till the days of the *Messiah*, or the end of the leuitical dispensation.

Thus the appointed place of the *Jewish* worship, in it's special forms, and at the stated returning seasons, was the tabernacle or the ark which was formed by *Moses*, or the temple built by *Solomon*, from the time of their departure from *Egypt* to the age of the *Messiah*. There the daily sacrifices of the two lambs were to be offered, there the burning lamps were to be kindled, there the sweet incense was to smoke towards heaven every morning and every evening, *Exod.* xxix. 38. and xxx. 7, 8. There God appointed his own worship with a special uniformity in the whole scheme, and a peculiar harmony betwixt the several parts of it, to hold forth by way of type and emblem, the beauty and glory of the church invisible, worshipping the great and invisible God.

PROPOSITION III. "While these appointed places of worship continued to be approved of God, they were called holy places; not only because God dwelt there, but because God claimed them as his own, and would have them solemnly separated for his own peculiar service: And he appointed also what special respect or regard the people should pay to them in testimony of their holiness."

When God appeared to *Moses* in the burning bush on the mount, he commanded him to "put off his shoes from his feet, for the place," says he, "whereon thou standest is holy ground," *Exod.* iii. 5. that is, because God was there.

When God manifested his presence in lightening, and thunder, and thick smoke on mount *Sinai*, to pronounce his law from heaven, "the mountain was to have bounds or rails fixed round about it, that neither man nor beast might touch it," *Exod.* xix. 23. *Heb.* xii. 20.

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\* Though I cannot find any express order for setting up the tabernacle in *Gibeon*, yet possibly there was such an order; because God shewed his acceptance of *Solomon* when he offered a thousand sacrifices there, by appearing to him, and promising him wisdom for his royal office. Compare 2 *Cbron.* i. 3. with 1 *Kings* iii. 4, 5. Though other high places were forbidden, that might be appointed.

When he fixed his visible dwelling amongst his people *Israel*, even before they came to be settled in the land of *Canaan*, as well as after, there were various degrees of holiness assigned to places according to their nearness to God, or the visible token of his presence.

When he appointed the orders of the camp of *Israel*, this camp, though moveable, had some degrees of holiness in it; for God represents himself as dwelling in the midst of them, and walking among them, therefore no unclean thing was to be left public and visible there. *Deut. xxiii. 14.*

When *Moses* was instructed and required to erect the tabernacle, it was to stand in the middle of the camp: There was the open court, surrounded with curtains, whither only the priests and the levites might come to perform the services of the sanctuary, and the daily sacrifices which God appointed. In this court stood the laver and altar of burnt-offerings: In this court stood the tabernacle itself, a covered building; the first part whereof was called the holy place, where only the priests came who performed daily services: There stood the golden candlestick, the altar of incense, and the table of shew-bread; the inner part of it was called the holy of holies, where God dwelt in a bright cloud; there none but the high priest might enter, and that once a year on the great day of atonement. *Exod. xxvi. 33.*

When they were settled in the promised land, the land itself was called holy, for it was the Lord's, *Lev. xxv. 27. Zech. vii. 12.* He claimed it for his own, *Jer. ii. 7.* The towns and cities of it were called holy cities, *Isa. lxiv. 10.* No man was suffered to inhabit within the gates of them, but who became a proselyte of the true religion, so far as to renounce all idols, and to worship the God of *Israel* only, and who took upon him, as is generally said, the observation of the seven precepts of *Noah*, about murder and eating blood, &c.

*Jerusalem* was peculiarly the holy city, or the holy mountain; for in *David* or *Solomon's* time, and afterwards, the mountains of *Zion* and *Moriab* were included in it. *David* brought the ark of God into *Zion*, and *Solomon* built the temple on mount *Moriab*, which by that means were made holy ground.

The temple in general contained in it many courts and buildings, whose holiness had very different degrees, as learned men have observed; and the chief of them were formed according to the tabernacle of *Moses*, but others were not so.

1. There was the court of the gentiles, where the heathens and the proselytes of the gate were permitted to walk: Whether this was distinguished in *Solomon's* time, is a doubtful inquiry; it is most probable, it was not.

2. The court of the people, or the court of *Israel*, into which no uncircumcised person was suffered to enter: It was only for those who were originally of the seed of *Israel*, or were circumcised and entered into complete *judaism*, and became the proselytes of righteousness, or the proselytes of the temple. The tabernacle of *Moses* had not these two courts: The camp of *Israel*, and the country round about served instead of them.

3. There was the court of the priests and levites, who performed the worship of sacrifices; this was according to the forms and orders of the tabernacle of *Moses*: And therefore in this court stood the brazen altar and the laver; the one to signify atonement for sin, by sacrifice, and the other to denote real purification of heart, by washing, which are both necessary in order to our appearance before God.

All these three courts were open to the sky; and they had afterwards, perhaps, some other divisions made in them, *2 Chron. xx. 5.* as there were, originally, galleries formed on pillars to secure persons from the weather, as well as chambers of lodging for the levites, where strangers might not lodge, *Neb. xiii. 5, 7, 8.*

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4. The sanctuary, properly so called, or the holy place, wherein stood the altar of incense, the table of shew-bread and the candlestick: And I question whether any priests were usually permitted to enter therein, but those whose turn it was to light the lamps, to place and remove the loaves of bread, or to burn incense.

5. The innermost sanctuary, or holy of holies, which was all overlaid with gold, was divided from the holy place by a veil of fine linen. Here stood the ark, and the covering of it, which was called the mercy-seat, on which God appeared to reside in a cloud of glory: And hither no person whatsoever might enter but the high priest only, and that but once a year, with the blood of the sacrifice, and with incense, on the great atoning day. The temple of *Solomon*, as well as the tabernacle of *Moses*, or the residence of the ark in *Zion*, were called the beauty of holiness, *Psal.* xxix. 2. xcvi. 9. and cx. 3. There *David* calls on men to come and worship God; there the beauty of his holiness and the harmony of his glories were discovered to men. All the parts of the temple were so far holy, that no civil or common business of life was to be transacted there. Our saviour gives occasion to *St. Mark*, in his history to describe it, *Mark* xi. 15—17. when he “went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves; and would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple; saying, “Is it not written, my house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.”

Thus then was the holiness of places duly observed, when no persons entered into them, but who were appointed of God, and when nothing was done in them of the common affairs of life and that out of special reverence to the great *Jehovah*, the God of *Israel*, who had chosen these places for a visible habitation to himself, and had made them holy. Let it be also observed, that there were several particular forms and ceremonies appointed for the consecration or dedication of these places unto God: Many sacrifices were offered by *Moses* and *Aaron* on this occasion, as you may read at large in *Exodus* and *Leviticus*, and in the first and second books of *Chronicles*. The great God was invoked by *David* and *Solomon* by prayer to enter into these holy places as his own habitation or place, *Psal.* cxxxii. 1. “Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou and the ark of thy strength.” *Psal.* xxiv. 7. “Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in.”

It may be noted here, mankind is ever prone to superstition, and wheresoever the great God for wise purposes affixes any holiness to places or things, by peculiarizing them to his own worship and service, men are very fond of adding some other forms and appearances of holiness to God's own appointments: Their synagogues, their schools of instruction, and their prayer-houses, which were built only by the prudence of men, as we shall shew afterwards, had distinct degrees of holiness imputed to them, by the superstitious *Jews*, which God never appointed.

PROPOSITION IV. “When it pleased God to appoint particular places for his worship, it was always for positive revealed worship, to be paid him by special forms and ceremonies, such as incense, sacrifices, &c. and he excluded other places from that honour; yet he never appointed a certain place, for any part of natural worship, with the exclusion of other places.”

If you turn to all the texts before cited, where God ordained any certain spot of ground, or any building, either for single acts of worship, or for the stated repetitions and returns of it, it was still for sacrifice, for incense, or for musical instruments, &c. that is, for some positive or ceremonious part of religion; but the natural

natural worship of prayers and praises offered to God, or attending to the ministry of his word whereby we might learn his will and our duty, was never confined to any certain place. Though there were no sacrifices offered in the captivity of *Babylon*, because they had not the holy ark, or temple, or tabernacle there; yet *Daniel* prayed continually, and *Ezekiel* preached or prophesied to the captives, afar off from *Judea* and *Jerusalem*, and all the holy places, which had been there appointed and sanctified. And though we do not read of their singing there, that was not from any danger of singing upon unconsecrated ground, but from the desolation of their circumstances, which required tears rather than music, and because they would not give occasion for new insults and scoffs from their barbarous enemies. The *cxxxviii. Psalm* itself was a divine song, which was written on that occasion, and probably might be sung there in private, though not when the *Babylonians* were in company.

It is granted indeed, that all the parts of natural worship, such as hearing the word of God, offering prayers and devout songs of praise to him, were also required, or rather implied and supposed, often if not always, to attend these positive institutions and revealed ceremonies at the temple or tabernacle. The house of God is always a house of prayer, *Matt. xxi. 13.* And God who dwells in *Zion* is said to inhabit the praises of *Israel*, *Psal. xxii. 3.* But no part of mankind were ever forbid to offer this sort of worship in other places; no, not in the strictest times of the *jewish* religion.

When sacrifices and all such ceremonies were confined to the tabernacle and the temple, still the people might meet together to pray to God, or to praise him, or to hear his word in any place whatsoever, through all the land of *Canaan*, when it did not interfere with the appointed duties of the tabernacle, or the temple: Or otherwise, the people in so large a country would have had but very little public worship among them, if all the nation had no other place to attend on it, but the temple or tabernacle.

Thence came the custom of erecting synagogues or convenient houses for *jewish* assemblies to worship God. These were built in many places of the land of *Israel*: some hundreds are said to be in *Jerusalem* itself: And these were not of peculiar divine appointment, because only natural worship was performed in them\*. It was the prudence of good men agreeing to wait on God in the practice of natural religion, prayer, praise, and hearing his word, which built such convenient places for worshipping assemblies to meet in their several towns and cities, There they came together every sabbath, and worshipped God, *Acts xv. 21.* “*Moses*, of old time, hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath-day.” How old or ancient these times were is hard to determine. It is highly probable, that synagogues were erected in the land of *Canaan*, long before the captivity of *Babylon*. The *lxxiv. Psalm* speaks of them, “that the enemy had not only cast fire into the sanctuary, and defiled the dwelling-place of the name of God to the ground, that is, the temple; but they had also burned up all the synagogues of God in the land.” These places of worship were greatly encouraged and honoured by our saviour himself, preaching often in them. *Matt. iv. 23. Luke iv. 15.*

There were also prayer-houses, built in mountains and solitary places by the *Jews*, in which people might retire, and travellers might pray to God in secret, free from disturbance,

\* Though the law of *Moses*, and the writings of the prophets, were read weekly in the synagogues, which were all revelations from God; yet, whensoever God has revealed his mind and will in writing, it is but a piece of natural divine service, to read and publish this among the people. The light of nature teaches this, and the law of nature requires it.

disturbance, and perhaps from the inconveniences of the weather also: These were called by a greek name, "proseuchai," and were also approved by *Christ*, for he used them for this holy purpose, *Luke vi. 12.* "He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in a prayer-house of God," as the greek word most properly implies. Now, these examples which are so encouraged by our saviour and his apostles, as well as from the reason and necessity of the thing, give us abundant encouragement to build convenient places for public worship under the christian dispensation\*. And blessed be God, who has given this church and congregation, in the midst of which we are now worshipping, such a convenient building as this is, and who inspired the hearts of his people with liberality answerable to such an occasion.

PROPOSITION V. "When God was pleased to put an end to this *jewish* dispensation, and all that typical scheme of worship, with it's forms and ceremonies, by the coming of the *Messiah*, he put an end also to all the holiness of places." He removed his dwelling from places made with hands, and dwelt bodily in the man *Jesus Christ* as his noblest tabernacle. The substance being come, the shadows must fly away: for all these things were only figures for the time then present. And God therefore entirely finished all that shadowy frame of things which he erected for the *jewish* church, and abolished his own ancient ordinances, which affixed holiness to places, to mountains, or cities, or edifices †, and confined his worship to any particular place: Nor does our blessed saviour require or permit christians to make new, holy places of their own, *John iv. 21.* "The hour cometh, saith our saviour, when ye shall be confined to worship God the Father neither in this mountain, *Gerizim*, which you *Samaritans* suppose to be holy, nor at *Jerusalem* which God appointed to be the holy place for his own worship: But the time comes, and is just now at hand, when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, without regard to particular places; for it is such the Father seeketh to worship him;" Such persons shall find acceptance of him, wheresoever they pay their homage to him, without any distinction of places. Every place, where God is sincerely honoured, shall be as holy for this purpose, as *Jerusalem* ever was. This is true christian liberty.

And this is the sense of the primitive christian churches, as you may see in the writings of the antient fathers. *Clemens Alexandrinus* saith thus: "Every place in truth is holy, where we receive any knowledge of God:" and *Justin Martyr*, who was before him, writes, "All the sacrifices that are offered to God through the name of *Christ* in every place of the earth by the christians, God accepts them, and witnesses that they are well-pleasing to him:" And therefore, though, in times of peace, they had convenient and fixed places for public worship, yet in times of persecution, as *Dionysius*

VOL. II.

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\* The christian churches, and their constitution and worship is agreed by learned men to come much nearer to the assemblies and worship, in *jewish* synagogues, than to that of the temple.

† It was a vain and idle imagination among the popish devotees, that holiness still belongs to those towns, or spots of ground, or buildings, such as *Judea* and *Jerusalem*, where *David* lived and worshipped, where *Christ* and his apostles travelled and preached, and to the sepulchre and the garden wherein the body of *Jesus* was buried. This foolish notion worked up by the popes and priests of those blind ages, sent out thousands from their native homes, sauntering over sea and land in silly pilgrimages to *Jerusalem*. This set the princes of *Europe* on fire with frantic zeal to recover the holy land, and those holy places out of the hands of the *turkish* powers who possessed them. This was the spring of those cruises or holy wars, to which the pope sent kings and their armies, one age after another, on a ridiculous errand; to the destruction of many thousand lives of their subjects, and the utter neglect of their own important affairs at home. And if *Tasso* the *italian* poet had not been a great bigot, he would never have employed and abused a noble muse to celebrate the knight-errantry of such wild attempts and achievements: Nor would *Casimire Sarbiewski*, that admirable *polish* genius, have wasted such sublime odes in giving alarms to christian princes, at the beginning of the last century, to pursue this impertinence of the holy war.

of *Alexandria* saith, "Our place of assembly is a field, a desert, a ship, a public inn, or a prison," or wherever they could securely join together in religious service.

When God appointed a church for himself in one nation, he appointed a general place of worship there, to which all the males of the tribes of *Israel* were obliged to resort, and pay their homage to him three times a year. But our Lord *Jesus* has now sent his apostles through the nations to gather a church to himself from among all the inhabitants of the world; and he has appointed, shall I say, a large and extensive temple for himself, that is, the whole earth, wheresoever any true worshippers are found in it. Our divines generally suppose that glorious prophecy, *Isaiab* lxvi. 1, 2. must refer to the days of the gospel, because of many plain expressions in the context relating to that state: And we think that all the holiness that belonged formerly to places of worship, is foretold to be abolished there. "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: Where is the house that ye build unto me; and where is the place of my rest? All these heavens and earth hath my hand made, and those things have been, that is, houses and temples for me to rest in; they have been, saith the Lord, but their time is finished now; and to this man will I look, and regard this worshipper, who is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word, wheresoever he shall call upon me and worship me."

The first martyr *Stephen*, when he cites this very place of the prophet in his speech to the *Jews*, *Acts* vii. 49. designs to let them know, that the holiness of their temple, in which they boasted, was just at an end: "The most high dwelleth not in temples made with hands;" his habitation is not confined to material buildings.

The gospel, in its religious worship, comes much nearer to natural religion in this respect, that there are very few special rites and ceremonies that belong to it: And God sees there is no need of appointing any particular place for christian worship, since we have but these two plain ceremonies to perform, baptism and the Lord's-supper.

Since the great God has been pleased to put down and abolish the holy and consecrated places of his own appointment, I cannot find the text wherein he has given to men any order or authority to pretend to make other places holy. Mortal men can never put holiness in ground or buildings, where God has not put it. No pompous ceremonies, no solemn forms, no magnificent appearances, no gaudy or golden solemnities can sanctify any place unto God and his worship, or make it more holy than it was before: And whatsoever fooleries and ridiculous rites or notions are found in the church of *Rome* in this case \*, I am well persuaded our wiser brethren of the church of *England* do not, cannot believe them to be of any value or importance, in order to make the worship more acceptable to God.

They are of opinion indeed, that it is a very proper thing for christians to build large and convenient edifices, where considerable assemblies may meet together to worship God in and through *Jesus Christ*: They suppose, that nothing indecent should be done in these buildings, to bring them into contempt, and that they should usually be separated

\* It is no wonder, that the church of *Rome* should pretend to make common things and places holy, by the consecration of their bishops, when every priest, among them, assumes a power to turn a bit of senseless paste, into the holy body and blood of our blessed saviour. Their ceremonies at the consecration of a church are so numerous and theatrical, that it would be very tedious to recite them: I shall only therefore, for a specimen, present you with a short abstract of the form of ceremonies, for blessing the first stone of any church, that is to be built, and this may be done by a common priest, provided he has power given him by the bishop. See the appendix at the end of this discourse.

rated and kept for the sacred purposes of worship, for which they are built: And I think the protestant dissenters are of the same opinion.

They believe also, that when a commodious building is erected for the worship of God, it is a very decent thing to begin the worship at that place, with solemn prayer or addresses to God, that the solemnities of the christian religion, which are performed there, may find acceptance of the God of heaven through *Jesus Christ* their saviour; and that the christian ordinances, there celebrated, may be blessed to the edification of the souls of men: Nor do the dissenters differ from them in this practice, for we are met together here, this day, for this very purpose.

It is true, the conformists have been pleased to call this the consecration of their churches; but though the dissenters use not that name, when they begin to worship in their new erected buildings or meeting-houses, yet they generally suppose and intend these buildings should be set apart chiefly for this end, nor should be usually employed for mean, or dishonourable, or ridiculous purposes in human life, without some appearing necessity of it, or some very great convenience to be obtained thereby, which might overbalance the mere considerations of decency and propriety.

Reason and humanity seem to dictate this separation or appointment of buildings for public worship. Should the senate-house where our law-givers assemble be used for a theatre or droll-house, or for idle puppet-shews? Should the council-board be made a drinking or gaming table when the king is absent? Or the presence-chamber be an entertaining room for public mimics and scaramouches to divert the mob, as soon as his majesty is departed? Or is it proper that a place, built for divine service, should be alternately employed for the fooleries of human life to appear in, when the worship is ended? This would unite ideas which are extremely distant, and blend together solemnity and ridicule. This would too nearly join things divine and jocular, and mingle the images of such scenes in the fancy, as should for ever be kept separate.

If such things have been ever done, surely it has not been matter of choice, but necessity, when the worshippers have been constrained to meet in such rooms, having no fitter place of worship near at hand. The common prudence of mankind, and natural decency in general, would seem to forbid it. When we erect a house for the worship of God, we would not chuse to couple it with any ludicrous or dishonourable ideas.

But though our friends here have built this house purely for divine worship, and we are all of us engaged this day in addressing the majesty of heaven, that, when the congregation attends here, he would condescend to favour them with his divine presence and blessing; yet all this human prudence, this natural decency, and all these prayers do not amount to the sanctifying the spot of ground or the building, so as to make it holier than the rest, or put any such holiness upon it as belonged to the *jewish* tabernacle or temple, where it was sinful either to work or play.

It must be confessed indeed, that some of the forms of expression which have been used in consecrations, and applied to new-erected chapels and churches in our nation, do carry too evident airs or appearances of superstition, as though men could put holiness into them: But we suppose, that these things were some of the relics of the popish religion, that were not quite swept away when the reformation brought in better christianity. How few wise men are there, amongst all our brethren in the national church, that would now-a-days approve of the ridiculous ceremonies, rites, and gestures, whereby archbishop *Laud*, heretofore, consecrated *Creed* church, near *Aldgate*, in *London*, and several others\*?

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\* A short abstract of this is found in *Mr. Neal's history of the puritans*, vol. II. p. 219. and a longer account in *Rusworth's collections*.

To make this agreement of sentiments, between us and our brethren, yet further appear, let these three things be considered.

1. That many of the public churches, notwithstanding all their consecrations, are frequently used by the approbation of the minister, the church-wardens, and the whole parish, for other purposes than religious worship; such as the assembling of the vestry-men to chuse parish-officers and settle parish taxes, the choice of aldermen and common-council-men in the city of *London*, in which they too often find such quarrels and mutual reproaches, such railing, such fraud and falshood in procuring votes at elections, as is very improper to be indulged, or even the probability of it admitted in a place, which has any real holiness in it. How many other secular affairs are sometimes transacted in churches in the country, and in church-yards too, though they are consecrated, because they are large and convenient? How many consecrated churches, are appointed to teach little children their A, B, C, and all the rudiments of learning in them? And are not boys often indulged to play in churches, while men meet to ring bells there merely for diversion, or for any trivial purpose? Surely these places are not supposed to have much real holiness in them, where these things are continually practised, and universally connived at, if not publicly allowed.

2. Consider how many chapels in the nation are erected and used for religious worship, without any consecration at all: And the divine service is justly supposed to be as effectually performed, and as much accepted of God, as if it had enjoyed all the ceremonious formalities in the world to consecrate it. Nor are any former impurities supposed to render a convenient place unfit for divine worship, though there have been no purifying rites and forms to sanctify it. Has the royal banqueting-house, which was erected in the last age, and where our former kings celebrated other sort of festivals, than those of the apostles and martyrs, has it been ever consecrated by any of these forms, in order to make it a holy place for divine worship, which is regularly and constantly performed there in the present age?

3. I could never learn, that the consecration of new churches and chapels, has any certain set of ceremonies, appointed for it by the laws of the land. There is indeed an ancient form preserved, whereby *Lancelot Andrews*, bishop of *Winchester*, in the year 1617. consecrated a small chapel at *Peartree* near *Southampton*, which I have several times seen, and gazed at it, as that very building which gives us the model for our present consecrations. But I have not found any sufficient authentic acts of the kings or parliaments of *England*, whereby this is required or made necessary\*.

Upon the whole then, I cannot find any great difference between the sentiments of the dissenters and the conformists, of our age, in this point, among wise and thinking persons. They seem to agree, there is no such holiness in places, as weaker minds imagine.

PROPOSITION VI. "Since there is no particular place appointed of God where christians must worship him; then we cannot learn, where he has recorded his name any other way, but by the worship itself and it's intire conformity to God's own ordinance and appointment." God resides in the midst of his people, wheresoever his divine institutions are celebrated, according to his mind and will. *Psal.* lxxviii. 18. compared with *Eph.* iv. 8. inform us, that when our saviour ascended on high, he received gifts for men, and he diffused those gifts to make pastors and teachers, to build up this church amongst the gentile nations, who, at that time were called the rebellious

\* This form of the consecration of churches, is found in bishop *Sparrow's* book, called "a rationale of the common prayer," in octavo; and in the same author's "collection of the articles, canons, &c." of the church of *England* in quarto.

rebellious; and he did it for this reason, "That the Lord God might dwell amongst them, as he did in *Sinai*, as he did in *Sion*:" And where these pastors or teachers celebrate his own ordinances, in their purity, there the great God condescends to dwell, and records his name there.

Time and place are necessary circumstances of all human actions, whether natural, civil, or religious. If God has appointed the time, let us keep to his appointments, and let us worship him one day in seven, according to his original institution; and let that be on the first day of the week, when our Lord rose from the dead, and his apostles directed the churches to attend on their exalted saviour in religious worship. But if he has not appointed the place, we are left to the best use of our reason and christian prudence, to raise our synagogues in the most convenient ground, and to agree upon our meetings or assemblies for the worship of God, where it may best suit, the conveniency of the church, or the greatest part of the worshippers. And since God has appointed no particular spot of ground, no special building for this purpose, under the gospel, we may assure ourselves, that whosoever worships him in spirit and in truth, will find acceptance in every nation, and in every place.

The parts of natural worship, are always the same, throughout all ages, that is, to attend to what God speaks, both in the dictates of reason and in his word, read or explained; to offer up our prayers to him for the mercies we want, and to celebrate his praises, and shew our thankfulness; these are accepted of God in all places. And as for the two ceremonies of baptism, and the Lord's-supper, since they are attached to no particular place by the appointment of our saviour, let us perform these solemnities in any convenient place, according to his will, and there God will reside among his people. Wheresoever the children of men separate themselves from the wicked world, and devote themselves to God in and through *Jesus* the mediator, and practise pure and undefiled religion, there is *Sion* under the gospel; "there will he take up his habitation and his rest, for he hath desired it:" *Psal.* cxxxii. 13, 14. "There is the temple of the living God, for he hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people," *2 Cor.* vi. 16, 17.

Here indeed, a question may arise, "How shall we know with any certainty, where God has recorded his name? or what are the chief and most particular things, whereby we may judge, whether our religious worship be according to his appointment." To this I briefly answer under these four heads.

1. By endeavouring as far as possible to find out his mind and will, concerning his worship, both in the duties of natural and revealed religion. God has given us both the light of reason and the light of scripture to instruct us herein: Where reason fails us, the scripture directs; and where the scripture is silent, there we must betake ourselves to our own reason and conscience, to determine our practice in those things which are necessary to be determined; but without inventing new ceremonies out of our own fancy, and appointing rites and forms which God has never appointed; or persisting in those which he has already abolished. Let us see to it, that such truths be published amongst us, as are agreeable to the written word, and that due honour is paid, to all the discoveries of his will, that he has made, in every part of our religious solemnities. A little mistake in these things, where the heart is sincerely inquisitive after the mind and will of God, shall never make our worship unacceptable to his mercy.

2. His name is recorded only there, "where worship is paid him in and through *Jesus Christ*, the great mediator. Some have supposed his human nature to be that  
greater

greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands," of which *St. Paul* speaks, *Heb. ix. 11.* Whether that be so or no, this is certain; it is through his hands, who is our great high-priest over the house of God, that our worship must be directed to the Father; "for the name of God is in him, it is the man *Jesus*, who is the one mediator between God and man. *1 Tim. ii. 5.* in whom all the fulness of the godhead dwells bodily:" *Col. ii. 9.* And it is only, on such worship, as is offered through God's incarnate Son, that he has recorded his own name: It is only in and by the name of his Son that we can have access to the Father, "no man cometh to the Father but by him," *John xiv. 6.* "It is in his name he has taught us to offer up all our prayers," *John xvi. 24.* "If we enter into the holiest, that is, if our souls ascend to heaven in devotion, we must do it by the blood of *Jesus*, as a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us," *Heb. x. 20.* "Whatsoever is done in word or deed, must be to the glory of God through *Jesus Christ*;" so this great apostle *Paul* requires, *Col. iii. 17.*

3. If we would have the name of God recorded and stamped on our worship, it must be performed through the desired aids of his own spirit. This is another qualification of true christian worship, such as God will accept," *Eph. ii. 18.* Both "Jews and gentiles have access by this one spirit unto the Father, and both grow up together as an holy temple in the Lord. We are all builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit," verse 21, 22.

4. If we would see the name of God, yet further recorded upon his worship, "let us take care to awaken every christian virtue and grace into exercise, whensoever we are engaged in religious actions." Let us worship him in spirituality, and in sincerity of soul, God loves those only who adore him in spirit and in truth: Let us pay our honours to his majesty, with great humility and self-abasement, at his foot, remembering we are, not only feeble creatures made out of the dust, but sinful creatures bowing before an almighty being of perfect holiness: Let us pray to him with fervency of spirit, and awaken all the powers of our nature to attend upon his word, with devout reverence and submission. When he speaks to us in the ministry thereof, we should diligently guard against every wandering thought, and keep out every flying vanity from our hearts. Let our hope in his promises be steadfast and lively, and our dependence be on his grace. Let us take heed, that we have no false, or carnal, or hypocritical designs in our appearance before God, and our addresses to him; but let it be our zealous and affectionate desire to glorify our heavenly Father, to honour our great mediator, and to seek the eternal happiness of our selves and our fellow-creatures.

Where these things are found, God has certainly recorded his name: There he dwells in such an assembly, and will encourage every sincere worshipper. But this brings me to the last proposition.

PROPOSITION VII. "Wheresoever public worship is performed according to the will of God, in the instances before-mentioned, we have everlasting encouragement to hope, that he will condescend to meet his people and bless them." His ancient promise, which he sent by *Moses* to his chosen people in my text, continues it's force through all generations. It is in *Sion*, that he assures us often in the old testament, "that he will meet his people: There he has commanded the blessing, even life for evermore," *Psalms cxxxiii. 3.* Every gospel church, constituted according to the appointment of *Christ*, is a little sanctuary, a little *Sion*, and hath the blessings of *Sion* belonging to it. Many of the promises, which are literally made to *Israel*, and *Jerusalem*, and mount *Sion*, are applied to christians, under the new testament, by the apostles



apostles themselves; and by their example, we are encouraged in the same manner to apply them.

Our blessed saviour himself also has given us assurance, *Matth. xviii. 20.* "That where two or three of his followers are met together in his name, and according to his institutions, there he himself is, and will be in the midst of them." The Father and the Son will come and dwell with his people in such assemblies, and diffuse divine blessings amongst them. Let us take heed that we have the name and the authority of God, and of his Son *Jesus Christ*, stamped upon all the parts of our worship, and we need not doubt his presence and blessing.

But upon the mention of such a promise, our desire and zeal should awake, and earnestly enquire, how glorious and how various those blessings are, which God has promised to his people, where he has recorded his name. Let us take a delightful survey of them, and, by the exercise of faith and hope, appropriate them to our selves, in every place, and in every season, where we attend on the pure worship of God.

1. Concerning *Sion* and all her assemblies for worship, it is promised, "that her priests shall be clothed with salvation," *Psalms cxxxii. 16.* If they are such, as our exalted saviour calls to be the ministers of his gospel, they shall be filled with his saving graces, they shall be furnished with the gifts of knowledge and utterance, answerable to their call and duty, they shall shine in these divine ornaments, they shall be like the high-priest of old, whose "clothing was made for glory and beauty, while the sacred perfume was poured upon his head, which trickled down to the skirts of his garments," *Exod. xxviii. 40. Psalm cxxxiii. 2, 3.* "The ministers of *Zion* shall spread the favour of the knowledge of *Christ*, and his all-sufficient power to redeem and save. His name from the lips of his ministers, shall be as ointment poured forth; They shall diffuse the sweet odours of the gospel of *Christ*, to refresh and revive the humble and weary souls, that attend on his holy ordinances, wherein they minister. They shall have their various gifts of elocution, exhortation and consolation, awakened into a pleasurable exercise, and shall obtain blessed success, amongst the souls and consciences of the worshippers. It shall be like the dew on the mountains of *Zion*, where God has commanded the blessing of everlasting life.

Now can we, who are ministers of the word, rest satisfied without feeling some of this divine benediction, when we exercise our constant ministry in holy things? Can we go on, from week to week, still labouring in a formal round of services, and still contented without this heavenly favour? Are we not as it were clothed with salvation, by the messages of peace and love, which we are commissioned to convey to sinful men, in the name of *Christ*? And shall we be contented for many years together, without seeing any divine success attending them? O may the ministrations and messages of grace, which shall be delivered from week to week in this place, in this new building, be attended with the divine influences of the spirit of God, that your worthy and beloved pastor may triumph in diffusing the knowledge of *Christ*, and become the favour of life unto life, to a multitude of souls!

2. It is promised, again unto *Sion*, "that it shall be said concerning her, this and that man was born there," *Psalms lxxxvii. 2, 3.* There shall be many souls, who are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, called, as it were, out of their graves, they shall be raised from the dead, they shall be born unto God in the assemblies of his people, under the reign of the *Messiah*. It is evident this *Psalms* belongs to the christian state and dispensation, for it prophesies concerning *Egypt* and *Babylon*; *Tyre* and *Philistia*, that the heathen countries shall become converts, the gentiles shall be born a-new, shall be made the children of God in *Sion*.

It is by the word of God preached in the assemblies, that men are regenerated or born again, *1 Cor.* iv. 15. *1 Pet.* i. 23. every divine truth contributing toward this blessed work. The whole counsel of God for the salvation of men must be preached in every place: The knowledge of the law for the discovery of our sin, and danger, and distress, and the grace of the gospel for the relief of the distressed. "It is this gospel of *Christ* that is the power of God to salvation both to *Jews* and gentiles," *Rom.* i. 16. "In *Zion* the arm of the Lord shall be revealed, and this divine report shall be believed." *Isai.* liii. 1. The law of God may and must be preached with it's severity of terror and it's strictness of demand, that sinners may be awakened and convinced of their guilt and weakness, of their helpless and hopeless state in themselves, that they may fly to the refuge that is set before them in the gospel. And where the law kills, the gospel can give life: Where the law works despair, the gospel provides hope. Faith and hope soften the soul to repentance, and work up the heart to a new, a holy, and an obedient temper, by the influence and motive of love. By this means, the loose, and the vile, and the sensual sinner is born into a new life of temperance; and the profane renounces his impiety, and grows in love with religion and godliness. *Sion* is the usual place, where these wonders, of converting grace, are wrought among men, by the presence of the quickening spirit.

Is it not a sad and dismal thing to read what *Solomon* speaks, *Eccles.* viii. 10. Is it not a most lamentable and deplorable case, that multitudes of the wicked in our days, should come and go from the place of the holy, from the assemblies for divine worship, and abide still dead in sin, and are buried without repentance? Let us enquire of our consciences, is this the case of any soul of us here? Let us awaken our hearts this day to cry earnestly unto God, that we may never more come and depart, from the places where God is worshipped, without being born unto God, without being regenerated by the word, without being made new creatures.

1. Shall I take the freedom to address you, more particularly, who belong to this congregation, and who usually meet together for divine services? Fathers and masters, do you bring your families with you to the place of worship, and never concern your selves, whether this blessing of *Sion* attend your household? Whether your children or your servants be born again there? Or, whether they continue still in their state of nature, guilt and wretchedness? Tender mothers, are you contented to have your sons and daughters attend you to the solemn assembly, and still be the children of the first *Adam*, in all the ruins of his fall, the children of *Satan* and the children of wrath? And can your eyes look upon them with satisfaction and pleasure, and never drop a tear of pity on their circumstances, while they are not yet become the sons and daughters of the living God? Speak each of you to your own hearts in secret, and charge them never to be at rest in a thoughtless indolence, never to cease your addresses to the mercy-seat, till you can see some of the happy effects, of this promise, manifested to your selves, and to all that are near and dear to you.

3. It is foretold concerning *Sion* and the church of God, "that the crown of *David* shall flourish there, that his horn shall be made to bud, and his enemies be clothed with shame." *Psal.* cxxxii. 18. *Jesus Christ*, the true *David*, shall have his head crowned with glory and honour, in the assemblies of his people, where God has recorded his name. Here shall he receive the first homage of numerous subjects; "they shall be made a willing people in the day of his power." *Psal.* cx. 3. Hither shall they come from the family of sin, and *Satan*, and death, and here shall they be made living subjects of *Jesus* their king. His horn shall bud, his power shall reveal itself, he shall have a new seed to serve him, growing up continually under

der the instructions of the sanctuary. "The Lord shall send the rod of his strength out of *Zion*, and *Jesus* shall rule and reign in the midst of his enemies," and melt and soften the hearts of thousands of them into willing subjects. *Satan*, his grand enemy, shall be put to shame, by the loss of so many souls out of his dominions: All his arts of mischief to ruin mankind shall be confounded; the church of *Jesus* our king shall never be lost or die, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." *Matth.* xvi. 18.

I persuade my self this promise has been fulfilled and acknowledged in your former place of worship: *Jesus* your king has been honoured in all his various offices, graces and glories: His empire has been enlarged by the addition of many subjects: Your own souls are thankful witnesses of this grace, and we cannot but hope and pray, that this new-erected building, and those that attend on God here, shall be witnesses of the same honours done to the blessed saviour, and a larger increase of his kingdom.

4. Another promise made to *Sion*, is, "that the poor and the hungry shall be satisfied with bread there, even with living bread, and the water of life, for God will abundantly bless the provision of his gospel-sanctuary," *Psalms* cxxxii. 15. It is the poor alone, and the needy, and the humble in spirit that shall be fed with rich grace and abundant plenty; but those who are full of themselves, and are rich in their high opinion of their own circumstances, they shall be sent empty away. God will here provide supplies for the wants of every inhabitant in *Sion*. The inhabitant shall not say any longer, I am sick, they shall be healed of their spiritual diseases by the sanctifying spirit, they shall be made to lift up their heads, and rejoice by the Spirit the comforter, for their iniquities shall be forgiven them through the blood of the Son of God. *Isa.* xxxiii. 20, 24.

All the particular necessities of hungry souls shall be here supplied: Those who come seeking and longing for some divine relief under their difficulties, shall often find a word suited to their case, they shall be supplied out of the stores of the sanctuary. Those who are bewildered in the dark, and are doubtful in their way, shall find a hint of happy advice; a beam of divine light, shining in their hearts, shall point them to the path, to which they should walk. Those who are mourning under a sense of guilt, or under the pressure of some heavy burden, shall be relieved and comforted out of the divine promises, and find the burden of their hearts made easy. Those who are bowed down, shall be supported and raised with a word of heavenly consolation; those who complain of hardness of heart, shall meet with a word of love and power, that shall melt their souls into tenderness and penitence, and mould them to the will of God their saviour. Those who are surrounded with many and mighty adversaries, shall experience new strength conveyed to their hearts to wage the holy war with vigour, that they may come off conquerors; and those who are dying under a sense of sin, shall find divine life and salvation here. God will meet his own people, and supply them with every needful blessing of the covenant of grace.

5. In *Sion*, the worshippers shall be made joyful in the house of prayer; and the saints shall shout aloud for joy, *Isa.* lvi. 6, 7. *Psalms* cxxxii. 16. They shall offer up their praises with holy cheerfulness, and delight themselves in the blessings of the sanctuary. Surely when the priests are clothed with salvation, when the crown of *David* flourishes, and his kingdom is enlarged, when poor perishing creatures are born into a new life, by the powers and provisions of grace, then the saints cannot but sing and rejoice. "When the sons of the stranger shall join themselves to the Lord, he will bring them to *Sion*; and make them joyful there, according to his promise."

promise." *Isai.* lvi. 6, 7. He will exalt their joy into shouting, he will raise their delight to a high degree, in his holy ordinances, where his name is recorded.

May I inquire of you, christians, have you never found this prophecy fulfilled, in your former attendance, on the ordinances of divine worship? Have you never experienced, that this promise has been made good to you, and this divine joy conferred upon you? Take it as a pledge and earnest of the full satisfactions and delights of the house of God on high, and in such proportion as it makes you holy and humble.

Happy will it be for your minister, if he can say from sweet experience, that he has been clothed with divine salvation, when he ministers in this place, that he has been taught to spread the favour of the knowledge of *Christ*, through a numerous assembly, in this building. Happy for the people, when many of them shall be enabled to say, I was once blind and dead, but I was here awakened into divine light and life. I was new-born in *Sion*, and through the grace of God I am taken out of the family of *Satan*, and am become a son or a daughter of the most high. I was overwhelmed with fears about my soul, and with the terrors of God which hung about me, but here I found the way of salvation, by *Christ Jesus*, made known unto me; thus all my terrors were scattered, and divine peace was spoken to my conscience. I was pained at my heart, under a sense of my guilt, and from such a text of scripture, or from such a sermon, I found divine rest and relief. My inward corruptions were strong, my irregular passions were wont to get the victory over me, but here I met with a word of power and grace to subdue them. I was entangled with a strong temptation, and here the snare was broken. I was oppressed with heavy sorrows, and I found support and comfort from the word of God, which was dispensed in this place: And, may this be the happy case, may this be the salvation and the joy of multitudes, that shall attend the future seasons of worship here!

#### The U S E.

It is now time to conclude my discourse, and I shall do it by setting before you these four plain and natural lessons, which may be derived from it.

1. We may learn by this discourse, our obligations to give thanks to the Lord, for the general and special instances of his grace and goodness to us, in the things whereof I have been speaking. Come then and bless the Lord, all our souls, and let all that is within us bless his holy name.

That he has built houses and habitations for himself, in this sinful miserable world; that he has not banished us for ever from his sight, and retired far away and withdrawn himself for ever, from such a defiled and wretched place, as this earth is made by the iniquity of it's inhabitants. Bless the Lord, that he has recorded his name upon any thing that we can do, or we can enjoy, and that he has permitted sinners to make any approaches to him in all the ages of mankind, since the guilt and fall of our first parent; that he has given so many rich and precious promises for our encouragement to attend his habitation, and that he has ordained institutions of solemn worship for us to maintain any communion with himself.

Bless him, that he has sent his gospel to *Great-Britain*, to enlighten us from heaven, while other nations lie in gross darkness and death; that he has taught us his name and his grace, and the forms of his worship; that he has called the inhabitants of our islands to assemble together in churches; that he has raised these dwelling-places for himself in the midst of us, for every church of *Christ*, even in the heathen nations,

nations, is a little *Sion*, a sanctuary where God dwells. We cannot say, God has his name at all recorded in the large nations of heathenism and idolatry, where the true God is not worshipped, nor his Son *Jesus* known; *Jesus*, in whom, his name dwells for ever. We can hardly say, his name is recorded in popish countries, though there is abundance of blasphemous and superstitious use of it there; but idolatry and antichristian worship are powerful and prevalent over every thing that is evangelical and divine. It is the name of *Babylon* and antichrist that are recorded there, rather than the names of God and his Son. Blessed be God, from our very souls, that our lot is not cast in such a land, where gods of wood and stone are worshipped, where the name of the true God is not recorded, and where we can have no special promises, no reasonable expectation and hope, that he should meet and bless us.

Let us again give thanks to our God, who has so formed our civil constitution and government, at this day, that we have liberty to worship God, through *Jesus Christ* the mediator, in his own appointed ways; that we are not persecuted from corner to corner, but in every place, we are permitted to erect synagogues for divine service, and to attend on our God in those ordinances, on which he has stamped his own name. How many scattered christians, are there up and down in the popish nations, where they are forbid to meet in any place for the solemnizing of true christian worship? How many nations are there where the places of protestant worship are utterly demolished, and christians are not suffered to unite their prayers and praises to the God whom they adore, in spirit and in truth?

Let us yet again give thanks unto God, that, in the course of his providence, we have convenient places to assemble for his pure religion; that we are provided with so many advantages, that we are not exposed to the inconveniencies of wind, or rain, or sultry seasons, and are secured from the disturbances of a sinful world. Let us bless God, that he has so plentifully stored the provinces of this land, with such buildings, that we are not exposed to the labour and hardships of long travel, which was a burdensome ceremony imposed on the *Jews*, who were required to wait upon their God three times a year, where he recorded his name, at *Shiloh*, or at *Jerusalem*; but we may meet him nearer at hand, and receive his public blessings, in so many of the streets of this great city, and in so many of the towns and villages of the *british* isles.

And you, my friends of this congregation, have abundant occasion and reason for thankfulness, that God by his providence has fixed your assembly in so convenient a place, wherein you begin this day to pay him your worship. May you long enjoy it in undisturbed peace! O blessed be his name, that many of you have found God with you in former places of assembling, and that you are daily training up under his divine instructions and blessings, for the worship and happiness of the heavenly state, and for his more joyful and immediate presence.

2. There is a lesson of self-inquiry to be derived from this discourse. Do we, on good ground, believe, that the name of God is recorded on the worship which we offer to him? Otherwise we cannot possibly claim or reasonably expect the accomplishment of this divine promise. Let us examine our consciences on this head according to the evidences before given of such worship, whereon God has stamped his authority and his name.

Do we heartily and sincerely seek, to learn the mind and will of God in his own word, concerning the religion that we should chuse, and the worship which we perform? Do we engage in such services, as we find directed and appointed by him? Are the sermons on which we attend, the prayers and the songs which we offer up to

God, and all the ministrations of his holy ordinances amongst us, such as are formed and guided by the rules of holy scripture, so far as scripture has given us any prescriptions about them? Do we take care to perform all that God has enjoined as far as possible, and do we take as much care to let nothing creep into our worship, but what the word of God or the necessary reason of things dictates to us? Do we make no additions, of our own, to the religious practices which God has enjoined, or the ceremonies which he has instituted? And can we appeal to God, so far as we know our own hearts, and can understand his word, that we practise nothing herein but according to his mind and will? Again,

Do we offer up all our religious services to the Father, in the name and by the mediation of his Son? Do we seek to draw near to the Father, only, in that new and living way, which he has ordained? Do we seek for acceptance at the throne, through the atoning sacrifice of our great high-priest, and through his intercession, as our advocate at the right hand of God? Can we appeal concerning our own conduct herein even to our Lord *Jesus Christ*, himself, "Lord, thou, who knowest all things, knowest, that we love thee, and that we would never draw near to the mercy-seat without thee.

Do we pray for the assistance of the holy Spirit of God in all our acts of devotion and attendance on his word? Do we seek, to have our minds enlightened, to have our thoughts directed, and our wills made obedient by this blessed Spirit? Do we seek, earnestly, for the influences of this Spirit, to raise our hearts towards heaven, and to animate and warm all our affectionate powers, in religious worship? Do we depend on him for divine aids, so that we may get nearer to God by every part of the religious services we perform? Where the Spirit of God is utterly neglected, I fear it will be hard to prove that the name of God is recorded in that worship.

Do we endeavour to exercise every christian grace, suited to those parts of worship in which we are engaged? Do we appear before God, with all holy reverence of his majesty? Do we enter into his courts, even the assemblies of his people, with a religious temper of mind, desirous to see God in his sanctuary? Do we address him in prayer, with holy fervency for what we want, and yet with humble resignation to his wisdom and will? Do we keep our spirits intent and watchful, in the season of prayer, or do we let our thoughts wander, as they please, to the ends of the earth? Do we offer up our souls in sincere praises, and rejoice before the Lord in our holy songs? Do we attend, on the ministrations of his word, with trembling and fear, with hope and desire to profit? Do we long to learn something further concerning the will of our God and Father, concerning the characters and offices of our blessed *Jesus*, and all the glorious grace which the gospel contains? Do we receive the precepts of God concerning our duty to God and to our neighbours, with all holy submission and obedience, and are none of his commands grievous to us? Do we relish the joys of his sanctuary, in this lower world, with a delightful expectation and hope of paying better worship to him, in a superior state? Are our souls daily growing up towards a more perfect conformity to the blessedness and the business of the heavenly world, so far as we are permitted to know it here on earth?

If we find these characters upon our selves, and on the worship which we perform, we may then reasonably hope, that God has recorded his name amongst us, and will come and meet us and bless us.

3. Another lesson we may learn here, is a direction what we should pray for, especially on this day, together with a strong encouragement for prayer, and expectation of the presence of God with us, and his blessing upon us? He has connected our duty with his promises, and we should encourage our faith, and learn to expect  
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the promise fulfilled, when, upon the sincerest searches of our own hearts, we find them engaged in a proper manner, in his service and our duty. We are met together this day, to pray that God would be pleased to accomplish his gracious word of promise, both to the minister and to the people, who hope to pay their worship to the great God, if he permit, for many following years in this place. Let our prayers then be directed by the divine words of promise. We would pray for all the blessings of *Sion* on you, who shall worship God here.

That your minister may be clothed with salvation, that he may diffuse the favour of the name of *Christ* in this place, with great success; that his gifts and graces may be multiplied and increased for your edification, and that his health may be restored and maintained to your great advantage and joy.

We would pray, that souls may be born again, in multitudes, in this place: That some may be taken, as it were, from *Egypt*, and from *Babylon*, from the vile and wicked generations of men, from the persecutors and the profligate of this world, and may be born into a new and divine life by the word of grace, as it is here ministered: That the lewd and the drunken, the profane and the vicious, if any such attend in this place, may be convinced of their sins here, may here be released from the bonds of their iniquities, and return no more to madness and folly: That the cruel and malicious may here be taught to put on meekness, and gentleness, and love, and the wrathful and passionate, learn to govern their spirits: That the covetous wretch may have his hands released from the greedy gripe of gold and silver, and his heart learn here to despise earthly possessions, in comparison of the riches of grace; and may seek after an inheritance more glorious, and more durable than lands or houses on earth. In short, we should pray that every part of the gospel of *Christ* may have it's due place, in the ministrations, which shall be performed here, that grace and duty may go hand in hand; and that many who are children of wrath, and dead in trespasses and sins, may here be created a-new in *Christ Jesus* unto good works, and made the children of *Sion*, the sons and daughters of God.

We would pray, that the crown of *David* may here flourish on his head, that *Jesus* the king of *Sion* may see a large increase of his kingdom, and many souls subjecting themselves to the scepter of his righteousness, and his mercy, and receive him in every sacred office he sustains for the salvation of sinful men.

We would pray, that the poor may be satisfied here with bread; that every hungry soul may find something here suited to his sacred appetite and pious desires, may find some word in the ministry, to relieve and support him, under every want, to advise and direct him, under every darkness and difficulty, and to strengthen him under every weakness of mind; that those who are poor in spirit, and empty and despairing in themselves, may be filled with all heavenly blessings, with pardon and peace, with righteousness and grace and holy consolation through *Jesus Christ*.

Let us put up our united prayers, that in this congregation, the "saints of God may shout aloud for joy;" that God may inhabit the praises of his people here, and that you may all be made joyful in this house of prayer; that ye may sing the songs of the lamb in this assembly, as well as the songs of *Moses* and *David*, and find divine pleasure here, raising your souls towards those rivers of pleasure, which flow at the right hand of God.

In fine, that you may have much of the presence of God with you, whensoever you shall meet together here, in the constant or occasional seasons of divine worship, and that he may sensibly fulfil all his words of promise.

4. The last lesson I would recommend to your learning here, is, “ a holy elevation and joy of soul in the faith and prospect of the heavenly worship, and the more complete accomplishment of all the best promises of God, in the heavenly *Jerusalem*, which is for ever holy, in the *Zion* which is above.” There surely he has recorded his name in all it's most glorious characters, for his noblest and brightest residence is there, among the innumerable company of angels and the church of the first-born on high. There he has stamped the name of his holiness and his majesty, the name of his justice and mercy, the name of his all-sufficiency and his faithfulness in eternal signatures, which shall never be blotted out. There he will meet his people, and bless them with everlasting blessings, such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive them. He will surely make them exceeding joyful, with the light of his countenance, in his house of praise, when earthly scenes shall vanish from the sight, and all that is low and mortal shall be forgotten.

There, we trust, you and your pastor shall appear, and you shall be his glory and his crown of rejoicing in that day, as he also shall be your's. Your appearance there will be an undoubted and eternal evidence, that he has not prayed or preached in vain, and that you have not heard the gospel from his lips in vain. There shall your mutual satisfactions rise high in your united songs; for it is there God has appointed the place of his everlasting worship, and the united devotions and joys of all his saints. With happy and unceasing harmony shall the song of *Moses*, and of the lamb be sung for all our deliverances and for all our salvations, while we travelled through the wilderness of this world, till he had brought us to the holy land of promise, and to eat the fruits of paradise. There shall we join with that unmeasurable assembly of angels, and with all the glorified saints that have gone before us, in one divine hymn of praise, “ salvation, honour and glory, to him that sits upon the throne, and to the lamb for ever.” Amen.

# A P P E N D I X

T O T H E

## T H I R D D I S C O U R S E.

*The blessing of a corner-stone, in the building of a popish church, taken out of the Rituale Romanum.*

**T**HE day before the first stone is blessed, let the priest fix a wooden cross on that spot of the ground where the altar is to stand; the next day this stone, which must be exactly square and well cornered, shall be blessed in this manner. The priest having put on his proper attire, his albe or surplice, his surcingle and other ecclesiastical robes, having some more priests and clerks with him, must bless the salt and the water, unless he has holy water ready before; and while the following psalm is sung by the clerks, he must sprinkle the place where the cross is with holy water,



water, saying, "Lord *Jesus Christ* put the sign of salvation in this place, and permit not the blasting angel to enter." Then the *lxxxiv. Psalm* is sung alternately with responses.

When the *Psalm* is ended, the priest turning to the place that was sprinkled, says, "Let us pray." "O Lord God, who although thou art not contained in the heavens and the earth, yet condescendest to have a house here, where thy name is daily invoked: Visit this place, we pray, with the light of thy countenance, by the intercession and merits of the blessed virgin, and of all the saints, and particularly saint *M.* or *N.* to whose honour this church is built, and purify it from all defilement, by the infusion of thy grace, and preserve it purified, &c.—that all spiritual wickednesses may fly from hence, by our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who lives and reigns with thee for ever." Amen.

Then he blesses the stone with the responses of the clerk or clerks thus. Priest. "Our help is in the name of the Lord." Resp. "Who made heaven and earth." Pr. "Let the name of the Lord be blessed." R. "Henceforth, and for evermore." Pr. "The stone which the builders rejected." R. "The same is become the head of the corner." Pr. "Thou art *Peter*." R. "And upon this rock will I build my church." Pr. "Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the holy Ghost." R. "As it was in the beginning, now is, and ever shall be." Amen.

"Let us pray." "Lord *Jesus Christ*, Son of the living God,—who art the corner-stone cut out of the mountain without hands, and the unchangeable foundation, confirm this stone which is now to be placed in thy name, &c." Amen.

Then the priest sprinkles the stone with holy water, and taking a knife, engraves, or scrapes, the sign of the cross on every side of it, saying, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost," making the sign of the cross at each of the three names. Amen.

"Let us pray." "Bless, O Lord, this creature of stone, making the sign of the cross, and grant by the invocation of thy holy name, that whosoever have assisted with a pure heart in building this church, may have health of body and the cure of their souls by *Christ* our Lord." Amen.

Afterwards let the ordinary litanies be said: Then the mortar being ready, and the mason standing by, the priest begins thus, the clerks following him. "*Jacob* rose up early in the morning, and took the stone, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it, and vowed a vow. Surely this place is holy, and I knew it not."

Then let the *cxxvii. Psalm* be read. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it, &c. Glory be to the Father, as it was in the beginning, &c." Which being said, the priest standing, touches, or lays his hand on the stone all the while the mason is placing it with the mortar, and says, "In the faith of *Jesus Christ* we place this chief stone in the foundation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost, that true faith may flourish here, and the fear of God, and the love of the brethren, &c." Speaking this, he makes a cross at each name in the trinity.

Then the priest sprinkles holy water upon the stone, saying, "Thou shalt sprinkle me, O Lord, with hyssop, and I shall be clean: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Then the *li. Psalm* is read. Then again, "Glory to the Father, &c." And if the foundations are laid open, he sprinkles holy water upon them all; but if they are not opened, he walks round the place designed for the foundation of the church, and begins to sprinkle, saying these words, and the clerks

clerks following, "O how dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God: This is the gate of heaven."

Then the lxxxvii. *Psalms* is read, "His foundation is in the holy mountains, &c." while he is sprinkling all the foundation, and the others repeating as a response, "O how dreadful is this place, &c." After all this, he adds at last. "Let us pray." "Almighty and merciful God, who hast given to thy priests such grace above other men, that whatsoever is perfectly and worthily done by them in thy name, shall be believed to be done by thee: We pray thine infinite mercy, that thou wouldst visit what we visit, that thou wouldst bless what we bless,—and at our entrance here, as mean as we are, let devils fly, and the angel of peace enter, by the merits of thy saints, through *Christ* our Lord," Amen. And with another short prayer the ceremony is ended.

After all this is done, and many other ceremonies which the priest performs towards blessing the church, and the walls of it when they are built, it is purified sufficiently to admit mass to be said in it: Yet still the consecration of the church is reserved for the bishop himself, at a proper season.

## D I S C O U R S E    I V .

*The jewish worship, and the christian compared; or, reasons why the worship and order of christian churches, are not so particularly prescribed, as those which Moses gave to the church of Israel.*

**I**F social religion and worship, or the communion of saints, as our creed expresses it, together with the duties that depend thereon, are so necessary to maintain christianity in the world, what reason can be given why our blessed Lord did not, in a more express and direct manner, institute the formation of christian churches, with all the parts of public worship and order, in the new testament? If church-worship be of such importance, why have we not all the affairs, that relate to the officers of a church, and their ministry, preaching, praying, and celebrating divine ordinances; more particularly described and appointed by an express command? Was not God pleased, to give express rules and orders, to the *Jews*, concerning their worship at the tabernacle and temple, their priests and sacrifices, and other solemnities? Why should the blessed God so exactly mark out and prescribe every lesser ceremony, in the *jewish* church, which was but a shadowy dispensation, and yet hath not descended to so very particular a description of every form and circumstance, that relates to his churches, under the nobler dispensation of the gospel? Why should that fabric of carnal ordinances have a more exact model, than this spiritual building, which so far excels in glory?

It is granted indeed, that there might some difficulties and doubts arise in the *jewish* worship, about some of the natural circumstances, that relate to the performance of it: As, whether the child must be circumcised with a sharp stone as *Zipporah* did, or a knife

knife as *Joshua*? And, who must perform that office? Whether the father or mother, the ruler or the priest? Whether in sacrifices the jugular vein of the creature must be cut, or whether it must be stabbed to the heart? Whether in their washings and purifications, for any accidental impurity, they must put their whole bodies under water, with every part of all their garments, or whether sprinkling or other methods of washing in some cases, were not sufficient?

These things, and many others, as the *Jews* pretend, are to be determined by their oral law and tradition, wherein the church of *Rome* has imitated them exactly, and gives us her traditions to clear up the darkness, and supply the defects of scripture. And though we justly maintain the sufficiency of scripture, without their traditions, to teach us all that is necessary to please God, always supposing the common use and exercise of our reasoning powers, yet still it must be confessed, that many of the same sort of things, under the gospel, are but obscurely prescribed, in comparison of the plain and express prescriptions of the *jewish* law; and much is left to be gathered by our own reasonings, from the light of nature, and the occasional hints which are given in the history of the new testament.

Let the instance be the order of priesthood, and the persons appointed to minister in divine service. Whosoever was of the seed of *Levi*, was born to sacred work; the eldest son of the house of *Aaron*, was the high-priest, and the inferior priesthood was all composed of his brethren and kindred. The method of their consecration was by offering such particular sacrifices, putting the blood on their thumbs, ears, and toes; besides some special washings, sprinklings, and vestments, as *Exod.* xxix. The maimed or deformed in body were to be secluded from this office; their maintenance was determined to arise from tithes, and some appointed portions of the sacrifices. But under the gospel, the different degrees of church-officers, bishops, pastors, teachers, seem not to be distinguished with quite so much evidence; their characters are much more inward and spiritual, and therefore not so easy to be discerned; the method of their appointment and ordination is the subject of perpetual controversy; and their support arises from the voluntary contributions of the people, of which the new testament has not assigned the proportion.

What is now mentioned concerning ecclesiastical offices, holds true in other parts of christian administrations; and we are forced to collect rules for the performance of many of them, by a comparison of several scriptures together, by matters of fact, circumstances, examples, and precedents, and by long trains of consequential deductions, because we find not the rules prescribed in any express words of command.

Let the business of baptism of infants be another instance. How clearly is the appointment of the circumcision of the infant-males, on the eighth day, expressed in comparison of the baptism of christian children? Take the observation of any sabbath, and particularly of the Lord's-day, to be another example of this obscurity, of the time of christian worship, in comparison with the exact rules of *jewish* sabbatims. We have none of these things prescribed in any express words of command. Some persons have taken laudable pains, to shew how many of these things are revealed, in the gospels, acts, and epistles, by way of hint and intimation, and may be found by deductions and inferences from some of the occasional incidents in the sacred history; but though some of these, I think, are just and strong, yet others of these inferences are but feeble and dubious, and some have been found to be mistakes; so that it must be granted after all, that, under the *jewish* oeconomy, several things were required, in more express language of direction and command, than un-

der the new testament. This difficult enquiry has sometimes exercised and puzzled my thoughts, and the most considerable reasons, which I have ever been able to suggest and assign for this difference, are such as these, *viz.*

First, The state of the *Jews* was the infancy of the church of God, and children had need of every letter and syllable to be marked down for them with the plainest pen, that they might spell over their lessons, learn their duties, perform their bodily exercises, and fulfil their tasks. And therefore also their rites and ceremonies were so very numerous, to keep them always employed; their infancy being less suited to the more spiritual parts of religion without such carnal aids. *St. Paul* in the epistle to the *Galatians*, seems to express this in plain words, chapter iv. 3. "We, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world," so he calls the train of *jewish* ceremonies.

But our Lord *Jesus*, the great reformer of his church, finished that infant-dispensation by his death, and raised his people to a more mature age, by his own resurrection, and the gospel; and sent down his Spirit, and sent abroad his apostles, to teach the world a more manly, spiritual, and refined worship, and such as is more suited to the nature of God, and his intellectual creation.

Now the more inward and seraphic all the devotion is, the less doth it need preciseness of form, either to assist or adorn it; therefore the modes of worship in the heavenly state shall, probably, be the mere dictates of glorified nature, and perhaps shall be incumbered with no prescribed ceremonies at all; and for the same reason, the rites and ceremonies, that *Christ* ordained in the evangelical state, were few and easy; and if the exact forms of them be not so very evident, in the new testament, as the forms of the yokes of bondage were in the old, it is to teach us, that the nature of christian worship is less ceremonious, is more spiritual and free, and approaches nearer to the heavenly state, than that of the *Jews*; and it informs us also, that we, under the gospel, are esteemed as out-growing the state of infancy, and it is supposed that manly prudence should direct us, especially in all those common natural circumstances of worship, which were more exactly prescribed to children.

Secondly, As the church or nation of the *Jews*, was a type or figure of the whole invisible church of God, so the ceremonies of their religion, were typical and figurative of gospel times, and spiritual things under the great *Messiah*; and even many of the common and natural circumstances of action prescribed in that religion, *viz.* times, places, &c. were also designed, to be types of evangelical affairs, and heavenly things; therefore it was necessary, that God himself, who only knew all his own future schemes, should prescribe and determine them, that they might exactly correspond, with the great anti-types, which were to be revealed hereafter. God only can appoint types and emblems of his own future blessings: He did not think fit to leave these things to the reason of men, who could not fore-know the glories of the gospel. But the religion of the gospel is not such a typical religion, and therefore there is not such a necessity that circumstantialia should be so strictly prescribed. The instances that prove this are abundant.

The high-priest or chief officer in the *jewish* church, was particularly described and appointed, with all his characters, and all his garments, and his forms of officiating in sacred things, because he was an appointed type of *Jesus* the Son of God, our great high-priest, in his various characters and offices, which offices and characters, only the great God fore-knew and could describe, because he fore-ordained them all.

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The places where the ark, the tabernacle, or the temple stood, were the only appointed places, where common sacrifices were to be offered, and where God would accept them: Now the tabernacle and temple, were types of the human nature of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, in which God dwells. *Christ* calls his body a temple, *John* ii. 19. All our spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise must be brought to *Christ*, otherwise they will not be accepted of God. The veil, through which we draw near to God is his flesh, *Heb.* x. 20.

The *jewish* sabbaths and festivals of several kinds, were appointed times of rest from labour, and of paying worship to God; but these were types of the rest from sin and guilt, and a spirit of bondage, that believers should enjoy under the gospel by the mediation of *Jesus Christ*, *Heb.* iv. 3, 4, 9, 10. *Colos.* ii. 17. as well as of the eternal rest, that the saints shall enjoy in heaven.

Every morning and every evening were appointed times for killing, and offering of the daily sacrifice; but these were types of the perpetual efficacy and virtue of the one sacrifice of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, powerful to atone for our daily transgressions, as if he was daily offered up a-fresh. See *Heb.* vii. 24, 27. and x. 14. So the morning and evening incense, in the holy place, was a type of his continual intercession in heaven, which may be collected from various parts of scripture compared together.

The holy of holies, was the place appointed for the high-priest, once a year, to enter into with the blood of the sacrifice; but this was a type of heaven, into which our Lord *Jesus Christ*, our great high-priest, is entered with his own blood, to appear before God for us, *Heb.* ix. 24. I might instance in many other parts of the *jewish* worship. It is no wonder then that places and times, and particular circumstantialities of worship and order, in the church of the new testament, are not so particularly prescribed, as under the old testament, because they were types and shadows which could be appointed only by God, who knew the anti-types; and these shadows are now fled away, and we have the substances themselves set in view by the gospel of *Christ*.

Thirdly, another reason why the *jewish* dispensation was confined to such nice rules of exactness and uniformity, might be, because it was ordained for the men of one nation only, who sprung all from a single family, whose manners, tempers, and customs were near a-kin to each other, and who were all under the same government, and their governors bound to the same forms of worship with themselves.

And indeed the whole form of their government was in-wrought with their religion, and their political laws were designed, to correspond with all the rites and ceremonies of their worship, and to support them. Besides, as they lived in a country of no large extent, and their males as representatives of their whole church and nation, were required to meet three times a year at *Jerusalem*; they were more easily reduced and confined to precise and uniform modes and rituals of worship.

But the religion of *Christ*, was brought into the world quite in another manner; not to one nation only, but to be propagated among all nations, and to be practised by men of most various and distant climates; men of contrary customs, manners, and laws; men that lived under governors of different religions, and such as hated the name of *Christ*. These could not so easily be reduced to a precise uniformity in any public worship, nor be maintained and kept in it; therefore though our Lord, by his apostles, has drawn the great out lines and boundaries of worship, and the matter-strokes of discipline, partly in precepts, and partly in examples, yet many lesser incidences and appendices, which were necessary to be determined, in order to the actual support and practice of social worship, he left to be agreed upon by

452 *Forms of worship in the old testament and in the new.* Disc. IV.  
churches or christian societies, as was suited best to attain the great end of edification in knowledge, holiness, and peace.

Fourthly, When we survey the religion of the *Jews*, we must distinguish between the worship of the synagogue, and that of the tabernacle, or temple. Their church was their whole nation, for it was ordained of God to be a national church, and the tabernacle or temple was the place of national worship: And that there might be an appearance of the whole church worshipping together, all the males of *Israel* three times a year were required to come up to the tabernacle or temple, I might add, or the ark of God in *Zion*, and pay their sacrifices to the Lord there. And the modes and formalities of this worship were prescribed with great exactness, as being typical of the universal invisible church, and the spiritual worship to be performed by it, and the spiritual blessings that belong to it, as was hinted before; but the worship of the synagogue, was the natural social worship of prayer and praise, which was agreed to be paid to God weekly, by so many persons as lived in a convenient neighbourhood. The forms hereof were not instituted by God himself, but left much to the discretion and agreement of elder and wiser men among themselves.

Now the worship in christian churches, which were to be raised in every nation, is much more a-kin to the practice of the synagogues, where one congregation met together, who with one mouth could glorify God, than it is to the practice of the temple-worship, which was chiefly ordained for the *jewish* national church. In the synagogues there was preaching, praying, and reading the scriptures every sabbath. Now here it was not determined in holy scripture, how often they should pray or sing psalms, whether before or after preaching or reading, or both; nor which persons of the levites should perform those offices; and some of the descendants of other tribes might be, and were employed in this ministry: Some of the prophets who preached to the people of old, were of other tribes; *Paul*, of the tribe of *Benjamin*, was desired to give an exhortation, as well as *Jesus* our Lord, of the tribe of *Judah*, read and preached in the synagogue, *Acts* xiii. 15. *Luke* iv. 16.

In short, the worship and order of the synagogues, as to the modes and circumstances of it, were such as the common prudence of men, or the light of nature directed, together with so much of the doctrines and duties of the revealed religion of *Moses* and the patriarchs, as might be practised on any time, or at any place, or by any persons qualified for it, and appointed by men to that service. And so is the worship and order of the christian church: It is such as the light of nature dictates, mingled with, and regulated by the doctrines and duties of christianity, so far as *Christ* and his apostles have taught and prescribed them. And these are to be practised in all nations, the light of nature, reason, and common prudence, of the fellow-worshippers, agreeing upon such circumstances of human actions, as are necessary to be determined, and such as the new testament has left undetermined and uncertain.

It is no wonder then that the circumstantial of these parts of order and worship, are not confined to precise rules and uniformity, in the christian church, any more than they were in the *jewish* synagogue. The common reason and prudence of mankind points out the chief and most necessary parts, both of the one and the other. always supposing the difference between the *jewish* and the christian revelations of doctrine and duty, which being mingled with the worship and order, did something toward the regulation of the form thereof.

Fifthly, The last reason I offer why many things, in the christian worship, are not so particularly prescribed, nor so evident as in the *jewish*, may be, because in the christian religion, the new command, as *St. John* calls it, or the duties of love  
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and charity are more abundantly required and enforced, beyond what they were under the law of *Moses*, and that notwithstanding we may differ in particular opinions: And christianity being to be diffused through all nations, among persons of a thousand different notions and prejudices, it was very probable, there would be more varieties of opinion, in sacred things, than would be found in one nation only: And in many parts of christian practice there is more room left by this obscurity, for the trial of our mutual love, and more occasion given for the exercise of charity among those, that are true disciples of *Christ*, than if all were confined to uniformity of practice, by express precept.

And where the scripture has left any obscurity upon doctrines or practices, I would be very unwilling to quarrel with my fellow-christians, for taking up a principle or practice different from mine. The xiv. chapter to the *Romans* leaves several points of practice undetermined for this very purpose, Let every one of us search as far as we can, by diligence and prayer, to find our duties in the word of God: "Where-to we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, and continue still to love all those who love the Lord *Jesus* in sincerity, though they differ from us in meats and days, and other matters of doubtful disputation." Amen.

## D I S C O U R S E V.

*The holiness of the jewish and christian churches considered and compared.*

**T**HE *jewish* nation was once the only visible church of God among men, and the gentiles were excluded; but for near seventeen hundred years past, the visible church of God has been made up of the several christian churches, scattered through the world, from whence unbelievers only are excluded. In what relation each of them stand to the invisible church, will appear in the following propositions; and thereby we may learn the different sort of holiness, that belonged to them.

PROPOSITION I. Since the apostasy of our first parents from God, mankind comes into the world under much more unhappy circumstances, than they would have done, in a state of perfect innocency. There are many such vicious propensities, disorders, and corruptions in human nature, as tend to lead men astray from God, and from their own duty and happiness. In this state of depravation, before they are renewed by divine grace, they follow the sinful appetites and passions that work in them, they fulfil the desires of the flesh and of the mind, they live in darkness, ignorant of God, or at least thoughtless and regardless of him, as creatures without God in the world, creatures that appear to have none of the moral characters of his children, nor bear his holy image, nor are intitled to his favour: They are led and governed, not only, by the course and fashion of this world, but, also, by the temptations of the devil, and they are led captive by the prince of darkness, that evil spirit whose dominion is spread through all the earth, who is, as it were, the God of this world, and who works powerfully, in all the sons and daughters of *Adam*, as they are in a state of degeneracy: They are children of disobedience, for they break the laws of their

their maker wilfully, they neglect or renounce God, and set up idols in his stead; they are idolaters to their own lusts, their pleasures, their honours or their possessions, and they are rather the children and imitators of *Satan*, than the children of God, or born of him, or like to him: They are by nature strangers to his covenant of mercy, have no interest in his salvation by his Son *Jesus Christ*, nor share in the spiritual and eternal blessings of the gospel; and as they dwell in this world without God, so without any solid hope of a better world. They are dead in trespasses, in sins, and know not the way of life and peace. This is the plain, obvious, and common state of all mankind, till they are changed and renewed, and become religious and holy. Scripture is full of such descriptions of mankind; but if we had no scripture to support this charge, our daily experience and observation gives a deplorable evidence to the truth of the greatest part of it.

It is granted indeed, that some, by reason of their particular complexion, have a few more natural virtues, and moral decencies, than others; and some by the advantage of education, and especially where divine revelation is known, are restrained thereby from those degrees of excess in some vices, which would otherwise prevail over them: But, in the main, it is certain, that we are born of sinful parents, and partake of the irregular appetites and evil passions that are in them, and that "none can bring a clean thing out of an unclean," *Job* xiv. 4. "that we are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity," *Psalms* li. 7. "that what is born of the flesh is flesh," or sinful nature, and prone to evil, *John* iii. 6. "that every imagination of the thought of the heart of man," that is, by nature as now corrupted, "is only evil, and that continually, and even from his childhood, or youth." The nature of man was pure and holy in it's original, as it came from the hand of God; but as it now comes into the world, it hath the principles and seeds of all iniquity within it: And these, which I have described, are the general characters of all mankind in greater or less degrees till they are changed, converted, and born again, or born of the holy Spirit, *John* iii. 6, 7. Instead of enlarging on the other proofs of this proposition, I shall refer only to *Rom.* iii. 9—19. Where all mankind, as things now stand, both *Jews* and gentiles, without the recovering grace of God, are represented by the apostle in a state of sin and death; "all are sinners, there is none that doeth good, no not one: The way of peace have they not known, every mouth is stopped, and the whole world guilty before God\*."

PROPOSITION II. "From the beginning of the world throughout all ages, there have been some persons of this fallen race of man, who have been recovered by divine grace, converted to God, "translated out of darkness into light, raised from a death in sin to a life of holiness, and are become children of the light, and heirs of life: Whose soul and spirit have been awakened to repentance and serious religion; whose hearts are circumcised to love God, who do really renounce and cut off, subdue and mortify the lusts of the flesh and of the mind, and resist the temptations of the evil one; who are born of God, are adopted by him, become his people, his children, and have his image renewed in them; who are his saints, his holy ones, and are partakers of his holiness; who abandon all idols, and walk with God in the world, maintaining a holy intercourse with him by prayer and praise, faith and obedience; who have the spirit of God dwelling in them, and they are his temple, they are his chosen people, his peculiar inheritance, redeemed from the bondage of their

\* That this character and sentence is absolutely universal and without exception, see further proved at the end of this discourse, just before the recapitulation.



their own lusts, and the slavery of *Satan* the prince of darkness; and travel through this world, as through a wilderness, under the direction of God, towards the promised inheritance, the heavenly country: They have hope in his mercy and his promises, they are the objects of his love and mercy, they are sanctified and devoted to God, a holy people, a chosen generation, elected or chosen, and called by his grace, a royal priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices to him, with acceptance, and these are usually called, the invisible church of God.

PROPOSITION III. As God has designed, in all ages, to draw out of this sinful race of man some holy souls to be objects of his mercy, so it hath pleased his wisdom to carry on his transactions with men, throughout all his dispensations towards them, in a way of type, emblem, and figure; frequently appointing carnal, temporal, and visible things, characters, persons, and families, to become emblems and figures of things and characters spiritual and invisible. This in several particulars is most evident from express scripture. The first man *Adam* was a type or figure of *Christ* the second *Adam*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 45 - 49. and *Rom.* v. 14. *Aaron* the high-priest, and *David* the king among the *Jews*, were types of *Jesus Christ*, the high-priest and king of his people. This farther appears in many places; so the manna from heaven, and the water from the rock in the wilderness, were a figure of *Christ* feeding his people with his own flesh and blood, 1 *Cor.* x. 1-4. *John* vi. 49, 51, 53. The tabernacle, the sacrifices, the washings and purifications, and many of the ceremonies of the *jewish* worship, are figures or shadows of *Jesus Christ*, and his atonement for sin, and the sanctification of the holy Ghost, and the spiritual blessings that belong to the gospel, *Colos.* ii. 16, 17. 1 *Cor.* v. 7. *Heb.* ix. 8, 9, 13. and x. 1, &c. and *Canaan* is a type of the heavenly inheritance, *Heb.* iv. 1. and xi. 13. 16. Those who have written on the doctrine of types, have made these things appear beyond all just and reasonable exception.

Now, from the beginning of the world, God seems to have designed, there should be some outward and visible types and figures, of these two sorts of mankind, the good and the bad, the holy and unholy, or the church and the world, and some plain distinction between them made in a visible manner. These different persons were at first called the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent, *Gen.* iii. 15. Then the family of *Cain*, who went from the presence of the Lord, *Gen.* iv. 14, 16. and were called the sons and daughters of men, *Gen.* vi. 1, 2. were a figure of the wicked, and were generally all wicked persons: And the family of *Seth*, who came in the room of righteous *Abel*, *Gen.* iv. 25. and who called upon the name of the Lord, or were called by the name of God, that is, the sons of God, *Gen.* iv. 26. and vi. 2. were a figure of righteous men, of the saints of God, and had most good men amongst them. Again, *Ssem* the blessed son of *Noah*, with his family, was thus distinguished as a visible church, from *Ham* and his posterity, who were cursed. After that *Abraham* was called from the rest of the idolatrous world, as a figure and pattern, or father of all true believers, and children of God. So *Isaac* the son of promise, was distinguished from *Ishmael* the son of the flesh, *Galat.* iv. 23, 24, 29. So *Jacob* from *Esau*, *Rom.* ix. 13. And when God divided the world into *Jews* and gentiles eminently by *Moses*, the scripture gives us abundant ground to reckon those two different people, *Jews* and gentiles, a visible emblem of the division of all mankind into these two parts, the church and the world, or the righteous and the wicked, as will appear in what follows.

PROPOSITION IV. The nation of *Israel* appears in the representations of scripture to be a figure or emblem of the righteous or religious part of mankind, of the saints  
of

of God, or his holy ones, his invisible church. The *Israelites* were the natural seed of *Abraham* the friend of God, the great believer, the father of the faithful, and the peculiar favourite of heaven. They derived many blessings through him; they had many privileges by their covenant at *Sinai*, and the promises of many divine favours; they had the adoption, or son-ship; God was their father, they were his first-born, and his favourites; they were his chosen people, an elect nation, and the beloved; they were redeemed by him, from the bondage of *Pharaoh* king of *Egypt*; he was their redeemer, and their holy one in the midst of them; they were the people of his salvation, conducted by him to the promised land through the wilderness: They are called his saints, or holy ones, having circumcision and other outward marks of holiness, or dedication to God; they had the true God for their God and their king, the Lord of their visible church, and head of their civil state, and he dwelt amongst them in a visible cloud of glory on the mercy-seat: They were a peculiar people to himself, a holy nation, a royal priesthood. See these characters, *Rom.* ix. 4, 5. *Exod.* xix. 5, 6. and iv. 22. and many other places.

Now these titles and characters, which belonged heretofore in an external, visible, and typical sense to the nation of *Israel*, do really and spiritually belong to the invisible church of God, his chosen, called, and faithful people, who were born of God, and who are the children of *Abraham*, and imitators of his faith, and heirs of the promise, *Rom.* iv. 11. *Gal.* iii. 29. Who are inwardly and spiritually holy, whose hearts are circumcised to love the Lord, and are interested in his everlasting love; and on this account, a real saint is called an *israelite* indeed, *John* i. 47. a *jew* inwardly, *Rom.* ii. 29. True christians, in the new testament, are called the *Israel* of God, *Gal.* vi. 16. as well as they are often represented, by the ancient prophets, under that name. These are the true circumcision, inwardly in the heart and spirit, *Rom.* ii. 29. These are "the circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in *Christ Jesus*," *Phil.* iii. 3. "who are circumcised with the circumcision without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh," *Col.* ii. 11.

And to confirm this doctrine, the scripture proceeds yet further, and represents even the best of blessings and the heavenly state, or the final reward of all the saints by the same sort of emblems, borrowed from the *Jews*. They go to the bosom of *Abraham*, *Luke* xvi. 22, 23. "They sit down with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, in the kingdom of heaven," *Matt.* viii. 11. "The blessing of *Abraham* comes on the gentiles, that is, that God is their God, and their exceeding great reward," *Gal.* iii. 14. They are heirs of the heavenly inheritance, according to the ancient promise made to *Abraham*, verse 29. They enter into that promised rest, that remains for the people of God, typified by *Canaan*, the rest promised to the *Jews*, *Heb.* iii. and iv.\*.

Here let it be noted, that there were multitudes, in this visible church of *Israel*, to which these outward titles and privileges belonged, who had not so much as a credible profession of real virtue, or holiness, or inward goodness; nor was it necessary, in order to be members of that church; for they not only came into this relation by their natural birth, as the sons of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, but they always

\* I think the language of the new testament, in the texts which I have cited, makes it evident, that the *jewish* visible church was not so properly a type of the visible christian church, in it's outward and visible form, as it was a type of the state and blessings of the true and real children of God, that is, of the invisible church of God in all ages; though it is granted, that the visible christian church is founded upon a supposition that the members of it are, or should appear to be, members of the invisible church also, which was not the case in the visible *jewish* church, and the persons who composed it, whose church membership was built on another foundation.

ways continued members of the church of *Israel*, so long as they continued members of the civil community, and were accounted parts of the nation, or kingdom of *Israel*: Their common immoralities did not cut them off from their civil rights, nor were they ever properly cast out of the state too; and according to the bible, when they were cut off from their people, they lost their civil as well as ecclesiastical privileges.

PROPOSITION V. On the other hand, the gentiles or heathens, that is, all the nations besides the *Jews*, had the visible marks of a people afar off from God, being neglected by him, and by their iniquities and their wretchedness they appeared as children of wrath, under divine displeasure, *Eph. ii. 3.* By their own practice they abandoned God, and were without God in the world, *Ephes. ii. 11, 12.* They were children of disobedience, as to the true God: They had another god, or ruler, even the devil, who is called the god of this world, this heathen world, and him they obeyed, he was their God, *2 Cor. iv. 4.* He ruled in them as their prince, and they were carried captive by him, at his pleasure, *Eph. ii. 2.* To him they sacrificed, even to devils, and not to the true God, *1 Cor. x. 20.* They walked in darkness, and ignorance, *Eph. iv. 17, 18.* and were alienated from the life of God, because of the blindness of their heart; they were dead in trespasses and sins, following the lusts of the flesh, and of the mind, that is, carnal and spiritual iniquities, *Eph. ii. 3.* uncircumcised in flesh and heart, undevoted to God, strangers or aliens from the covenants of promise, without *Christ*, and without hope, verse 12. this is their literal character.

And as the *Israelites* are evidently figures of God's true invisible church, his real saints, or holy ones; so the gentiles are, evidently, a figure and emblem of all the sinful world, the unholy, unconverted part of mankind, whether *Jews* or gentiles, whom I have before described, as in a state of corrupt nature, in the first proposition, and who are not born of God, or renewed by grace, and repentance, and a sincere change of heart. The word uncircumcision, is the very name and literal character of the gentiles, and it is used to signify sinful souls, unholy, and unbeloved of God, *Jer. ix. 26.* The house of *Israel* is uncircumcised, that is, gentiles in heart, and un sanctified. In *Rom. ii. 25—29.* the words circumcision and uncircumcision, are used both, in their spiritual sense, to signify holiness and unholiness, as well as, in their literal sense, to denote *Judaism* and gentilism. verse 25. If thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision, that is, thy person, notwithstanding all it's marks of mortification, is counted unholy, un sanctified in the sight of God. The gentiles are described, as a sinful character, *Galat. ii. 15.* We who are *Jews* by nature, and not sinners of the gentiles. And some suppose the ungodly, *Rom. iv. 5.* and *Rom. v. 6.* to signify the gentiles, where *Paul* says, who believeth on him, that justifieth the ungodly; and when we were, without strength, in due time, *Christ* died for the ungodly. The gentiles, and the ungodly, or sinners, are used as synonymous terms; and the descriptions of them, in scripture, are much the same. The working of the will of the gentiles, is an expression to signify a sinful course of life, or an unconverted state, even by the apostle *Peter* who was a *Jew*, *1 Pet. iv. 3.*

Yet, I would lay down this caution, that I do not, hereby, exclude every individual heathen at that time, from the invisible church of God; for *Jethro* at that time a *midianite* was probably a good man; and so might some others, upon the foot of *Noah's* covenant, even as several of the *Jews* were wicked men: But considering these two parts of mankind, *Jews* and gentiles, in the bulk, they were types and figures

gures of the two sorts of people, in the world, *viz.* the good and bad, or saints and sinners.

And I think, it is pretty evident, that the holy writers use the same sort of language, which I have recited, in the first and fifth propositions, sometimes to signify the literal and external state of the gentiles, before the gospel came to them, and sometimes to signify the real, internal, and spiritual state of all, who are not born again, nor converted to God, nor renewed to holiness; and the one seems to be designed, by all these spiritual parallels, as a type and emblem of the other.

PROPOSITION VI. During the time of the *jewish* dispensation, there were always some of the *Israelites*, really, religious and holy, who were the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, as well as natural, that is, imitators of his faith and holiness; and, in this double sense, *Abraham* is their father: for, in the spiritual sense, he is father of all who believe, and trust in God and obey him, even of the gentile believers, as well as of the *Jews*, *Rom.* iv. 16. *Gal.* iii. 29. These religious *Jews* were real saints, members of the invisible church, and the true *Israel*, that is, they were, in reality, what the whole nation of *Israel* was, in type, and figure, and appearance, *Rom.* ix. 6. The apostle saith, "they are not all *Israel*, which are of *Israel*, nor because they are the seed of *Abraham*, are they all children;" implying that the true *Israel* are, really, what the whole nation was, visibly: And chapter ii. 29. "He is a *Jew*, who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter only." Such were not, only, the parts of God's visible church, and had the visible privileges thereof, but were, also, members of his invisible church, and the children of his special love.

But, at the same time, the bulk and multitude of the visible nation of *Israel*, which was the visible church, were generally great sinners, and with all their glorious titles of external and typical holiness, and divine favour, they were inwardly wicked, and belonged really to the kingdom of *Satan*, and not to the invisible church of God. There were multitudes of sadducees in that church, who neither believed there was any angel or spirit, any immortal soul in man, any resurrection of the dead, nor, indeed, any future state of rewards or punishments, and they lived according to these principles. Hopeful church-members indeed, if the *jewish* church had been to be composed of real saints! Another body of them were pharisees, whose inward wickedness was great, as even many of their outward practices were very vile, and abominable. It is certain, there were very many of them who continued, for some time, members of the outward visible *jewish* church, to whom *John* the baptist, and our blessed saviour, ascribed the vilest of characters relating to their inward and real state, *viz.* that they were "hypocrites, children of the devil, they had him for their father, for they did his works, a generation of vipers, and such as could not escape the damnation of hell."

PROPOSITION VII. When the times of the gospel came, God designed to set up a more spiritual kingdom, or visible church, in the world, which should come much nearer to his invisible church, in true and real holiness, than that of the *Jews* did; and of which, there was frequent notice given, by the prophets *Isaiab*, *Jeremiab*, *Ezekiel*, and *Malachi*, and particularly, by *John* the baptist, *Matt.* iii. 9, 10. "Think not to say within your selves, we have *Abraham* to our father, for God is able of these stones to raise up children unto *Abraham*: Now the ax is laid to the root of the trees; therefore every tree, which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire." If ever, therefore, you would be worthy members of such a church

church, as God is going shortly to set up in the world, by introducing baptism, as the badge and seal of it, you must bring forth fruits of repentance, and holiness.

Our saviour, also, gives notice of the same thing to *Nicodemus*, *John* iii. 3. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." It is, as if *John* and *Jesus* had agreed, to tell the *Jews*, "Your being born of *Abraham* will by no means secure to you, any visible and eternal blessings, in the kingdom of God, nor will your natural and fleshly relation to *Abraham*, any longer, constitute you members of the visible church, or of that kingdom, which God is going to set up, unless you are born of the Spirit of God, unto holiness of heart and life, or appear to be so, as far as the state, of a visible church can require; unless you declare that you repent and believe the gospel, and make a credible profession of it, by bringing forth fruits, &c. for God will make a clearer discovery of his spiritual designs, under the gospel, and that he has an invisible church which are all holy; and he will make his visible church much more like it than they were in the days of *Judaism*, wherein several evident immoralities did not exclude them from church-fellowship, and the outward covenant of *Abraham*, if they did but perform their outward rites of religion, and, in cases of political or ceremonial defilement, fulfilled their purifications and atonements, by proper washings and sacrifices: But now, the tree that brings not good fruit, must be cut down, and cast out of the vineyard."

PROPOSITION VIII. When God came to set up this more spiritual kingdom and church in the world, those among the *Jews* who professed that they received the *Messiah*, and submitted themselves to his holy and spiritual religion, were received by baptism, and were counted the people of God and his visible church, and they continued in all the visible privileges of church-fellowship in all their extent; and if their profession was sincere, they were intitled to all the inward privileges of the invisible church, and the spiritual blessings of the gospel.

Note, I do not mention any thing here relating to the infants of true believers, because I would not embarrass the present argument with another controversy, and because they are, at best, but incomplete members of the christian church; and, in my opinion also, so far as they are acknowledged to be any way members of the visible christian church, it is upon a supposition of their being, together with their parents, members of the invisible church of God. I proceed therefore in my argument.

Every person then, among the *jewish* nation, who made a visible and credible profession of christianity with his lips, and in his life, was, in a judgment of charity, to be counted sincere in this profession, and, consequently, they were to be esteemed parts of the invisible church of God, *Gal.* vi. 16. "As many as walk according to this rule of the gospel, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon all the *Israel* of God, that is, upon all real saints." These believed in God and his promises, as *Abraham* did, and they become both the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, by imitating his faith and obedience, and children of God, by faith in *Jesus Christ*, *Gal.* iii. 26, 29. and heirs of the heavenly inheritance, according to his promise. These, among the common multitudes of the nation of *Israel*, are his special people *Israel*, "whom God foreknew, and whom he hath not cast away," *Rom.* xi. 1, 2. "These are the remnant, according to the election of grace," verse 5. "These are the election which have obtained faith and salvation, when the rest of the *Israelites* were blinded, or hardened," *Rom.* xi. 7. These are the Sons of God, brought into this relation by receiving *Jesus Christ* his Son, or believing in his name: These are said to be born of God, *John* i. 12, 13. Being born of water, and of the Spirit, that is, regenerated by

his holy Spirit, and washed with water, as the seal of it, they became actual visible members of this gospel-church, or the kingdom of God, *John* iii. 5, 6.

PROPOSITION IX. Those particular persons, among the *jewish* nation, that rejected the *Messiah*, who was sent to be their prophet, priest and king, were cut off from all pretences to these spiritual privileges, and from all the inward blessings which were signified by their outward and carnal privileges; and they did also cut themselves off from the visible church, which God was then bringing into a purer and more spiritual frame, by renouncing the Son of God the *Messiah*, who was the king of *Israel*. These are become the *Lo-ruhamab*, and *Loammi*, mentioned in *Hosea* i. 6, 9. For they are not the favourites, or beloved of God, they are not his people. These were the natural branches of *Abraham's* family, or the visible church, who though they are of *Israel*, yet are not the true *Israel*, *Rom.* ix. 6. These are the natural branches of the good olive-tree, who were broken off because of unbelief, *Rom.* xi. 20, 21. and after the christian church was set up and established, they no more belonged to the visible church of God, as they did never at all belong to the invisible.

PROPOSITION X. And when the christian church was thus set up and established in the world, the nation of the *Jews*, who were for the most part unbelievers in the *Messiah*, were cut off as a nation, from all appearance of God's visible church and people, by the destruction of their city and temple, and utter ruin of their state or commonwealth. Thus their being cut off from the privileges of being his visible church, as he was their God, and, from being his visible subjects, as he was their king, considered as a public body and community, went hand in hand, as fast as human affairs could permit. The *Jews* were then, in a most notorious and visible manner, cast out of the favour and protection of their God and king, in the sight of the world, and abandoned of him; and since they renounced the Son of God, who was appointed their king, and slew him, and thereby filled up the measure of their iniquities, he also renounced them from being his subjects, or his kingdom: He sent the sword, amongst them, for their destruction, and the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost, as that text has been usually explained, *1 Thes.* ii. 14—16. and they have not, so much as, the face of a visible church or people of God remaining these sixteen hundred years. God has fulfilled his word, and cut them off according to his threatenings, from their relation to him as their God, nor are they any longer his people; they have left their names for a curse to his chosen people, that is, the gospel church made up chiefly of gentiles, who esteem the name of a *Jew* a reproach or a curse, and God has called his people, by another name, that is, christians, as he threatened so plainly by *Isaiab*, his prophet, chapter lxxv. 15. These were the children of the kingdom, concerning whom our saviour foretels, "that they should not sit down with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, in the kingdom of heaven, but should be cast out into utter darkness," *Matt.* viii. 11, 12.

PROPOSITION XI. Those, among the gentiles, who received the *Messiah*, and believed in him, who practised faith and repentance, come into the real spiritual privileges, of which all the external glories of *judaism* were types and figures; even as the inwardly pious *Jews*, of old. had those spiritual blessings, which were typified by their own outward peculiarities. The "gentile believers, who were, naturally, branches of the wild olive, are grafted into the good olive-tree," *Rom.* xi. 17, 18. They are the seed of *Abraham*, and he is their father, *Rom.* iv. 11, 16. *Gal.* iii. 8, 9, 29. "They are called God's people, who were not his people," *Rom.* ix. 24, 25. They are invested with the honourable titles which the carnal *Jews* enjoyed, *1 Pet.* ii. 9, 10. "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, which

which had not obtained mercy," but now have obtained mercy. And in *Ephef.* ii. 19. "They are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, his elect, his beloved, and he dwells among them, and in them, as in his city and his temple, by his holy Spirit," verse 22. and *1 Cor.* vi. 19. and *2 Cor.* vi. 16.

PROPOSITION XII. As those gentiles who do, really, and inwardly, receive the *Messiah*, and practise his religion in faith and holiness, come into all these inward, real, and spiritual privileges and blessings; so all that make a visible and credible profession of faith, and holiness, and universal subjection to *Christ*, come into all the outward privileges of the visible church, under the gospel: Some few of which privileges are continued from the *jewish* church, but the greatest part of them are abolished, because the gospel state is more spiritual than the dispensation of the levi-tical law, and not such a typical state as that was; and none are to be admitted into this visible church, and esteemed complete members of it, but those who make such a declaration and profession of their faith in *Christ*, and their avowed subjection to him, as may be supposed, in a judgment of charity, to manifest them to be real be-lievers in *Christ*, the true subjects of his spiritual kingdom, and members of the invisible church. See proposition VII.

PROPOSITION XIII. When therefore *St. Paul* and *Peter* write to the gentile chris-tian churches, they give them such honourable titles as these, "Holy brethren, called to be saints, called and holy, sanctified in *Christ Jesus*, the elect of God, the beloved of God, washed from their sins, justified, sanctified in the name of the Lord *Jesus*, and by the Spirit of our God, risen from a death in trespasses and sins, raised to-gether with *Christ*, set down with him in heavenly places, followers of us, and of the Lord, to whom the gospel came not in word only, but also in power, elect ac-cording to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spi-rit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of *Jesus Christ*, begotten to a lively hope by the resurrection of *Christ* from the dead, who have obtained precious faith through the righteousness of God and our saviour, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, even the people of God, who have now obtained mercy," &c.

And the reason of these glorious titles is this, that they are members of the chris-tian church, which receives none but upon profession of true faith in *Christ*, and sin-cere repentance; none but those who profess to be members of the invisible church, and, in a judgment of charity, are to be so esteemed: For persons of scandalous or immoral characters, or who walked disorderly, their fellow-members were warned not to keep them company, nor to eat with them, *1 Cor.* v. 11. The church are required to withdraw from them, and they were to be cast out of the church, *2 Thes.* iii. 6. Purge out the old leaven, saith the apostle, that is, put away from among your selves that wicked person, who was amongst them, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened, that is, without the leaven of malice or wicked-ness, *1 Cor.* v. 7, 8, 13. And therefore the apostle writing to the *Philippians*, charitably supposes them all to be in a state of grace, chapter i. 6. "Being confi- dent of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of *Jesus Christ*, even as it is meet for me to think this of you all," that is, to think you all, in general, real saints, in a judgment of charity, and without unreasonable suspicions of the credibility of your profession, or the sincerity of your hearts.

It is granted indeed, there might be, here and there, single persons in primitive christian churches, whose apparent sinful lives deserved to have them cast out; such were

were among the *Thessalonians*, and *Philippians* too: And, concerning such as these, the apostle, here and there, gives directions to withdraw from them, and to cast them out of the church, which was to be done by proper degrees. But this does not hinder the bulk or body of the church from being still esteemed, and called saints, and holy brethren.

Objection I. But was it not a sufficient qualification to become a member of a christian church, if a person professed the name of *Christ* in general, *viz.* that he would be of that sect or party in religion, without making what you call a credible profession, that is, without having such a serious spirit, and a life of piety and virtue, as might give any just reason to conclude that person was a member of the invisible church.

Answer. This I have spoken of, in another place, about christian communion, and therefore I shall only speak very briefly here, and say, that *John* the baptist gave an early hint, that an entrance into the gospel church was not to stand upon the same terms, as that of the *jewish*: They were to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, as well as profess it; for the ax is laid to the root of the tree, *Matt.* iii. 7—10. And those will be cut off from their visible standing in the church who bear not good fruit. So *Acts* xix. 18. Those that believed, came and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

Besides, it may be justly granted, that the mere present profession of the religion of *Christ*, against the general opposition of the world, and the danger of prosecution in those primitive days, was reasonably counted as sufficient an evidence of inward repentance, faith and true religion, as many weeks or months of outward visible piety and virtue might be in our day, because the profession of *Christ* is no matter of hazard and difficulty, as it was then. Far the greatest part of christian professors in that age were real inward christians, and all of them pretended and appeared to be so, on which account the apostles, in writing to them, give them those glorious titles and characters, belonging properly to none but real saints. Nor can we justly suppose the apostle would give such sublime and blessed titles and characters, to persons who were openly vicious and profane, under this spiritual dispensation of the gospel, whatever belief they professed of christian principles.

I would, only, ask upon this occasion, whether, if *St. Paul* were to write a letter to all that profess the christian religion in *London*, at this day, all the ignorant, the stupid, the careless and profane wretches who dwell in that great city, wherein the greatest part are visibly unholy, or at least have no visible appearances of holiness; I would ask, whether he would bestow these sacred titles upon them, and call them “holy brethren, elect of God, sanctified in *Christ Jesus*, faithful and beloved of God?” Surely, no; he could not do it; and therefore these sacred titles were given to the primitive christian churches, not as typically holy, but as professing themselves to be really and inwardly holy and religious, and in a judgment of charity appearing so to be.

Objection II. But were not many of these sacred and glorious titles given to the whole church or nation of the *Jews*, the greatest part of which were so wicked, that our Lord and *St. Paul* agree, but few of them should be saved; *Matt.* vii. 14. *Rom.* ix. 27.

Answer. The *jewish* church and state were distinguished from other people and nations, by such an external and typical holiness, as was designed to be an emblem of the invisible church, which was really and inwardly holy; and therefore these titles are given them only in an external, figurative, and typical sense, as having the outward emblems of those divine qualities, privileges and favours, which really and



and inwardly belong only to the church invisible; for the foundation both of their church and state was not so much as laid in a profession of inward holiness, but in being the seed of *Abraham*, and conforming to outward ceremonies. It was a much more carnal dispensation than that of the new testament, and therefore it was an outward emblem of what is more real and spiritual under the gospel.

PROPOSITION XIV. As the apostles, when they write to gentile christian churches, use the word "we," and rank themselves amongst them in their present state of faith and holiness; so when they speak of their former state of corrupt nature, and before their conversion, they used the word "we" also, and rank themselves with them, as having been in a state of corrupt nature as well as the gentiles, before their faith and repentance, though they were never gentiles by nation, but *Jews* or *Israelites*. So *Eph. ii. 1—3*. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein, in time past, ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh, in the children of disobedience; among whom, also, "we" all had our conversation, in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," Verse 5. "When we were dead in sins, God hath quickened "us" together with *Christ*." *Tit. iii. 3*. "We" our selves, also, were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another: which, by the way, the learned author of "*Miscellanea sacra*," attributes particularly to *St. Paul* himself, in his unconverted state, volume II. page 63. See the same characters applied to *St. Paul*, by the learned author of the "paraphrase and notes on the epistle to *Titus*;" but I ask leave to include *Titus* and other gentile christians in the word "we," and not confine it merely to the apostle himself, as that author does. The words hateful, and hating one another, ἀλλήλους, must imply mutual and reciprocal action, which is sufficient to prove, that *St. Paul* includes others, together with himself, in these vile characters. *St. Peter* expresses himself in the same manner, when he was writing to the converted gentiles, *1 Pet. iv. 3*. "The time past of our life may suffice "us" to have wrought the will of the gentiles, when "we" walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries."

It is true indeed, that *Peter* and *Paul* could not apply all these expressions personally to themselves in a state of nature and unconversion, in the same literal sense in which they might be applied to the gentile christians, in their unconverted state; but the apostles themselves, and the best of christians were, by nature, such sort of sinners, as might be figured out, by these literal characters of the gentiles; as living too much without God, giving themselves up to their lusts and the idols of their heart, and to the course of a sinful world, and the temptations of the devil, so that they were, inwardly, and really in the sight of God, such sort of sinful creatures, in a state of corrupt nature, in a spiritual sense, as the gentiles were, in more visible outward appearance and practice: It is in this respect the heathens, as I said before, were figures or emblems of all the unconverted world, which lies in wickedness, and in this sense says the apostle, *Eph. ii. 3*. "We all," that is, *Jews* and christians, as well as gentiles, "had our conversation in times past, and were dead in sins, and children of wrath, even as others," that is, just objects of the wrath of God and condemnation, as well as the rest of the unconverted world.

Objection I. But the apostles, when writing to gentile christians, would ingratiate themselves with them, and, therefore, when they are going to speak hard things, of the former conversation of these christian gentiles, they join themselves with them, and use

use the words "we" and "us" in a way of pleasing oratory and address, in order to take off the severity of reflexion, and to obtain a better hearing.

Answer. But, for the sake of such pleasing oratory and address, we must not explain the apostles into direct falsehood: The words "we" and "us" in the plural, certainly include "I" and "me" in the singular; for, though there are several places, where the word "we" means only the single person who speaks, as *1 Thes.* ii. 8. We would have come to you, even *1 Paul*; and *John* xxi. 24. We know; and *1 John* iii. 12. We testify; yet, I believe, there will hardly be found any place, where the person speaking is quite excluded.

Perhaps that text *1 Thess.* iv. 17. may be objected, "We which are alive and remain, at the coming of *Christ*," &c. Could *St. Paul* suppose he should remain alive on earth till that time? I answer, yes, very probably; for this epistle was written the first of all *St. Paul's* epistles, and he might not then have it revealed to him, that *Christ* should delay his coming so long. And it is evident that by some expressions in this very epistle, the *Thessalonians* were led into a supposition of *Christ's* very speedy appearance. See *2 Thes.* ii. 2\*.

The apostles therefore when they use the word "we," took their share in these self-accusing expressions, concerning their sinful state by nature; and if there be not a literal sense wherein these expressions were true concerning the apostles, there must be a kindred, similar or spiritual sense, wherein it is true of them, according to their own design and meaning, lest we make them speak false things in a compliment. They, together with the gentile idolaters, were therefore in reality children of wrath by nature, or in a state of depraved nature and guilt, though the gentiles had more outward and visible marks of it than the *Jews*.

Objection II. But was not *Paul* even when he was a pharisee, a man of morals, a man who "lived in all good conscience," as he testifies of himself, *Acts* xxiii. 1. and "touching the righteousness that was in the law blameless," *Phil.* iii. 6. Nor have we any ground to think *Peter* was really one of those wicked persons, though he says, *1 Pet.* iv. 3. "We" walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelling, banqueting, and abominable idolatries.

Answer I. There is no need among such catalogues, always to apply every single character to every single person, included in the plural number "we." Even among the heathens themselves, there were some who might not be actual gluttons, or given to excess of wine, and to whom every one of these characters could not be literally applied; but all these characters, in general, must be scattered and distributed amongst the "we," of whom they were spoken. There are instances of this sort of speech, in many places of scripture: See, for instance, *Heb.* xi. 32, 33. "*Gideon, Barak, Sampson, &c.* and the prophets; who through faith subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, &c." Not that each of these performed all these exploits, but some did one, and some another. So, when the apostle says, "we wrought the will of the gentiles, walking in rioting, excess of wine, idolatry, &c." some of these predicates must, in some sense or another, belong to the apostles, at least as part of the sinful race of mankind, *Jews* as well as gentiles, in order to secure their veracity; for we must not explain them so, as to make the apostles

\* Perhaps, it may be granted, that the pronouns "we" and "us," may signify sometimes the men of our nation, as "we" *Jews*, or people of our profession, as we christians, though it speaks of something done before they were born: because they are looked upon as one with all that nation, or all that profession; but this is so easily distinguished by the sense, that there is no danger of leading the hearer into a mistake, and doth not at all invalidate the present argument, concerning the universal corruption of *Jews* and gentiles.

apostles yield up the truth of things to complaisance and fair speech, especially in such cases, wherein a multitude of their readers would be very liable to mistake them.

Answer. II. In general, it must be acknowledged, that as we are in a state of depraved nature, the seeds and principles of all iniquities are found in us, both the lusts of the flesh and the mind, and in this sense all men, by nature, have the springs of all sin in them: Nor is this a harder censure than the apostle *Paul* lays upon all mankind, *Jews* and gentiles, without the exception of one individual, when he cites, out of the old testament, the several characters of wicked men. *Rom.* iii. 9—19. and pronounces them true in general concerning *Jews* and gentiles; and some of them belong to every particular person in the world; all are under sin, that is, in a state of nature; there is none righteous, no not one; there is no fear of God before their eyes, &c. “Thus every mouth is stopped, and all the world, even every individual son and daughter of *Adam*, is guilty before God; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” And that this includes every individual person, is evident; because otherwise there would be some persons who need not justification, by grace, through the redemption of *Christ*, which is the only relief which the apostle proposes for all mankind in the following verses.

Thus, it is made pretty evident, that the good characters of the *Jews*, as God’s chosen visible church, are applied by the writers of the new testament to all true christians, even gentiles as well as *Jews*; and the evil characters, of the gentile world, are applied to all sinners, in a state of nature and unconverted, as well *Jews* as gentiles.

PROPOSITION XV. From all this discourse there appears a sufficient reason why the prophecies and promises of the old testament which display the mercy of God to the *jewish* nation, are often cited in the new testament, as belonging to true christians, and applicable to them, whether *Jews* or gentiles; because the *Jews* were the figure of the true church of God, and the spiritual meaning of those promises is designed to be applied to all; who are the true *Israel* of God, that is, truly pious, whether *Jews* or gentiles.

See for instance, *Lev.* xxvi. 11, 12. “I will set my tabernacle, or dwelling among you: I will walk among you, and be your God, and you shall be my people.” *Jer.* xxxi. 1. “I will be the God of all the families of *Israel*, and they shall be my people.” Which promises are made expressly to the *Jews*, in the old testament; but St. *Paul* applies them to the *corinthian* christians, *2 Cor.* vi. 16. “I will dwell in, or among them, and walk among them: I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

So again, *Isa.* lii. 11. “Depart ye, depart, go out from thence, touch no unclean thing, &c. and the Lord will go before you. These words are addressed to *Jerusalem*, and *Israel* only; but St. *Paul* addresses the gentile converts, in the same manner; “come out, or depart from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, &c.” *2 Cor.* vi. 17. And then he tells them these promises are their’s, chapter vii. 1.

So *Ijai.* lx. 1. “Arise, shine, for thy light is come, is applied to the *ephesian* christians, *Epb.* v. 14. “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead,” &c. And such kind of promises may be used and improved by us gentile christians; “for they were written for our instruction, that we through patience, and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope,” *Rom.* xv. 4. and therefore in verse 10. “Rejoice, ye gentiles, with his people.”

And, in the same manner, the promises of the old testament, which are made to the gentiles, may be assumed and pleaded by sinners, who are in a state of corrupt nature, in order to their obtaining grace and salvation, because the gentiles were a type and emblem of them. *Isa.* xlv. 22. "Look unto me from the ends of the earth, and be saved." And *Hof.* i. 10. and ii. 23. which are cited by *Paul* to the *Romans*, "I will call them my people which were not my people." Chapter ix. 24—26. "Where it is said, ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God." Which scriptures may be very appositely and properly applied to encourage the worst of sinners to come to God, by the gospel of *Christ*, even those that are, as it were, in the ends of the earth, afar off from any relation to God, or his people.

### R E C A P I T U L A T I O N .

The sum and design of these propositions may be thus represented in short. There are but two sorts of persons in the world, saints and sinners, the holy and the unholy. The *Jews* and gentiles stand in scripture as figures or emblems of these two sorts, that is, of saints and sinners; or of the invisible church of God, and of the wicked world; the one, under the kingdom of God, the other, under the kingdom of *Satan*: For the visible church of God, in the old testament, was under its typical and shadowy administration; and this visible *jewish* church, into which persons were admitted by being born of *Israel*, was a type of all that are really the subjects of God's kingdom of grace, being born of God; whereas the heathens, who were not of this visible church and kingdom of God, were subjects of the visible kingdom of *Satan*, and were types of all that are really in a state of corrupt nature, and so are subjects of the devil.

In the times of the gospel, God introduced a more spiritual state and oeconomy, even of his visible church, and appointed our entrance into it, to be made, by a visible profession of our being born of God, of real faith in *Christ*, of true repentance, and inward holiness; supposing that the christian visible church ought to be composed of such persons, who, in a judgment of charity, should have those inward spiritual qualities, which were denoted by the *jewish* outward privileges, forms and ceremonies, and which should render them real members of the invisible church of God.

And, therefore, the apostles in writing to christian churches, speak of unconverted, or un sanctified persons, under the common descriptions and characters, which literally belonged to the heathen or gentile nations, in the days of their heathenism: And, when they speak of the visible members of christian churches, it is under the common descriptions and characters which literally belonged to the *jewish* nation or church, as a type of the spiritual invisible church; and the reason is, because visible christians are all bound to profess these characters, in their spiritual sense, that is, real inward holiness, and special relation to God, and, in a judgment of charity, they are to be esteemed as possessing these characters and qualifications.

Thence it follows, that these glorious and holy characters, are not ascribed to professing christians, in that typical and figurative sense, in which these characters were applied to the *jewish* church and nation, because the *Jews* were but a type or emblem of what God's invisible church always was, and what the christian visible church ought to be; and if the discipline of the primitive days were still practised, every christian church would be such as might be charitably presumed to have all these

these inward and glorious characters; and however possibly there might be some particular wicked persons in it, who deserved to be cast out, yet this did not hinder the bulk and body of them, from enjoying these honourable appellations, as supposing them to be saints indeed.

And, hence also it comes to pass, that many of the promises made to the *Jews* of old, are applied, in the new testament, to all true christians for their comfort; and the promises made to the gentiles may be applied to great sinners, to encourage their hope: But this must be understood only where the state, and circumstances, either of saints or sinners, are such as to stand in need of those promised blessings, and to render such promises pertinent to their case. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, both *Jews* and *Romans*, through these scriptures, might have hope and divine consolation." *Rom.* xv. 6.

And indeed without such a liberty of explaining and applying the promises, of the old testament, to our own souls, as the apostles have taught us, for our private and spiritual advantage, a good part of the writings of the prophets, even some of those which refer to the days of the *Messiah*, would be impoverished and drained of many of their richest blessings, and would become of little use to us, unless it were for the mere proof of the truth of christianity: Whereas there is a rich and heavenly treasure, of grace and blessings, contained in these exceeding great and precious promises, and transferred to the gentile church under the new testament; which treasure is opened and unfolded to us, and set before us, by this doctrine, which the holy apostles have taught us, both by their word and practice; and which I have now been endeavouring to establish. Upon many of these ancient promises, have true christians lived, in all succeeding ages, as well as in the apostolic times, and in them they have found support and relief, under their temptations and sufferings: So what was spoken by the Lord to *Joshua* for his support and encouragement, is applied to all christians by the apostle. See *Josh.* i. 5. and *Heb.* xiii. 5. I will never fail thee, nor forsake thee."

These words of grace have drawn sinners, near to God, under the gospel, by the language of the old testament happily applied to their consciences. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, that is, the waters of life;" *Isa.* lv. 1. compared with *Rev.* xxii. 17. "Let him that is a-thirst, come and take of the water of life freely." "It is by many of these exceeding great and precious promises, that the gentiles have been made partakers of the divine nature, and have escaped the corruptions of the world, 2 *Pet.* i. 4. It is by these the christian church has been gathered and animated, has been nourished and propagated to this day. These promises which were given "to the *Jews* and to their children, shall be made good to those that are afar off, that is, the gentiles; even to as many as the Lord our God shall call," *Acts* ii. 39. "For in *Christ Jesus* there is neither *Jew* nor *Greek*;" *Gal.* iii. 28. "but all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God," 2 *Cor.* i. 20.



A C A V E A T against  
**I N F I D E L I T Y:**

O R,  
The D A N G E R of  
**A P O S T A S Y**

F R O M T H E  
**C H R I S T I A N F A I T H:**

W I T H:

An ANSWER to various QUERIES, concerning the fal-  
vation of the heathens, and the hope of the modern  
deists, upon their pretences to sincerity.

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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**I**T was in the year 1722. these discourses were composed, and they have lain several years by me waiting for a more proper opportunity to be sent into the world. But deism and infidelity having made such violent efforts, of late, in this nation, and having obtained such unhappy success, as to draw away some from the faith of the blessed gospel, and to stagger others in their belief, I thought providence forbid any longer delay, and called me to add this attempt toward the restraint of a spreading pestilence.

It has not been my business and intent, here, to produce the numerous train of arguments, whereby the christian religion is supported, and set them in a fair array. This has been done in many forms, and in many volumes by writers of the first rank, in our age, which are sufficiently known in the world, and received with just honour.

Yet I take pleasure on this occasion to point to my reader two lesser writings lately published, which are worthy of his perusal. The first is the lord bishop of *London's* "pastoral letter," written in defence of christianity, wherein, he has drawn into a narrow and comprehensive view, some of the most considerable arguments, for the vindication of our holy religion; and by exhibiting them, in a just and perspicuous manner, he has recommended them to the christian world. The other is doctor *William Harris's* two discourses, wherein, "the reasonableness of believing the gospel, and the unreasonableness of infidelity, are displayed in a convincing light. I could wish that believers and infidels would read these little books with a serious spirit.

There are two sorts of persons, in our age, who have not only need to have the evidences of our holy religion, set before them, in their fullest view, but it may also be very proper to excite them to a diligent, faithful, and religious attention to these evidences, by representing the formidable and tremendous threatenings of God, against those who abuse the light they enjoy, and become infidels or apostates in the midst of divine advantages for faith. Happy should I be, if I could impress their souls, with a solemn concern and solicitude, equal to the vast and infinite importance of the subject.

The one sort of men have declared themselves unbelievers of the gospel of *Christ*: they have gone so far as to renounce the scriptures, and forsake christianity: Some of these set themselves to oppose it boldly by such assaults, either, of wit or argument, as nature hath furnished them with; and some join their attempts of reason and railery together: May God recover them by his almighty grace! I fear there is but little prospect of recalling them to the faith, by any thing we can speak or write.

There are others who have not abandoned the gospel, yet have had their minds so corrupted and perplexed, by some objections of infidelity, that they are reduced to a doubting state, whether the religion of *Christ* be divine or no, and are seeking after some determination by fuller evidence. I do not call these persons deists or infidels: I hope, as well as pray, for their establishment in the faith of *Jesus*, the only saviour.

Now



Now my chief design in this treatise, was to attempt a recovery of some of these doubting christians, or to stop them in their course toward apostasy, by representing the dreadful and eternal hazard of rejecting the gospel of *Christ*, if it should at last appear to have come from heaven: That those who think of abandoning the christian faith might see and be persuaded, that none of their pretences to natural religion can give them an effectual security, from the condemning sentence of the great judge, if they shall to the last oppose and resist the light of evidence, that shines round the gospel, in our nation and our day.

I am well aware that my conduct and manner of argument, on this subject, will be represented as very uncharitable: Perhaps, I shall be told, that I assume the awful province of God, that I enter into the hearts of men, and pass a judgment concerning their sincerity, while I scarce suppose it possible for a man to be truly sincere, in seeking the truth, and yet to live and die an infidel, where the gospel is surrounded with it's proper light and evidences.

I must confess it is a sensible grief to me, when I am constrained, by the word of God, to say any thing terrible and severe against my fellow-creatures, my partners in flesh and blood. I would hate and avoid all the characters of a censorious and uncharitable spirit. The gospel of *Christ* is a gospel of love, and while I preach it for the salvation of men, I would never mix my own wrath with it, nor would I willingly lie under the shadow of such an imputation. But when the great and blessed God, who has made this gospel, and who searches the hearts of men, has pronounced his wrath and damnation so often against those who believe not in his Son, it is he himself who does in effect declare, that they are not sincere in their searches after the truth: For I am persuaded he would never proclaim such vengeance from heaven against any sincere soul, that with humble diligence and faithfulness inquires, "What he must do to please his maker."

The blessed God who has ordained the gospel of his Son *Jesus*, to be the means of the salvation of men to the end of the world, has certainly furnished it with sufficient evidence, for the propagation of it, through the successive generations of men, among all that are humble and willing inquirers after truth. The God of nature knows well how much light is necessary, both in the eye, and on the object, to convey the sight of it to those who are willing to see: The same all-wise God well knows also what capacity in the mind is requisite, and what degree of evidence is necessary to attend any revealed truth, in order to it's being received by the honest and sincere soul: And his equity and goodness would never have suffered such a heavy curse to be denounced against unbelievers, if he had not foreseen, that nothing but some corrupt and guilty prejudices could withhold men from receiving the truth of the gospel, where it is accompanied with it's necessary testimonials. It is not I, therefore, but it is the word of God that declares the unbelievers of his gospel to be insincere, while he pronounces such a curse upon them.

The holy and gracious lips of our blessed *Jesus*, who knew the hypocrisy and insincerity of the *Jews*, in his day, did often pronounce a sentence of death and destruction upon them; and, when he left the world, he repeated this condemnation upon all infidels, where his gospel should come with it's proper evidence, "he that believeth not shall be damned." *Mark* xvi. 16. The great apostle of the gentiles has assured us, that they who believe not have suffered the God of this world, that is, the devil, to blind their minds," *2 Cor.* iv. 4. and he has confirmed the awful sentence, "If any man love not the Lord *Jesus Christ*, let him be "anathema," or accursed, till the Lord come," *1 Cor.* xvi. 22.

Now

Now, since these solemn denunciations, of divine vengeance, are frequently repeated in our bible, and make a part of that book, wherein, our religion lies, since we are bound to declare all the counsel of God, for the salvation of men, and knowing these terrors of the Lord, we cannot but set them before the faces of those, who are in danger of being drawn away from their steadfastness in the faith; that if they should at last perish, in their own unbelief, they may not lay the blame upon the ministers of the gospel, and plead that they had no warning of this condemnation.

It is, therefore, no instance of an uncharitable conduct, to point out to careless wanderers, that pit of fire and destruction into which they are hastening, unless they turn their feet to another path: It has been, always, counted an act of charity and love, to pluck the wandering traveller, from a fatal precipice, or affright him from approaching the brink of it, by displaying all the dreadful mischiefs, and the certain death that will attend his fall.

On this view of things, if any person shall be led by providence to look into these discourses of mine, whose thoughts have been entangled, and his heart drawn away to any degrees of apostasy, or whose faith of *Christ* and the gospel hath been shaken, by the cavils of men, I would beg one favour of him, for his own sake, more than for mine, and that is, that he would not turn over these pages as a matter of mere curiosity, nor let his wit loose upon them in wanton sport, nor toils the solemn subject about as an airy jest, or a matter of trifling dispute. This awful theme and controversy in *Great Britain*, hath, in my judgment, no less consequences attending it than everlasting life or everlasting death.

—————“ Non hic levia aut ludicra petuntur  
Præmia, lectoris de vitâ animæque salute certatur.”

The indulgence of a sportful fancy, or a ludicrous spirit in questions so divine and important, is not the character of an honest mind which seeks the truth, nor is it a likely way to find it. The great God, the maker and Lord of all, and the fountain of all light and knowledge, is not wont to bless such triflers with divine irradiations. His awful majesty, and his tremendous justice, many times, leave them to sport themselves, in their own deceivings, till they have woven a fatal snare for their souls, and his righteous judgment may give them up to perish for ever, in their own impious mirth and madness.

If any wavering christian has a sincere desire, to be established in the truth, and to save his own soul, let him set his conscience at work in the sight of God, while he peruses the books written on this subject. Let him examine, with an honest heart, whether it be not the utmost hazard of his immortal interest to depart from the christian faith, and to “forsake the holy commandments, that have been delivered to him,” in the gospel. *2 Pet. ii. 21.* Let him see if he can find any other solid and substantial hope of the favour of God, of the pardon of his sins, and final happiness, such as will enable him upon just and rational grounds, to face death with courage, and enter into the immediate presence of a holy and offended God.

May the Spirit of *Christ* accompany this essay, to guard his own divine religion, and make these discourses happily effectual, to establish the professing christian, in his holy faith, to secure the wavering from apostasy, and to prevent the eternal ruin of souls. Amen.

London, February

A. 1728-9.

T H E

A  
C A V E A T  
A G A I N S T  
I N F I D E L I T Y.

2 TIM. ii. 5.

———*If a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.*

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

**T**HE life of a christian is not a state of indolence and ease: If we seek for salvation and eternal glory, in the way of the gospel, we must shake off sloth and idleness: There is some sacred skill and wisdom required in it, with a vigorous and holy exercise of the best powers of nature: Therefore *St. Paul*, in my text, compares it to those games or bodily exercises, which were practised, at appointed seasons, by the *Greeks*, wherein they exerted their utmost care and activity: He uses the same comparison in his first epistle to the *Corinthians*, chapter ix. verses 24, 25. Where he speaks of “being temperate in all things, and of striving to obtain a crown:” And he alludes to it in several other parts of his writings. The apostle *John*, or rather *Christ* himself seems to have some reference to it, in his epistles to the churches, where he proposes large recompences to them that overcome, and promises a crown of life, *Rev. ii. 10.* and *iii. 21.*

These games were of various kinds, such as running a race, wrestling, fighting, &c. Now, for each of these kinds of contest, there were certain laws and rules ordained, as in racing, they must start from such a spot of ground, they must run such a road or track, they must reach such a goal, and approach it in a proper manner too: In wrestling, the law of the contest required them to be naked, that they might not take the advantage of each other’s clothing: In fighting, they must use only that sort of weapon which was appointed for the combat, &c. And though the crown, which was given to the conquerors was but a poor corruptible one, as the apostle speaks, for it was made of the leaves of an olive, a laurel, a pine-tree, or of parsley; yet, so much honour attended it, and so strict were the overseers of it, that none obtained this prize, though he took never so much pains, and shewed never so

great activity, if he did not manage himself, in all things, according to the rules of the game or contest.

So a man, who seeks the prize of heavenly happiness, and aims at the crown of life and glory, must carefully conform himself to the sacred rules which God has appointed; otherwise he may labour and strive in vain. I take this to be the precise meaning of the apostle in the text, and it gives us fair occasion to derive this doctrine.

Doctrine. "All our pains to obtain the heavenly prize will be lost, unless we seek it in the right way and manner: We shall not be crowned, except we strive lawfully."

To render this doctrine useful and practical, I shall

I. Endeavour to shew what is the right way by which God has appointed us to seek eternal salvation, or what are the rules and laws of this sacred exercise, in order to obtain the heavenly crown.

II. I shall lay down some considerations to enforce and prove this doctrine, viz. that heaven must be sought only in this appointed way.

III. I would answer several queries and objections, which are commonly raised against, it in our day, chiefly by such as disbelieve the gospel.

IV. I shall offer two or three general exhortations to christians, derived from this discourse.

V. Propose some preservatives against apostasy, or a departure from the true way of salvation.

## S E C T I O N I.

*The rules to obtain salvation proposed, and the duties required in the gospel, or the necessary articles of christianity.*

**T**HE first enquiry is this, viz. What is the right way to obtain heaven? What are the appointed rules whereby we must govern our belief and practice?

The great and general rule is the divine revelation or word of God: For when man had lost his original state of innocency, and the favour of God by sin, God knew that his feeble reason, or the light of nature was not sufficient to inform him, what was necessary to recover his favour, and to direct him in the way to happiness; and therefore he took the first opportunity to acquaint his fallen creature man, that he would not for ever abandon him and all his race, but that there was some hope of his recovery; and he told him of a mediator or saviour, even the "seed of the woman that should break the serpent's head," *Gen. iii. 15.* that is, he should destroy the works of the devil, and repair the ruin which the temptations of *Satan* had brought in: And doubtless, at the same time, the blessed God assisted the reason and conscience of *Adam* in his enquiries, what duties were to be performed on his part toward his recovering an interest in the love of his creator. Nor has God been wanting ever since that time to give

give various discoveries of the right way of salvation in several successive ages, that mankind might be restored to his favour and image again.

The last, the brightest, and the best of all these discoveries is that which he has made in the gospel, by his Son *Jesus Christ*, and by the evangelists and apostles in the writings of the new testament: This book therefore contains the rules of that sacred exercise or contest, in which we must now be engaged to obtain the crown of glory. No pretences to the light of reason, no vain fancies of new revelations, no devices of our own heart must dare to oppose, or contradict the rules given us in this holy book; if we reject the gospel there is nothing will serve us instead of it.

I will not here enter into the question, how far they shall be accepted of God, who never had the word of God revealed to them, nor the gospel of *Christ* published among them. I reserve this for the end of my discourse. It is sufficient to say at present, that God the judge of all the earth, will deal in righteousness and wisdom with all mankind, and he is not wanting in mercy to his creatures, who submit themselves to him according to the dispensation they live under. Where he has given less, less shall be required: But this is certain, that he requires of all men a conformity to the rules, which he has made known to them; and therefore wheresoever the gospel comes with sufficient light and evidence, as it has done to us in the *british* isles, he expects that we should learn the rules of our holy race from thence, and conform our selves to them, if we would ever obtain the prize of glory.

But to descend to particulars. The appointed way, to obtain heaven under the gospel, may be comprized under the following heads, which I call the necessary requisites in order to salvation, and I have multiplied them into six particulars, that I might be more explicate and plain.

I. A knowledge and belief of the great articles of natural religion, whether they contain doctrines or duties\*: For though these, alone and in themselves, are not sufficient to save sinners, yet they are necessary in order to our salvation, and the gospel of *Christ* teaches and confirms them all.

We must believe that there is a God, the one only true and living God, almighty, all-wise and all-good, the creator of all things; and we must believe that he governs the world which he has made, and does not sit idle in heaven, and let his creation run at random; but that as a wise and holy ruler, he takes notice of the behaviour and conduct of all his reasonable creatures.

We must believe that there is a real difference between virtue and vice, between good and evil: And that this does not depend, as some have imagined, upon the mere customs and fashions of particular countries, or the will of princes, but upon the nature of things and the will of God. It is God, who has written it plain in our own consciences, and in the very frame of our rational souls, that it is our duty to fear and love him, to pray to him for what blessings we want, and to praise him and give him thanks for what mercies we enjoy, and to honour, worship, and obey him according to the discoveries of his nature and his will which he has made to us. And as it is our duty to know, and honour this God, so it is evident that atheism and blasphemy, and the neglect or contempt of God and things sacred, are high crimes and offences against him.

It is written also, in our consciences, with sufficient evidence, that it is our duty to love our neighbour, to be honest, and just, and faithful, and kind: And that cheating and falsehood, injustice and cruelty to our fellow creatures are hateful vices and

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\* By the articles of natural religion in this place, I chiefly intend such as belong to mankind in general, without regard to his fallen and sinful state.

never to be practised. It would be endless and needless to cite texts of scripture to prove all this.

We must believe, also, that this great God, the righteous governor of the world, will call us to an account hereafter, how we have behaved ourselves here, and will sit as a judge upon our past conduct in this life. The light of nature tells us; there is some reason to hope, that he will reward us gloriously, if we are faithful and diligent, perfect and persevering in our obedience to all his will; and it gives us just ground to fear, that he will punish us severely in a future state, if we are impious and perverse, and act contrary to the known rules of our duty. But the light of scripture gives us much clearer and surer discoveries of a heaven and a hell, a state of reward and punishment, according as our works shall be.

It is the voice of reason, and it is the language of revelation, that there is a future state to set all things right, and to account for the scenes of disorder in this present life. "Without the faith of things unseen it is impossible to please God; for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him," *Heb. xi. 6.* Nor was there ever any revelation of grace, that God made to fallen man for his salvation, but it pre-supposed or included this article of a future state, and all the other doctrines of natural religion in it.

II. Another thing necessary to our attainment of the heavenly happiness is a due sense of our guilt and misery by reason of sin, and a humble confession of it before God: Some conviction of sin may be derived from our own experience, if we do but converse with ourselves, and take a survey of our own hearts and lives, and compare them with the law of God written in our consciences. Where is the man, who has perfectly obeyed all the dictates of his own reason, and never contradicted this inward rule of duty? Surely if we know any thing of ourselves, we must confess we are sinners; we have offended God our creator, and broken his laws: "We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," we have lost all just hope of the reward: "Every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God," *Rom. iii. 19.* There is none innocent, no not one. Our own conscience accuses and condemns us, and subjects us to the just judgment of God.

And not only must we be sensible of our being exposed to divine anger, by reason of sins actually committed, but we must also be acquainted with the corruption of our natures, the body of sin which dwells within us, and be abased before God because of those inward sinful inclinations, and vain affections, which are ever busy and ever starting up to defile our consciences, and pollute our lives.

The gospel of *Christ* makes a sense of sin necessary to salvation. "They, who are whole, have no need of the physician; but only those who are sick: I came not, says our Lord *Jesus*, to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," *Mat. ix. 12, 13.* This is the language of the old testament as well as the new: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy," *Prov. xxviii. 13.* "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins: But if we say we have no sin, we make God a liar, and the truth is not in us," *1 John i. 8—10.* Now it can never be supposed, that those wretches are in the right way to salvation, who, either through stupid ignorance, or a great degree of pride and self-flattery, fancy themselves innocent: These proud vain creatures must be far from the path of salvation and deliverance, who are not convinced of their sin and danger. They are not in the way to obtain relief,

lic, who feel not their distress and misery. Such a haughty spirit of vain conceit makes God a liar, by contradicting the testimony that he gives in his word concerning all the children of men.

III. Sincere repentance is another necessary duty required in the gospel, in order to a sinner's salvation. Now this repentance implies a hearty sorrow for all our past offences, and a sincere return from sin to the love and obedience of God.

The very light of nature and reason, which teaches an innocent creature to obey his maker, does as plainly tell a sinful creature, that he must repent of his disobedience, that he must be heartily grieved for having broken the laws of his God, and that he must love and obey him for time to come, if ever he expect the least favour from him.

The scripture enforces this sacred duty of repentance continually upon the consciences of men, and the gospel of *Christ* being sent to the nations, "commands all men every where to repent," *Acts* xvii. 30. It is the very word of *Christ*, "except ye repent ye must all perish," *Luke* xiii. 3, 5. Not only must we forsake sin, and avoid it in our actions, but we must hate it in our hearts, and fulfil all our duties from a principle of divine love wrought in us. Our wills are by nature averse to God and goodness, and turned toward sin and folly; "We must therefore repent and be converted, that our sins may be blotted out," *Acts* iii. 19.

Our whole natures are vitiated and spoiled by sin, and we must be regenerated or born again, and made new creatures, that is, a universal change must pass upon all the powers of our natures, by the influence of the holy Spirit, or we can never be fit for the enjoyment of God. It is only "the pure in heart that shall see God," *Matth.* v. 8. "Except a man be born again, be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God, nor enter into it," *John* iii. 3, 5. That is, except his nature, which was sinful, be renewed unto holiness, so that he begin to live a new life, as a new born child, he cannot be admitted into the kingdom of divine grace: Except he be cleansed from the power of sin, by the influence of the Spirit of God, as the body is cleansed from outward defilements by water, which is typified and represented in baptism, he cannot be saved; "for nothing that defileth shall enter into the kingdom of heaven:" *Rev.* xxi. 27. "and he that hath not the spirit of *Christ* to sanctify him, to enable him to mortify sin, and create him a-new unto good works, such a one, is none of his," *Rom.* viii. 9. that is, he does not belong to *Christ*, nor hath any interest in him as a saviour.

IV. Another necessary rule we must observe, is this, *viz.* To draw near to God, and to seek his favour by a mediator. This seems to be designed in the words of *St. Paul*, which I have chosen for the foundation of this discourse. He that will be crowned must strive lawfully, and, in the following verses, he bids *Timothy* consider what he teaches him, and remember that *Jesus Christ* of the seed of *David* was raised from the dead according to his gospel; that is, remember that *Jesus Christ* approved himself to be the *Messiah*, the anointed saviour, by his rising from the dead. This is the only lawful way of striving for the heavenly crown, that is, by *Jesus* the mediator.

This doctrine of the mercy of God to guilty creatures by a mediator, was the plain design of the first promise made to *Adam* after his fall, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," as it is written, *Gen.* iii. 15. Those very words led him to a mediator, that is, to one born of a woman, that should relieve man-

kind under the mischief *Satan* had brought upon them. This blessed mediator and our saviour has been always kept in view, through all the succeeding revelations which God has made to the children of men. The *Messiah*, the anointed of God, who was to be the light of the gentiles, and the glory of *Israel*, and the saviour of men, even to the ends of the earth, was continually expected by the ancient saints.

And in these latter days we are now bound not only to trust in God, manifesting his mercy through some mediator, but to believe that *Jesus of Nazareth* is he, that the great appointed "mediator between God and man, is the man *Christ Jesus*", *1 Tim. ii. 5.* for *Christ* himself has said it, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins," *John viii. 24.* It is sufficiently manifested in the gospel, that there is no other hope or refuge: "There is salvation in no other, nor is there any other name given under heaven, whereby we can be saved, beside the name of *Jesus*," *Acts iv. 12.* Our Lord assures us, "that he is the way, that no man comes to the Father but by him," *John xiv. 6.* "And when he bid his disciples preach the gospel to every creature, he bid them not only tell the world, that he that believeth shall be saved, but that he who believeth not shall be damned," *Mark xvi. 16.*

Here let it be noted also, that we are not called to trust in *Christ* only as a mediator, to interceded or plead for us, though this is part of his appointed work, *Heb. vii. 25.* but we must receive him also as one who has made propitiation or atonement for sin. This is called in *Rom. v. 11.* receiving the atonement. "For he becomes our propitiation through faith in his blood," *Rom. iii. 25.* "And if we sin wilfully by a public and obstinate rejection of him, under his character of a sacrifice of atonement, I fear we shall find that there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful expectation of God's fiery indignation to devour us," *Heb. x. 26, 27.* This text seems to me to carry a solemn terror in it, against those who pretend to be christians, and yet dare to deny that *Christ* made a proper atonement for sin by his death, since this doctrine of atonement for our sins by the blood of *Christ*, is so often and so expressly asserted in the word of God\*.

You see then, that trust in a mediator, and in the mercy of God manifested through him, is a necessary part of our religion. This is that faith in *Christ* which is foretold so plainly in the old testament, that in him should the gentiles trust. This is represented so often in the new testament, as the great requisite of salvation, viz. the belief of *Jesus Christ* the Son of God, to be the only mediator between God and man, and a trusting in the mercy of God in and through this mediator, a committing the soul into his hands, as a Lord and saviour from sin and from hell: And it is called faith in his blood, to shew that we must trust in him particularly, as a mediator of atonement. This is that faith of *Christ* that *St. Paul* preached wheresoever he preached the duty of repentance, as a necessary attendant of it, in order to a sinner's acceptance with God. *Acts xx. 20, 21.* "Publicly, and from house to house he taught the *Ephesians*, and he testified both to the *Jews* and *Greeks*, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord *Jesus Christ*".

V. A constant sincere pursuit of universal holiness, and perseverance therein till the hour of our death. This is also necessary in order to our arrival at heaven. We are entered into a race, when we are first converted, and set our faces toward

\* I do not tarry here to enlarge on the proof of the atonement of *Christ* for sin, having sufficiently proved it in my sermons upon *Rom. iii. 25.* See volume the first, sermons xxxiv. xxxv. xxxvi. pages 368—403.



toward heaven; we must not turn backward, lest we lose the prize. We must keep the path of duty with sincerity and diligence, and, in this manner, we must run through the whole stage of life, till we reach the goal of death, if we would obtain the glorious crown of righteousness.

It is true, the gospel does not suppose or expect, that we should be innocent or perfect in obedience; and therefore a gracious God has made provision for the repentance of christians, and their return to his mercy after their renewed falls and sins, otherwise no flesh could be saved: But it is our duty to stir up our selves to arise and return to God with sincere sorrow, and then with greater watchfulness to set upon our duty, and make it appear through the course of life, that in our heart we hate sin and love holiness.

It is not the costly or toilsome performance of ceremonies, nor any long slavish labours in outward forms of godliness, nor any painful mortifications of the natural body, and severe penances of fasting and scourging, that will be accepted of God instead of inward piety; nor yet is that piety to be all inward and confined merely to the heart: but it must appear in the life too. "The grace of God that brings salvation, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, and by our good works to adorn the doctrine of God our saviour in all things." *Titus* ii. 10—12. Whatsoever particular neglects the great God may excuse, he will never dispense with a general neglect of holiness: For it is said expressly, *Heb.* xii. 14. "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." He is a holy God, and as compassionate and condescending as he is, he doth not lay aside one ray of his own holiness, in order to display his grace, nor will he dishonour that glorious perfection of his divinity to save a world of sinners. The gospel and the grace of God that saves us, can save us only in a way becoming the holiness of his nature. No unholy thing shall enter into heaven.

We, who are engaged in this christian exercise, have much of strife and conflict to pass through: It is not only a race, but a combat also, and it implies wrestling and fighting: We must take up arms against the sins of our natures, and the corruptions of our hearts, as well as against *Satan*, and the temptations of this world. Then surely those that know not their spiritual dangers, who are not made sensible of the sins that dwell within them, have no reason to imagine or expect they shall be conquerors: They are not yet engaged in the spiritual warfare, nor apprized of their spiritual enemies: They are not in the way to obtain the prize. "If we live according to the inclinations of our flesh we shall die," "but if we through the spirit mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live." *Rom.* viii. 13. "They that are *Christ's* must crucify the flesh, with it's affections and lusts," *Gal.* v. 24. And it is not only flesh and blood must be opposed, but principalities and powers of darkness, and all the hosts of hell, as well as an army of temptations of this wicked world, *Eph.* vi. 12. and if we lay down our weapons and give over fighting, we give up all pretences to victory, and lose the crown.

VI. A humble hope in the divine promises of joy and happiness in the world to come, is the last thing I shall mention. This is so necessary a grace, that it is said, "we are saved by hope," *Rom.* viii. 24. And it is often put for faith itself, in the language of ancient prophecy, and in the writings of the apostles: "*Christ* himself is called our hope," *1 Tim.* i. 1. Unbelief of the promises, and despair of heaven cut off all the sinews of action, and will effectually prevent us  
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from seeking and striving to obtain the prize: We must live therefore in humble expectation of future glory, "looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearance of the great God, and our saviour *Jesus Christ*." *Titus* ii. 13.

And the apostle's argument in *1 Cor.* xv. 12—16. seems to make the belief and hope even of the resurrection of the body, a necessary part of our christianity also: For, "if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is not *Christ* risen; and if *Christ* be not risen, then our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain, ye are yet in your sins." For my part I must own, that where this gospel comes in such full light and evidence, as we enjoy it, I hardly know what to make of their christianity, who deny the doctrine of the resurrection.

These are the substantial parts of our religion, and the chief rules of the christian race, or contest in which we are engaged in order to obtain the crown. And concerning these, I have endeavoured to make it appear from reason, or express testimony of scripture, that God, the great and blessed God, will not dispense with any of them in those persons who expect favour and salvation at his hands.

There are indeed many circumstantials that belong to our religion, which are by no means of equal importance with those substantial parts of christianity before mentioned. In many of these circumstances of our duty, it has not pleased the Spirit of God, to write the rules of them in so plain and express language; and therefore there may be very different sentiments and practices in these points, without endangering our salvation, without breaking the bonds of our christian love and unity. It is of infinitely more importance, that we believe that there is but one God, that he must be worshipped and served by his creatures, that there is an essential difference between virtue and vice, that there is a future state of rewards and punishments, that we are guilty creatures, and can obtain favour of God no other way but by a mediator, that we must repent of our sins and have our hearts changed and renewed unto holiness, and live in the sincere practice of every known duty, and in humble expectation of future blessedness; I say, these things are of infinitely greater moment, than whether we must be baptized in infancy or riper years; whether that ceremony must be performed by dipping or sprinkling; whether the ordinance of the Lord's supper must be received in the posture of guests sitting at the table, in the posture of children standing round their father's board, to receive his distributions of bread and wine, or in the posture of humble supplicants kneeling and adoring; whether our ministers must be ordained, and our churches governed by bishops or presbyters, or how far the concurrent acts of the whole church have an influence into these solemnities; whether our prayers must be immediately conceived in our hearts, and invented as they are uttered in new expressions continually, or whether we may use forms written down before-hand: These things, and many others of the like nature, because they are not of such necessity, therefore are not so evidently determined in the word of God.

But as for the six general rules before mentioned, I do not see how we can expect that God should dispense with any of them, since he has appointed his written word to be the rule of his final judgment, and he seems to have required them in his word in so peremptory a manner. He that strives and takes pains to obtain heaven, with a neglect of these rules, I think we may boldly say, he does not strive lawfully, and he has no sufficient ground to hope that he shall be crowned.

## SECTION. II.

*Considerations to prove the doctrine.*

I proceed now to the second thing which I proposed, and that is to lay down several considerations, which may serve to evince and prove the truth of the doctrine, and make it still more evident, that such as neglect the rules of God's appointment shall not obtain salvation.

Consideration I. "God alone has a right to appoint the way to his own favour, and he is jealous to secure this prerogative." God has the first and most unquestionable property in us as his creatures, and sovereign dominion over us as subjects. He has a right, and he only, to ordain in what manner we should honour him, and seek his favour. If we were innocent creatures, it is he must direct us to any special instances of our duty in that state of innocence, and tell us how we may keep our selves in his love: Or since we are guilty and rebellious, he only can appoint the sacred methods to obtain his own favour again, and gain an interest in his compassion.

"The Lord our God is a jealous God," and will not suffer himself to be disobeyed or mocked in things that so nearly concern his own sovereignty. This is evident in the second commandment, where he appoints the method of his own worship: And though we may think paintings, or images to represent his glory, and his power, are very agreeable and proper to assist our sensible natures, yet he forbids every thing of this kind as mediums of divine worship, and he solemnizes the prohibition with an awful discovery of his own jealousy: He declares that he will avenge himself of those that dare to worship him in unappointed or forbidden ways, even to the third and fourth generations. It is worthy of our notice, that when he charges the *Jews* of old, with some of their idolatrous abominations, he mentions this as the reason of his anger, that they practised things "which he commanded not, neither came they into his heart," *Jerem. vii. 31.*

When God designed his own worship to be attended with a variety of pomp and ceremony, he prescribed every part of it to *Moses* with great exactness: And when he had given an account how the tabernacle, and table, and the candlesticks, and the altars should be made, he gives him a charge that he should precisely follow the divine directions, *Exod. xxv. 9, 40.* "Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount." Now if the great God requires such accuracy, and such exact conformity to his rules in matters merely external, typical, and ceremonial, how much more may we suppose that he will be strict and severe in demanding a conformity to his own appointed methods of salvation in things of more solemn, more spiritual, and everlasting concernment?

Suppose a traitor guilty of death, should have orders from the king his sovereign to enter into his presence, dressed in the borrowed ornaments of the prince his son, and to be introduced by his hand in order to obtain pardon; now if this condemned criminal should resolve rather to come and appear before the king in some bright ornament of his own preparing, and without the mediation of the prince; would he not deserve to be frowned away from the throne, and sent directly to execution? Would not this be a new indignity offered to the king himself, and a fresh instance

of rebellion and disobedience? So when we consider our selves as rebels and traitors against the majesty of heaven, if we will refuse the methods of God's own appointment in order to obtain his favour, and will walk in the devices of our own hearts, this will be justly construed a continuance in our rebellion, and we must expect the sentence of death to be executed upon us. *Isa.* l. 11. "Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks, walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled; this shall ye have of my hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow."

Consideration II. "All the ways of recovering the favour of God, that proud vain man would contrive for himself, are evidently fruitless and ineffectual, and if we consider them distinctly, each of them will appear to be insufficient."

Shall we come to God in the way of innocency, and pretend that we have done no harm? But we have before proved that "all men are guilty. There is none righteous, no not one." *Rom.* iii. 15.

Shall we come in the way of "hope and reliance upon the general and absolute mercy of God," trusting that God will forgive our sins because he is infinitely good and kind? But the light of nature can give us no manner of assurance, that he will express his kindness and goodness in forgiving sinful men. This is a free act of his will, and there is nothing in his nature, or in our circumstances that obliges him to it. Nor in his gospel hath he given any promise of such mercy to be exercised, but through *Jesus* his Son: "The grace of God that appears to men is only through *Jesus Christ*," *Tit.* iii. 4. "He justifies us freely by his grace, but it is through the redemption that is in *Jesus Christ*," *Rom.* iii. 24.

Shall we approach to God in the way of humble address to him, and beg him to accept of our "repentances and mortifications?" But these can never atone for our past offences. What are the tears, or sorrows, or little penances of a creature to make satisfaction for the affronts offered to God?

Shall we come to God and hope for acceptance by "our best duties of righteousness?" But they are all imperfect, and the law of God in it's perfect purity would condemn both us and them: Besides, if they were never so perfect they could not make recompence for transgressions past.

Shall we seek "to saints in heaven, or angels, or any higher rank of creatures to become mediators, advocates, and intercessors for us?" Alas! We have no acquaintance with them, nor do we know that any of our petitions can come to their knowledge: Besides, this office is so sublime and glorious, that it seems too assuming for them to undertake, unless the offended majesty of heaven had appointed them to it: They are all utterly precluded by their want of sufficient merit, as well as by the designation of his Son *Jesus Christ* alone to that glorious office.

In vain shall sinful guilty man hope to come near to a holy and offended God, but by the death and righteousness of his own Son. Ever since the first *Adam* laid the foundation of our ruin, and divided us from God our maker, by his sin, man kind has been still wandering farther from God, and rebelling against him; and it is the second *Adam* alone that can restore us to his favour again by his righteousness. *Rom.* v. 19. "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one man shall many be made righteous."

But to proceed in shewing the insufficiency of sinful man to return to God by his own power or merit. All that we have insisted on here is but one part of our misery: We must look upon our selves not only guilty of many past offences in the sight

fight of God, but as having our natures ruined, and the powers of them infeebled and broken by sin. We are dark, ignorant, and averse to God and all that is holy. We cannot learn divine things, savingly, without the teachings of the holy Spirit: We cannot change our own sinful natures to holiness without his special influences: We cannot mortify all the rising corruptions, and reigning iniquities of our hearts, and transform our own souls into the likeness of God: By nature we are enemies to God and goodness; our own reasonings, our moral motives, our rules of philosophy, and all our self-invented methods of austere penance and mortification, will not wean our hearts from the love of sin and vanity, and work that supreme love to God in our souls, and that delight in him above all things, which is necessary in order to true happiness. "It is a new creation, it is a resurrection from the dead, it is a being born again;" and what mere creature is sufficient for these almighty works?

As it is nothing but the gospel that shews us the atonement of *Christ*, which is equal to the guilt of our offences; and how by that atonement we are to be reconciled to God, so it is nothing but the gospel that reveals to us the condescending grace of God, and the powerful influences of his own Spirit; whereby we may have our natures renewed and fitted for the presence and enjoyment of God\*.

Consideration III. "Since the gospel of *Christ* is established as the way of our access unto God, there is an awful and terrible curse pronounced against those, who bring in any other pretended gospel or way of salvation," "If any man preach any other gospel to you than that ye have received; let him be accursed:" *Gal. i. 9.* And this curse is not only pronounced against men; but against angels themselves, if we could suppose any of them should attempt such an affront to the government of God. *verle 8.* "Though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you, than that which we have preached, let him be accursed." Behold here *St. Paul*, a little and despicable figure of a man, but under the influence of the divine Spirit, pronouncing a curse upon himself, an apostle, and upon the highest angel in heaven, if he should preach another gospel. The sovereignty of God, in the appointment of the means of our salvation, will maintain it's own unrivalled character and dignity in a sublime degree, and he declares his holy jealousy of the least intrenchment upon it. Wo be to the man that attempts to lay any other foundation for a sinner's hope; he exposes himself to such a curse as would sink an apostle, or an angel down to hell and eternal misery.

Consideration IV. "The great God has already made several persons become terrible instances of his indignation, when they have pretended to attempt to please, or serve him in other methods, than he himself has appointed." Read the story of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the sons of *Aaron*, in *Levit. x. 1, 2.* when they "took their censers and burned incense in them, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not; there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord." It is supposed by learned men, that when the divine fire came from heaven and consumed the burnt-offering, *Levit. ix. 24:* this fire was not only to be preserved, always, upon the altar, according to God's express order, *Levit. vi. 12, 13.* "The fire shall ever be burning, and never go out:" But that no other fire was lawful to be used in burning the sacrifices, or the incense: And when *Nadab* and *Abihu* neglected to use this sacred fire, and put common fire in their censers in

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\* See these things proved more at large in the two first discourses of my first volume of sermons; volume the first, page 1—19.

the room of it, this was the very crime which God so terribly avenged. "This is that, said *Moses*, which the Lord spake, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people will I be glorified." verse 3.

Behold a second instance of the dreadful anger and high resentment of God upon a like occasion, when *Korab*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, with two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, rose up against *Moses*. They presumed to enter into the office of priesthood, and to offer incense in their censers, to which ministry God appointed none but *Aaron* and his sons. Read the awful narrative, *Numb.* xvi. 1, 31—35. "When *Moses* gave them a solemn reproof, and pronounced the doom of *Korab* and his company, the ground clave asunder that was under them, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up and their houses with all their goods: They and all that appertained unto them, went down alive into the pit; and the earth closed upon them, and they perished from among the congregation: And all *Israel* that were round about them, fled at the cry of them, for they said, lest the earth swallow us up also: And there came out fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense." This unexampled and astonishing vengeance makes it appear with dreadful evidence, that their crime was very hainous in the eyes of a jealous God.

Take a third example of the jealousy of God. *Saul* was the first king whom he appointed over *Israel*, yet when he presumed to offer a burnt-offering himself before the appointed hour, and did not tarry for *Samuel* to do it, God lays this to his charge as one reason of his taking away the kingdom from him, viz. "because he did not keep the commandment or appointment of the Lord," 1 *Sam.* xiii. 12—14. And yet he seems to have had a very good excuse too, and did it almost unwillingly: "I forced my self, &c."

In the fourth place, mark what a monument of indignation and misery appears in *Uzziab*, the king of *Judab*, 2 *Cbron.* xxvi. 16—21. "He went into the temple of the Lord, to burn incense upon the altar of incense." The king refuseth to desist from his impious attempt, when the priests informed him of his transgression: "It belongs not to thee, *Uzziab*, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of *Aaron*, who are consecrated to burn incense; and immediately he was smitten with a foul disease, the leprosy rose up in his forehead, and he was thrust out from the temple, yea himself hastened to go out, because the Lord had smitten him: And *Uzziab* the king, was a leper unto the day of his death, and was cut off from the house of the Lord." Thus we see that God will spare neither priests, nor princes, nor indulge kings to make an inroad upon his appointed forms of worship, or to alter any part of the ceremonies which he has ordained. The Lord of hosts is a great king and a jealous God.

There is yet a fifth instance, that, in some respect, seems to carry a more tremendous evidence of the jealousy of the great God in this matter, and that is written, 2 *Sam.* vi. 7. "When the ark of the Lord was brought up from the house of *Abinadab* in a cart, *Uzzab* put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it, for the oxen shook it." Doubtless *Uzzab* did this out of a pious zeal to preserve the ark of God, and the things that were in it from being shattered: But the law of God by *Moses*, had ordained the priests only to bear the ark: verse 8. "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against *Uzzab*, and God smote him there for his error, and he died by the ark of God." Here does not seem to be any ambition or insolence in the heart, presuming to attempt forbidden work: But even where piety and zeal itself were expressed in a forbidden manner, the great God is so jealous of the honour  
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of his appointments, that he struck the man dead for his mistaken zeal : The Lord our God, says *David*, made a breach upon us, for that we fought him not after the due order, that is, by employing alone the levites and priests in removing the ark, 1 *Cbron.* xv. 13. And this is left upon record as a warning piece to affright us for ever from pretending to honour God, and to express our devotion for him in any other methods than those, which he himself has ordained, and consecrated.

Consideration V. "The huge contempt that God himself has thrown upon the ways and rules of his own appointment when their date is expired, gives us a plain intimation that will accept of no methods of worship, but such as he appoints." How magnificent and illustrious, beyond all our present thoughts and expressions, was the worship of God in the tabernacle, and especially in the temple, when those buildings were first set up, the one by *Moses* the prophet, and the other by *Solomon* the king? All the pomp and glory of the heathen temples and their golden idols, all the splendor of the vestments of the priests, and furniture of cathedrals and altars in the church of *Rome*, though the riches of the world seem to be amassed and laid out there, yet it falls incomparably short of the glory and grandeur of the *jewish* worship in the days of *Moses* and *Solomon* : But when the term of these ceremonies was once expired, and their great design accomplished in the death, the resurrection and intercession of *Christ*, what names of contempt does the Spirit of God cast upon them? "They are elements of the world," *Gal.* iv. 3. "Yokes of bondage," chapter v. 1. "Weak and beggarly elements," chapter iv. 9. "The rudiments of this world," *Col.* ii. 20. "Mere shadows of good things to come," *Heb.* x. 1. "Carnal ordinances and a worldly sanctuary," *Heb.* ix. 1, 10. And even when the apostle is speaking of the glory of that dispensation, he calls it the ministration of death, 2 *Cor.* iii. 7. especially when the gospel came in which is the ministration of life. And when he speaks

It is evident to the world, and must be universally acknowledged, that the great of circumcision, which was the pride and boast of the *jewish* nation, and was once the distinguishing mark of God's special favourites, he not only pronounces it unprofitable, but threatens the *Galatians* that *Christ* shall profit them nothing, if they run back to circumcision, and the rites of judaism, *Gal.* v. 2.

Now if the great and holy God lays such a load of contempt on modes of worship, which his own divine wisdom once contrived, and his own authority established; if he himself throws upon them such reproachful and forbidding language, when the appointed term of them is expired, can we imagine this holy God will endure forms of worship of the fanciful invention of men, or that he will indulge foolish and sinful creatures, where his own appointments are revealed, to seek his favour by addressing him in methods which he has not appointed? This must be a vain attempt, a fruitless labour, and a foolish hope.

Consideration VI. "There are several express scriptures that declare *Christ* and his gospel, to be the only way of our acceptance with God; and, therefore, it is in vain for us to hope to attain the crown of glory, if we strive not for it lawfully, or in these methods of his divine appointment". Several of these scriptures I have already cited under the first general head, where I enumerated the most fundamental doctrines and duties of the gospel, and proved that, without the practice of them, there was no hope. "No man cometh to the Father but by me," *John* xiv. 6. "Other foundation can no man lay than what God has

has laid, that is, *Christ Jesus*", 1 Cor. iii. 11. Though the unbelieving *Jews* had a zeal for God, and *Paul* himself bore this witness for them, yet they did not attain justifying righteousness, but fell short of it because they did not seek it by faith in the Son of God, but by obedience to the works of the law of *Moses*." Rom. ix. 31. "And when our blessed redeemer shall come in flaming fire, he shall not only pour out his vengeance on them that know not God, but on those also who obey not the gospel." 1 *Thess.* i. 10. It was the commission which our risen Lord gave to the apostles, when they were sent to preach the gospel, to let the nations know, that "he that believeth not shall be damned", *Mark* xvi. 16. And at the close of the bible "the unbelievers are joined with the murderers, and whoremongers, and forcerers, and idolaters, and liars, and are cast into the lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone, by an express order from the God of heaven sitting upon his throne of judgment," *Rev.* xxi. 8.

The last of these considerations is sufficient of itself to evince this truth, that a sinful creature can never attain the favour of God and happiness, unless he pursue them in those ways, and according to those rules, which God has established in his gospel: But when we add all these six considerations together, methinks they should make a deep and powerful impression upon our consciences, and awaken us all to enquire whether we are engaged in the pursuit of heaven, according to the methods of divine appointment, and whether we are striving lawfully for the crown of glory. It will be a dreadful disappointment to labour hard by unlawful and unappointed methods, and at last to lose our hope and our crown, and our souls for ever.

### S E C T I O N III.

#### *Various objections and queries of the deists answered.*

**I**T has been declared in the foregoing sections, what are the methods and rules of divine appointment, wherein we are to seek for eternal life and happiness: And several considerations have been offered to enforce this truth, that it is in vain for us to hope for the favour of God or life eternal, if we refuse to seek it by these appointed ways and rules. I come now to answer some queries which the deists and infidels of our age have raised by way of objection against this doctrine: And I hope, through divine grace, I shall be enabled to give so sufficient an answer to them, as may confirm the wavering christian against the danger of apostasy, and I would wish also that it might convince some of the unbelievers in *Great Britain* of their weak and hopeless pretences to future happiness.

### Q U E S T I O N I.

**I**S it not impossible, that a man should honestly practise a religion which he does not know, or which he does not believe? If therefore a man be not convinced of the truth of the christian religion, it may be justly said, that he does not know it, that is, he doth not know reasons enough to believe it: And will not this ignorance be a sufficient excuse for him in the sight of God the judge of all?

Answer I. It is granted that ignorance is no crime at all, where it hath been always utterly invincible in the very nature of things, and where there have never been any means of knowledge: Therefore an heathen among the savage nations  
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of *Africa*, where the gospel was never preached, or the name of *Jesus* never known, shall not be condemned for not believing in *Jesus*.

It is granted also, that where the means of knowledge are exceeding weak and defective, and the glimmerings of divine light very feeble, as among the *Laplanders* and the northern *Russians*, doubtless ignorance doth very much extenuate the guilt of their superstitions, and their ridiculous methods of divine worship.

But in the land of *Great Britain*, and especially in the towns and cities of it, where these men of infidelity generally dwell; in *Great Britain*, where the light of the gospel shines with glorious evidence, where christianity has been brought often to the test, and has maintained it's ground in the midst of all the intellectual conflicts of a reasoning age; in *Great Britain*, where the proofs of our holy religion have been set forth in so convincing a light, surely the pretences of ignorance must be cut off here, especially among all persons who have had a tolerable education: And there is just reason to fear, that this ignorance has too much of pride or negligence, or obstinacy in it, and will be imputed by the great judge, to the evil turns and biases of the will and affections, more than to the weakness of the understanding: Nor indeed will our modern infidels bear to have it placed on this foot, from the high esteem they generally have of their own reason.

The scribes and pharisees in the days of our saviour, might make the same pretences, that they did not know the gospel of *Christ*, that is, they did not see or know reasons enough to believe that *Christ* was the great prophet, or the saviour of the world: But our blessed Lord, who well knew the sufficiency of the evidence which he had given to convince men of the truth of his divine mission, pronounces destruction upon those infidels. "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." *John* viii. 24. And I think it may be said, that if ever there was an age or nation under heaven, since the apostolic age, which had abundant rational evidence of the truth of christianity, the inhabitants of the chief towns and cities of *Great Britain* enjoy that evidence; and especially the men of leisure and learning amongst them. So that this pretended ignorance, I fear, will at last appear to be too near a kin to the pretences of the unbelievers in the days of *Christ*, and it is well if they do not fall under the same condemnation.

Answer II. The great God, who is perfectly wise and perfectly just, well knows what allowances to make for every degree of ignorance which people may lie under, according to their various advantages or disadvantages for knowledge: Yet he has taken care in his word, both of the old and new testament, to let it appear, that ignorance in general is not always a sufficient excuse for crimes committed, or for the neglect of duties commanded. The whole fifth chapter of *Leviticus* is spent in directing the ignorant sinner among the *Jews*, what he should do to make an atonement for his transgressions, verse 17. It is said, if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord, though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity\*. The various forms of sacrifice that are there appointed, sufficiently discover that the Lord will not hold him intirely guiltless, that commits a sin of ignorance: And, this is done, that men might not hope to excuse themselves before the great God for their sins, merely by the pretences of ignorance and mistake. In the new testament our saviour

\* I confess it may be disputed here, in this law of *Moses*, whether the ignorance spoken of, be an ignorance of the law, or an ignorance of the fact; yet in the words of *Christ* which are cited afterwards, it is plainly an ignorance of the law that is described: And, in general, this leuitical appointment sufficiently shews, that pretences of ignorance are not always a sufficient excuse.

favour hath expressly told us, *Luke xii. 47, 48.* “ And that servant who knew his Lord’s will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes : But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.”

Here, let it be always observed, that wheresoever ignorant sinners are punished, for their errors, the ignorance is always culpable, and therefore it is in some degree voluntary and chosen. It must arise either from slothfulness or neglect of enquiry, or from some criminal prejudices against the truth. No man can be punished for ignorance of his duty, if in the nature of things it be utterly invincible.

### QUESTION II.

**B**UT can any man believe what he will? or believe whatsoever he is bid to believe? Can I assent to any thing which doth not appear with sufficient evidence to my understanding to be true? The mind of man in this respect seems to be a passive power, and cannot receive any proposition, but according to the evidence or proof that attends it, and according to the strength of light, in which the mind discerns this evidence or proof. Now if the proofs of the gospel, and the arguments for christianity, do not appear to my understanding in a convincing light, I am not able to believe it: Why then must I be condemned for not believing what, according to the make of my nature, I cannot believe? The severity of this one expression of *Christ*, “ He that believeth not shall be damned,” *Mark xvi. 16.* is even an obstacle to my belief of his divine authority; for surely the great God would never send a messenger, to pronounce damnation against men, for not assenting to what does not appear evident to them, that is, for not believing what they cannot believe: This would be like condemning men for not seeing what they cannot see, for want of sufficient light.

Answer I. This threatening is only denounced against those, to whom the gospel is offered, with sufficient credentials. It cannot be denounced against any person, who has not enjoyed sufficient means of knowledge and conviction. No man shall be condemned for not seeing any object, when there is not light enough to discover the object to him.

But, let it be remembered, that the great God, who is the judge of all, well knows the faculties of men, and what degree of outward revelation is sufficient, in it’s own nature, to discover the truth of the gospel to every single person, who comes within the hearing of it, if he be sincere and honest to attend to that light and evidence. And this threatening shall never be executed on men of an honest and sincere mind, who were willing to receive all conviction, and attend with humble and diligent souls, yielding up their understanding and assent, wheresoever there was sufficient evidence. Such condemnation belongs therefore only to those persons, to whom God himself knows he hath given sufficient outward revelation, or evidence of the truth of the gospel, but that through negligence of attention, or some culpable prejudice, they refuse to receive the truth, and believe the gospel.

Our blessed saviour well knew the pride and obstinacy of the sadducees and pharisees in his life-time, when after all his divine miracles, they would not believe his divine commission: It was in vain for them to pretend, they could not see sufficient evidence of the gospel, for our Lord knew he had given them evidence sufficient to convince souls, who were sincere in their inquiry; and therefore he pronounced, and repeated the damnation upon the proud and obstinate unbelievers, *John viii. 21, 24.* “ If ye believe not that I am the *Messiah*, ye shall die in your sins.”

Answer

Answer II. To refute this objection more effectually, let it be considered, that the judgment, that is, the power of assent or dissent to a proposition, is not a faculty so merely passive, as some men imagine it; for it is plain, that by our own choice or inclination we are capable of delaying our assent long, and abstaining from rash judgments; and we can by our own choice or inclination give a precipitate or hasty judgment, concerning an object without sufficient evidence; we can withhold or suspend our judgment or assent, where the evidence is weak till it grows stronger; and we can also withhold our judgment or assent, by an unwillingness to receive into our mind the full light and strength of clear evidence, where the proposition to be believed, is displeasing to our inclinations.

Thus it is manifest, there is much of the will, mingles itself with the exercises of the understanding in our acts of judgment. We are justly pronounced criminals, and God may condemn us for a rash and hasty assent to a mischievous error, because we did not withhold our assent, till we saw fuller evidence and proof: And we are as justly pronounced criminals, and are condemned justly, for withholding our judgment, and refusing our assent to an important truth, where God sees and knows the light and evidence, to be sufficiently strong for our conviction.

There are some errors that we are ready to receive into our assent, upon very slight argument and insufficient evidence, because there is a secret inclination in us, that they should be true, according to the old latin saying, "Quod volumus facile credimus," what we wish to be true, we easily believe: And there are some truths, which we are very backward to receive into our assent, though the evidence be never so strong, because we are unwilling they should be true. Perhaps these truths do not agree with our former notions, they contradict our old opinions, or condemn our present practices, or perhaps they thwart our honour or interest, we shall be exposed to shame or hardship, or loss in professing them, or we must change our party if we believe them, or finally because we do not at present see the way fully, to reconcile them with some other things, which we have received and believed to be true. Now if the mind be under any of these influences, and therefore delay and deny it's assent to plain evidence, it may become criminal in the sight of God, for hearkening to any one of these prejudices, rather than to the plain divine discoveries of truth, when it is proposed either by the light of reason or revelation.

I might here make use of the very same similitude, that is mentioned in the objection, and shew how a man may see an object, even though it be placed in a dusky light, when he is very desirous of seeing it, and when he uses the utmost vigour and effort of his eye-sight for this purpose: And on the other hand, if he does not exert his visive powers with vigour, if he will wink a little, or will turn his eyes aside, or raise a dust before the object, he may be said not to see it; but the true reason is, because the object upon some account or other is displeasing, and he is unwilling to see it. Now if the life of this man, depended on his seeing and laying hold of this object, he must die without hope and without pity: It is in vain for him to pretend, that he did not see it, when either he winked a little, or raised a dust about it, and thus abused the day light, and prevented his own sight of the only object that could save him.

In such important concerns as the affairs of eternal salvation, let our infidels take heed that this be not their case. *Jesus* the Son of God is the object proposed to them, to lay hold of as their only refuge from death and hell, and the light is so strong in which it is set, that thousands of wise, rational and cautious men have seen it, and embraced it, and found salvation: Let them take heed therefore of winking in the day-light, and of raising a dust by wanton and unreasonable cavils; let them

examine the secret workings of their souls with the strictest care; for if it should be found hereafter, that there was external light and evidence enough for their conviction, and the fault lay only in their prejudices or their inattention, this will justly expose them to the terrible and condemning sentence of God.

### QUESTION III.

**I**S not sincerity \* in the practice of what we believe, of much more importance in religion, than the truth of our opinions? Is not sincerity even in the practice of a true religion, the only thing acceptable to God therein? And if there be the same sincerity in the practice of a false religion, surely God will accept of man's sincere endeavours to serve him, and will easily pardon and pass by all his ignorance, his errors and mistakes.

Answer I. Though sincerity be a necessary ingredient in all the practices of true religion that can be acceptable to God, yet it is not sincerity alone that is made the term of our justification and acceptance, in the constitution of the gospel, but faith in *Jesus Christ*, or trust in the mercy of God through *Jesus* the mediator. *Moses* describes the righteousness of the law, that is, the way of justification by the covenant of works, as it is figured out to us in the external legal covenant of *Sinai*, in this manner, *Rom. x. 5.* "The man that doth these things shall live in them: But the righteousness of faith which we preach," saith the apostle, that is, the way of justification and salvation under the gospel, "speaks thus, if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord *Jesus*, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," v. 8—10. So *Rom. i. 16, 17.* "The gospel is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth, for it is written, the just shall live by his faith." *Mark xvi. 16.* "He that believes shall be saved." *Eph. ii. 8, 9.* "By grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of your selves, it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast." Neither *Abraham* nor *David* amongst the *Jews*, were justified by works, but by faith, that is, not by the sincerest works of righteousness, which they themselves performed, but by trust in the divine mercy, according to the revelations of it in their various ages, and in various degrees. *Rom. iv. 3—6.* Blessed is the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works, to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, that is, his faith or dependence on the pardoning mercy of God through a mediator, is the only appointed way of obtaining justification: It is not his own works, for he has none sufficient for this end: But his trust in that God who justifies and accepts the ungodly, that is, persons who have no sufficient godliness for their justification: The only thing that man can do, which shall be imputed or reckoned to him in order to his justification, is his faith or trust in the mercy of God, who justifies us freely, without any merit of our own works in our justification: And he doth this by virtue of the redemption that is in *Christ*. This is the sense of this verse, according to the whole scope and design of the fourth chapter; for the very design and scope of it is to shew the self-emptying nature of that faith, by which we must be justified, as the design of the fifth chapter, is to declare the object of it, *Jesus Christ*. This is the language of the new testament, this is the appointment of the gospel.

I grant indeed, that the gospel requires also repentance, and sincere submission and obedience to all the will of God revealed in his word, as well as trusting in *Jesus Christ*,

\* By sincerity in practice I here understand, a performing the duties of religion, according to the best of our present knowledge, and the utmost of our abilities.

*Christ*, if ever we would be accepted of God, and obtain heaven: And there are many substantial and indispenfible reasons for it in the oeconomy of the gospel. It is the very design of the gospel to recover men to holiness, by a sense of pardoning grace: "We are accepted in the beloved, that we may be holy, and without blame before God in love," *Eph. i. 4, 6*. We are not fitted for salvation, and the heavenly blessedness unless we are sanctified: "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," *Heb. xii. 14*. We cannot evidence our own faith to be true and saving, unless it abide in us as the spring of all good works. It is only "faith that works by love," that is available to eternal life. *Gal. v. 6*. Therefore those that have believed must remember, that they are "redeemed from an evil world, as well as from hell:" They are "redeemed from a vain conversation, as well as from guilt and misery, that they may be a peculiar people unto God zealous of good works." *Tit. ii. 14*. But all this will not prove that sincerity in our works of obedience to God, is the appointed term of our pardon of sin, our justification or acceptance in the sight of God under the gospel, without faith or trust in *Jesus Christ*, as the great mediator and reconciler. Still our acceptance with God is eminently referred to faith, and that as it stands distinct from works, though it must be such a living faith as is the spring of holiness.

But to bring the matter as low as possible, suppose it should be allowed; as some contend, that our sincere endeavours to serve God by works of holiness, should be joined with our faith in *Christ*, as the condition of our pardon, and should be made the very matter of our justifying righteousness in the new testament, yet no man that honestly reads the scripture, can ever suppose that this sincerity in our duties, is there made the term of our justification, without the belief of a mediator, or that it is sufficient to procure pardon of sin, and acceptance with God without faith in *Christ*, that is, where the gospel is preached with its clear proofs and evidences.

And now as we have considered the way of salvation by faith, as it is described in the gospel, and seen the promises made to it, so let us also take a short review of the threatenings that stand bent and pointed against those who refuse this only way of salvation. *John iii. 18*. "He that believeth not on the Son of God is condemned already, because he hath not believed." Verse 36. "He shall not see life, the wrath of God abideth on him." *Mark xvi. 16*. "He that believeth not shall be damned." *1 John v. 10, 12*. "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: He hath eternal life begun in him; but he that hath not the Son hath not life." *2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9*. "They who obey not the gospel, shall be punished with everlasting destruction, when the Lord *Jesus* shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire."

Now surely he is a bold man that will dare venture his final and eternal state of happiness or misery, upon his own pretences to mere sincerity, in the practices of any other religion whatsoever, in opposition to such awful expressions of the gospel of *Christ*, and especially in such an age and nation of light and knowledge, where the gospel appears with so much divine evidence about it.

Answer II. If the heathen or infidel nations, with all their sincerity, are described in the new testament as having no hope of eternal life, even where the gospel had not been published, surely much less ground is there for hope, where the gospel is known and refused. Consider a little what sort of descriptions the Spirit of God gives of the heathen world, because they were without a divine revelation, and without the gospel, either in a patriarchal, or *jewish*, or in a christian form. *Eph. ii. 12*. "They were without *Christ*, strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." *Eph. iv. 8*. "Alienated from the life of

God through the ignorance that is in them". *Col. i. 21.* "Alienated from God, and enemies in their minds by wicked works, &c." Read the dismal corruption and wretched state of the heathen world more at large, *Rom. i. 29—31. Eph. ii. 1—3.* Now if the heathen nations are said to be utter strangers to God, to be without God, and to be without hope, because they are without any gospel, without *Christ*, and without the promises, these things have not been revealed or conveyed to them, much more shall persons who live in a land of gospel-light, be pronounced to be without God and without hope, if they refuse to believe in *Jesus Christ*, who has been revealed to them, and whom they have been taught to know from their very cradles. What hope can they have, who shut their eyes against the light that shines so gloriously round about them? Whatsoever mollifying sense may be put upon some severe expressions of scripture, in favour of the heathens, who never had the gospel, surely there is none will be allowed to those who have so blasphemed and abused it.

Answer III. If sincerity in the practice of a false religion were sufficient to procure the divine favour, then ridiculous and inhuman superstitions of all kinds, blood and murder, and cruelty, would be effectual means to obtain the favour of God; for these have been practised by many people in the world, and that with great zeal and sincerity, and sometimes as a piece of religious worship.

Can you imagine, that the ancient heathens were not sincere in the practice of their ceremonies, in their laborious and painful rites of worship, when they put themselves to so much self-denial and torment in the performance of them? Think of the dreadful and bloody penances to which some of them have devoted themselves: Think of their cutting and wounding of their own flesh with knives and lancets: So did the prophets of *Baal*, whether they were *Jews* or heathens, *1 Kings viii. 18.* "Think of the agonies of parents, when they offered their own children to brazen idols, and burned them in terrible sacrifice to *Moloch*: Count over the thousands of rams, and the rivers of wine and oil, the fruit of their body for their transgression, and the first-born of their flesh for the sin of their soul." *Micah. vi. 7.* Think of *Curtius* and the *Decii* among the old *Romans*, that devoted themselves to death, to appease the anger of the gods. Think of the wretched devotees at present in *Malabar*, who throw themselves under the chariot wheels of a heavy idol drawn by a hundred men, that they may be crushed to death, and thus pay honour to their god; survey all these, and then tell me whether these worshippers are not sincere or no. What have you to shew as signals and tokens of your sincerity in religion, comparable to these poor blind heathens? And yet after all, can you ever suppose these bloody and dreadful works of devotion, these consecrated acts of murder, were acceptable to the great God, or could procure peace with heaven, under a pretence of their sincerity?

Let us survey another scene of madness, which yet appears to be sincere zeal among some of the professed enemies of the people of God in all ages. When they have been sending christians to the lions, to slaughter, and death, when they have given up the beloved sons and daughters of God to fire and sword, to famine and nakedness, to the teeth and talons of wild beasts; some of these bigots seem to have been sincere in their designs to honour the powers of heaven, and to offer these barbarous sacrifices to appease the god of their country. The *Romans* imagined that the toleration of christians, who were blasphemers of their gods, brought plagues and distresses upon their armies and kingdoms, and therefore they devoted them to death to please the god whom they worshipped.

Now

Now will any of our deists tell us, that these inhuman persecutors were accepted of God, and in the way to his favour and eternal life; and yet we have our saviour's own word for it, *John xvi. 2.* "Whofoever killeth you, will think he doth God service," that is, he sincerely thinks so.

I grant *Christ* foretells this eminently concerning the *Jews*: The unbelieving *Jews* persecuted the christians even to death, in the sincerity of their zeal for God, and died their hands in the blood of christians, in order to render themselves more acceptable to the God of *Israel*. *St. Paul* himself tells you, that he was one of them. *Acts xxvi. 9, 10.* "I verily thought with my self, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of *Jesus of Nazareth*. Many of the saints did I shut up in prison, and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. I punished them often in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even to strange cities." And *Gal. i. 13, 14.* "Being exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers, I did persecute the church of God beyond measure and wasted it." *Phil. iii. 6.* "If I may speak of my zeal, I have sufficient proof of that, being a persecutor of the church." Was *Paul* in the way to obtain divine favour by such cruel and inhuman methods as these? Could such guilty practices against his fellow-creatures render him a worthy object of the divine love or obtain for him eternal life, because he was sincere in them? It has been sometimes observed, that persons under the unhappy influence of these evil principles of religion, have grown up to be most fierce and barbarous murderers, in proportion to their sincerity and zeal: But surely they are not accepted with God in proportion to these bloody practices.

That sincere zeal in a false religion will not obtain justification in the sight of God, is sufficiently declared by the apostle *Paul*, to all that believe the scriptures: For he pronounces concerning himself, that he was the chief of sinners upon this account, *viz.* his zealous persecuting the christians, *1 Tim. i. 13, 15.* And that he did but just obtain pardoning mercy because he did it ignorantly; but he does not pretend to the least claim of merit on the account of his sincere zeal. "He bears witness also concerning the *Jews* his country-men, that they had a zeal for God, though it was a blind one, and without knowledge," *Rom. x. 2.* "They followed after righteousness, that is, to obtain justification by the works of the law, but they did not attain to the law of righteousness, that is, they could not find justification or acceptance with God in their way of procedure, because they sought it not by faith, *Rom. ix. 31,—33.* or in the appointed way of the gospel.

Answer IV. If sincerity in the practice of a false religion were sufficient to entitle us to the favour of God, yet no person can lay claim to the favour of God on this account, since I may venture to say, no man ever was constantly sincere in practising every point and tittle of what his conscience directed him to, and required of him as his duty. It is very possible, that a man may be sincere in some single actions of life or worship, who is greatly defective as to his sincerity in other parts of his behaviour. Where is the man that can stand up and say, "I have constantly served God to the utmost of my knowledge: I have loved him with all my heart: I have loved my neighbour as far as conscience told me I ought to do, and fulfilled every duty to God and man, as far as I knew it, and was able to perform it, and that without any wilful transgression or negligence?" I am verily persuaded, no man can say, his own conscience has always excused him, though in many actions men may have been justified to their own consciences. Now if men will venture to build their eternal hopes upon this presumption of God's

God's acceptance of their sincerity, even where their religion is not true, let them see to it, that they sincerely and constantly fulfil their own invented law of righteousness: Let them take care that their honest and sincere obedience to their own light be continual, uniform and complete; or else they may justly expect that God and their own consciences will come upon them one day with dreadful demands\*.

Answer. V. Suppose it were granted, that the sincere practices of a mistaken or false religion, could render us accepted of God, and suppose yet further, that we could be perfectly sincere in this practice, without one failure, yet we ought to enquire whether we have been sincere also in our search after the true religion: For if we have failed here, and been negligent and careless in our search after the right way to please God, our greatest sincerity in a false way can pretend to no merit, and can give us but little hope. It is not an irrational and thoughtless sincerity, an ignorant and stupid zeal in a mistaken religion that came to us by chance, or that we slightly took up from a principle of sloth, or were led into by culpable prejudices, that can never make a just pretence to the favour of God: And therefore if we should allow, that in the darkest nations of the earth, where men have scarce any advantages for knowledge, God would accept of their sincere follies and superstitions, yet we have no reason to expect it in a land of such light and knowledge, where we have the greatest advantages to be informed of the true way of worship.

The great God who made all the powers of our nature, expects the use of our understandings to enquire out truth and duty, as well as the activity of our will and affections, and our lower powers to practise it. He expects that we should give diligence to search and find out the true religion in the midst of such rich advantages, as his providence has conferred upon us. He gives us no indulgence to go on in the practice of a false religion, and hope for the pardon of our sloth and negligence, and forgiveness of our thoughtless and stupid errors, on the mere pretence of sincerity in the practice of them. This leads me to the next question.

#### QUESTION IV.

**B**UT if I am sincere in seeking out the truth, shall not my sincere endeavours to find out the true religion, and to practise agreeably to my knowledge obtain acceptance with God, even though I should happen to fall into mistaken opinions, and practise a false religion instead of the true?

Answer I. Sincerity in the search after truth, has so many and various ingredients in it, that I fear the unbelievers in *Great Britain* would make but a poor pretence to sincerity, when called before the bar of the great and righteous God, and would find it a dangerous thing for them to have built their whole hopes  
and

\* Perhaps it will be said, that sincerity does not imply such an uninterrupted constancy of obedience as I represent, but that it is consistent with some failures in point of known duty, if these failures be attended with hearty repentance and a resolution of future care and watchfulness.

To this I answer, that the gospel and the revelations of grace in scripture allow this sort of sincerity and accept of hearty repentance after sin, through the interest of a mediator: But the light of nature doth not allow of any sincerity in obedience, if it be interrupted by one wilful sin; for the light of nature can never assure us, that any one wilful and known sin will be pardoned, nor that any repentance will be accepted. The discovery of this is pure grace.



and expectations on this pretence, while they have rejected the gospel of *Christ* his Son.

The several qualifications, which are required to make up sincerity in the search of a true religion, are as follow,

I. "A watchful and diligent disengaging our selves from all the secret and culpable prejudices that hang about the mind, and lead it astray from truth:" A restless and constant endeavour to free ourselves from every evil influence, every wrong bias and turn of mind, that might lead the understanding astray in it's enquiries, or may warp the judgment in it's determinations. Now these are very numerous.

1. There are some prejudices that arise from the influence of those who are our superiors, either in riches or power, or wit and learning, or years, &c. "Have any of the rulers believed on him?" *John* vii. 48. was thought to be a good argument in the days of *Christ* against his gospel: And it is an argument of the same stamp, which vulgar souls in our days make use of: Are not many of the polite gentlemen, and fine wits of the age weary of christianity?

2. Our friends or acquaintance, or companions, have a strange influence also upon the mind, and by their constant conversation prejudice it for, or against particular opinions. Even a sober youth who happens to fall into heathenish acquaintance, by the perpetual impressions of their vile discourse, may become a heathen too.

3. Some prejudices arise from the fear of ridicule and shame among our associates, and those with whom we converse: And many a young person is turned aside from attending to the evidences of christianity, lest he should be made a jest among his profane company, if he profess himself a believer of the gospel.

4. There is sometimes a strong and unhappy prejudice against the religion of *Christ*, arising from the faults and follies of those who profess to be christians: These disciples of infidelity never consider that follies and faults of as heinous and criminal a kind, are daily practised by their fellow infidels: The old heathen philosophers who professed the religion of nature, were shamefully guilty of many vices contrary to the dictates of natural reason, and yet the religion of nature is true and good still, so far as it goes: And christianity may be divinely true notwithstanding the iniquity and madness of some that pretend to profess it.

5. Another set of prejudices arises from pride of mind and self-conceit, presuming that the reason of man is sufficient to direct itself in the paths of happiness, without receiving any discoveries from God.

It is pride also that suffers us not to submit to receive the doctrines of revelation, when there is any thing in them that we know not presently how to reconcile and explain: And this spirit of pride and arrogance tempts some of the deists to abandon all their bible, because the word of God contains some deep things in it which are not fully understood by men.

6. Sometimes an affectation of novelty warps the mind aside, and leads it astray in it's enquiries after truth, and for this very reason some men do hardly receive the doctrine which has been the ancient faith of their ancestors. New things have a strange and subtle influence to allure the heart away from old truths.

7. The pride of thinking freely for our selves, and throwing off all the bonds and fetters of education, has had a licentious and unhappy influence on some minds, to lead them off to infidelity. They scorn to follow the dictates of tutors, and renounce the best of religions, because they were born and bred in it.

8. There

8. There is another set of prejudices that arise from the lusts of the flesh. Christianity seems to have too much strictness in it for those men who would give themselves a loose to sensual delights : And thus their own vicious inclinations darken their understandings : First they secretly wish and desire that a doctrine so self-denying may not be true, and then they are easily led to fancy and pronounce there is no truth in it. Every slight turn of wit, and faint colour of reason, is sufficient to carry off their minds from their gospel, whose passions are carried off already.

9. And it may be there are others who are under the influence of this wicked prejudice, *viz.* “ I have begun to cast off christianity, and therefore I will go on : I have declared my self a free-thinker, and I cannot go back.” On this account they harden themselves in their unbelief, and they are unwilling to hearken or attend to any reason or evidence that might make them believers, or incline them to receive the gospel, after they have once given up their name and honour to infidelity.

Now these and other prejudices of the mind must be all laid aside, before we can pretend to such perfect sincerity in the search after truth, as will justify us at the bar of God in the choice and practice of a false religion \*. And though in the main we may have some real design to find out the true religion, yet which of us will dare to venture our everlasting hopes upon a mere presumption of our freedom from all these evil-influences, these faulty prejudices that stick so close to mankind ? I am ready to persuade my self that there are not many of the deists and infidels in this nation, who examine their hearts closely in this matter, and after all can pronounce themselves most sincere and unbiassed searchers of the truth.

II. Another qualification requisite to sincerity, is “ a hearty inward solicitude about these important concerns ; a fervent and longing desire of the soul to find out the knowledge of God, and the right way to salvation.” It is not a cold wish or two after divine truth, once now and then, that is sufficient to prove a man sincere in his enquiries. A sincere soul will feel an inward and penetrating concern agreeable to the momentous subject. There are too many who content themselves with a general unaffecting consciousness, that they are willing to find out the truth, but this design makes no answerable impression upon their spirits as a matter of prime importance and of infinite concern.

III. Sincerity requires also, “ a laborious diligence in searching after the knowledge of the truth, and industrious use of every help possible to be attained in our station and circumstances.” It applies a due attention to every argument, and giving

\* Since these papers were in the press I met with a paragraph in doctor *Harris's* excellent discourses of the “ reasonableness of believing,” &c. which I take pleasure to transcribe here. The sincere and upright will always readily embrace the divine revelation. Whatsoever prejudices and mistakes they may labour under from the weakness of their understanding, and the impressions of education, as soon as ever they discern the evidence of it, they will resign to the superior claims of truth, against every lower consideration or remaining difficulty and doubt. Shew them that it is the will of God, and they readily yield and submit. When the insincere on the other hand, governed by their interests and other prejudices, will reject the plainest truths and greatest evidence which is against their interest, and they will start little cavils, and raise endless objections, and fortify their minds against the strongest evidence, to support some shadow of false quiet, and appear infidels upon principle : Or else without allowing themselves to reason about it, they will bear it down by mere force, and oppose it with violence and malice of heart, which was the case of the unbelieving *Jews.*”

ing them their full weight; a seizing every beam of light honestly, as soon as it appears to the mind, as a man that seeks after hidden treasure, would cheerfully receive every hint of discovery, would follow the first glimmerings of the gold or silver oar, and trace out the rich vein through the bowels of the earth.

If we would prove our selves sincere, we must not be tired or discouraged by a few obstacles in our way. We must "search for wisdom as silver, and dig for understanding, as for hidden treasures: Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." *Prov. ii. 4, 5.*

Whereas many of our modern infidels, when in their searches they find a dark sentence, and a few difficulties in the language of scripture, they labour not after a solution of them, but gladly lay hold of every objection, and content themselves with these little cavils as a sufficient argument to reject it all at once, to abandon the law of *Moses*, and the prophets, *Christ* and his gospel. Such a temper and spirit, such a cavilling and contentious practice, will fly in the face of a man, when he shall pretend to plead sincerity before God.

IV. "Perseverance in this honest and diligent enquiry is another ingredient of a sincere search after truth." It is not the work of a hour or two, or the labour of a few days, but according to our state and circumstances in the world, we must continually search till we have found some solid satisfaction, and till our minds can rest in some doctrines of religion, upon just and reasonable grounds. *Hosea vi. 3.* "Then shall ye know the Lord, if ye follow on to know him."

V. Sincerity, in searching out the truth, requires also "great humility and meekness of spirit, a holy sense of the importance of this enquiry, a consciousness of our own weakness, and of the many prejudices, the false lights, and the dangers that attend and surround us both within and without in our enquiries, together with constant and importunate prayer to God for his assistance." All these are necessary ingredients of such a sincerity in the search after true religion, as will approve itself to God. We must not be self-sufficient and conceited of our reasoning powers, but, under a sense of our weakness and danger of mistake, we must be instant petitioners daily at the throne of God, that he would not suffer any delusive prejudice to blind our minds, nor well-coloured errors to lead us astray; that he would order all things in the course of his providence in so favourable a manner, as may tend to guide us into the path of truth.

A sincere enquirer is able to appeal to God who knows all things, "Thou seeest the honest desire of my soul, and the sincere, inward and intense breathings of my heart, to find out the way to thy favour: All my desire is to know and please thee my creator, and therefore I daily seek thy directions." We must not only "incline our ears to wisdom, and apply our heart to understanding, but we must cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice to heaven. For it is the Lord who giveth wisdom." *Prov. ii. 3, 6.*

VI. It belongs also to a sincere search after truth, that we are "careful and zealous in the practice of every thing, that we have already found out in religion." All the duties toward God and man, that reason and natural light discover to us, must be fulfilled by us, with a holy and religious industry and watchfulness: And we must with a constant jealousy and solicitude of soul, abstain from every thing that would displease God. "It is for the righteous that God layeth up sound wisdom," *Prov. ii. 7.* "He giveth to those that are good in his sight, wisdom and knowledge," *Eccles.*

ii. 26. And our blessed Lord himself tells us, *John* vii. 17. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of my self." Doing the will of God as far as it is known, is a necessary requisite in order to obtain farther knowledge.

Now when our modern deists have fulfilled all these rules of sincerity in their search after the true way of salvation, I am verily persuaded they will continue no longer in their infidelity, but rejoice to receive the gospel of *Christ*.

However, it will be time enough for them to make their own pretences of sincerity in the search after truth, the ground of their expectations of divine favour, and to plead it at the bar of God, when they have carefully practised all this sincerity, which has been now described.

And yet if any should boldly declare they have practised all this sincerity, and yet they are not convinced of the truth of the gospel; before I quit this head, I would address my self to them with one enquiry more, and that is, if you imagine that you are now truly sincere in your present search, "have you been always thus sincere in your enquiries, ever since you began to doubt of christianity? Have you not indulged such an immoral conduct, such sensuality, such a love to vicious pleasures, such pride of your own reason, such self-sufficiency, such a bantering spirit, such lusts of the flesh, or lusts of the mind, such criminal prejudices, or such guilty practices, as may have provoked God to punish you one of these two ways, 1. Either in the course of his providence, "to take away those means and advantages for knowledge, which you have once enjoyed and abused:" Or 2. "To withdraw all the common influences of his holy Spirit, and leave you to the weaknesses and wanderings of your own spirits, and to give you up to a judicial blindness, even though the outward means of knowledge may remain?"

There are many amongst the ancient gentiles, and many amongst the later worshippers of anti-christ, who have fallen under these just and heavy judgments. There have been men who held the truth in unrighteousness, and would not practise religion so far as they knew it, nor glorify God so far as they were acquainted with him; and they have been given up to "vain imaginations, their foolish heart has been darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools instead of philosophers: They became ridiculous idolaters, and worshipped birds and beasts, and creeping things, instead of God. The righteous God gave them over to a reprobate mind, because they did not like to retain him in their knowledge," *Rom.* i. 18—27.

There have been many *Jews* and heathens, who have had the gospel preached to them with sufficient evidence; but when they had refused to receive it, the ministry of the gospel has been taken away from them, the apostles and preachers have been called off from such an unfruitful spot of ground, and have left that town, that country or nation in double darkness. See the history of the gospel, and the acts of the apostles. Our saviour threatened this judgment to the unbelieving *Jews*, and it has been executed not only on them, but on other sorts of infidels besides.

Or if the means of knowledge have continued among them, yet they have been forsaken of God, and given up to blindness of mind. This also seems to have been the punishment of multitudes of the *jewish* nation. And *St. Paul* foretels the same terrible judgment upon some degenerate parts of the christian world. "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, God shall send them strong delusions that they shall believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," *2 Thess.* ii. 10. This has been evidently fulfilled in some members of the anti-christian church.

Now

Now if this be the case, there is need of deep repentance for past insincerity and negligence: There is need of great humiliation of soul before an offended God, in order to make up the character of present sincerity: There is need of strong cries and prayers for pardoning grace for the time past, as well as for present light and assistance in all further enquiries after the truth.

Thus I have gone through the several requisites of sincerity, which the great judge of all may require and demand at the hands of every one who rejects the gospel under pretence of it's insufficient evidence. And I think upon the whole, it appears to be a very dangerous venture for those that renounce the religion of *Christ*, in our age and nation, to trust entirely to this pretence of sincerity in their enquiries; since I fear upon a strict examination, their pretences will be found very defective and insufficient.

#### QUESTION V.

**B**UT if God insist upon such severe terms in judging of our sincerity, then no christian can be saved any more than a deist or an unbeliever: For without sincerity in a true religion, you grant there is no salvation. But may not a deist be as sincere and upright as a christian, both in the searching out his religion, and in the practice of it? The great God who created us, knows the frailty of our natures, he sees the prejudices with which we are surrounded, and the weaknesses to which we are continually exposed, and if he will make allowances to christians in the practice of their religion, why may we not suppose his merciful nature will incline him to make the same compassionate allowances to the sincere and honest infidels, while they are seeking after the right way to please him.

I answer, First. The light of evidence and the force of argument, wherewith the gospel is surrounded in the present age, seems to me to be so strong and convincing, that I cannot but say there is great reason to doubt, whether in the enlightened towns and cities of *Great Britain*, there can any man live and die an honest and sincere unbeliever, that is, whether any man who hath a mind sincerely ready to submit to evidence, and hath used his utmost diligence in searching out the truth, can always remain a professed infidel; this I have intimated before, and I shall give the reasons of this opinion more plainly under the next question.

But I proceed now to a second answer. The christian who feels and mourns, thus over the weakness of human nature, the strength and bias of the passions, the powerful prejudices which stand round us, and the many frailties that attend and defile our best endeavours, has greatly the advantage of the infidel in this case. For the bible, which we believe to be the word of God, is the book of his grace, and there he has promised favour to the upright, he has taught us what a door of mercy he has opened for repentance, under our returning frailties, and what compassionate allowances he will make for the transgressions and failings, and lamented weaknesses of those who are in the main, sincere and diligent in their service of God; and it is in these promises the christian finds hope: But the light of nature and reason, which is the only hope and refuge of the deist, can never give solid rest and peace to his soul, under a sense of these frailties; for it cannot assure him that God will make any of these allowances, or that he will accept of any repentance.

The great and holy God, who sees all the vicious turnings of our spirits, whether we be deists or christians, and who beholds all the criminal inclinations, and false biases which our minds have indulged, can discover all these in a glaring light to the eye of

our souls, and lay us under the evident and heavy condemnation of our own consciences. Now when this is done, the deist being made deeply sensible of the defects and flaws of his own sincerity, throughout the course of his life, has nothing to plead or hope but unpromised and uncovenanted mercy: The christian sees and confesses himself guilty before God, repents and mourns over his wanderings, and flies to the promises of mercy, and to the covenant of hope. "If thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who can stand? But there is forgiveness with thee." *Psalms* cxxx. 3, 4. "And the blood of *Jesus* cleanseth from all sin:" 1 *John* i. 7. But the deist has no such promise of favourable allowances, no hope in this atoning blood: He has renounced the sacred promises of grace, and refused the blood that was shed to make atonement.

#### QUESTION VI.

**A**RE there not some deists, that have taken more pains in the search of true religion, than the greatest part of christians have ever done? Christians, in our age, receive the religion of *Christ*, from their education, they owe their christianity to their being born in *Great-Britain*, in this age of the world, when the whole nation is christian: But the deists are the men of enquiry into the grounds and reasons of what they believe. If sincerity, in the practice of a true religion, which came to us by education, will save one from the wrath of God, and yet the same degree of sincerity in our enquiries after truth, will not save another, if he happen to mistake the true religion, and light upon a false one, then it is entirely owing to chance, or to pure divine favour, that a man happens to be saved: There is no worthiness nor honour belongs to the christian, that he is in the right way, nor has he any merit above the infidel. At least, may it not be justly so pronounced concerning those christians, who never searched into the grounds of their religion, but took it up entirely from their education?

Answer I. One might reply to this reasoning partly by way of concession, and say thus, if this objection were left in it's full force, so far as to ascribe the salvation of christians, to pure divine favour without merit, I do not see any evil consequence from it: For it is the design of God in his gospel, that man should not have the praise or merit of his own salvation ascribed to himself, but that "he that glories should glory in the Lord," 1 *Cor.* i. 31. and that all the honour of our salvation and happiness should be attributed to God alone. We are all sinners in the sight of God: "There is none righteous, no, not one:" *Rom.* iii. 10. And if by the secret methods of his providence and special favour, he has trained up some persons in the knowledge and belief of the truth, without much enquiry or labour of their own in searching for it, and if he has by his own Spirit wrought powerfully in their hearts, and made this religion, in which they were educated, effectual to change their corrupt natures, to form their hearts and lives to holiness, and to fit them for the heavenly world, let his name and his grace be for ever adored. "Who is it has made us to differ? What have we, even the best of us, that we have not received?" 1 *Cor.* iv. 7. This is the language which the word of God teaches: For the time and place and family wherein we were born, all the outward and inward helps we enjoy, all the advantages which we have above others, are owing entirely to rich and free mercy, and therefore God will not allow his people any room or ground for boasting.

It is evident to the world, and must be universally acknowledged, that the great God, the maker and Lord of all, may appoint the birth and habitation of his creatures

tures in what nation, in what household, on what spot of earth he pleases: and yet this very appointment will make a vast difference between some mortals and others in their advantages for knowledge and salvation. Now if this almighty and sovereign God in the course of his providence, please to give me a birth in *Great Britain*, where the religion of *Jesus* is professed, and give birth to others in the wilds of *America*, where the true God is not known, what injustice is there in his conduct? If he train me up by the divine impressions of his grace, in the religion which I received from my christian fathers, to a fitness for the heavenly world, while the *american savages* are left almost as ignorant as the brutes, through their own universal neglect to improve their reasoning powers, "who shall say unto God, what dost thou?" Let my soul adore him with all humble thankfulness, and with ardent love for his distinguishing mercy, and leave the judge of all the earth to account with the *americans*: He will do them no wrong.

Answer II. But, in the second place, I answer, however some deists may have been more laborious in their search after the true religion, than several christians have been, who have believed the gospel at first because their parents taught them so, yet I believe it will never be found that any deist, who has renounced the gospel, has arisen to those degrees of sincere piety, in his devotion toward God, and sincere love to his fellow-creatures, as these christians have arrived at.

Doubtless, there are many believers in the name of *Christ*, who were never acquainted with any of the principles or objections of the deists, who never had any scruple in their thoughts about the truth of christianity, and never troubled themselves to search whether their religion were true or no: But the grace of God has made the belief of this religion in which they were born and educated, effectual to change their hearts, to sanctify their natures, to make them hate every sin, to draw out their love to God and their neighbour, to fill them with every virtue and every pious disposition, and to fit them for the sacred employment and the blessedness of heaven: And this is an inward, a solid and rational testimony and evidence of the divine original of christianity, as I have proved at large in the several first discourses both of my first and second volumes of sermons, published some years ago. This inward experience of the sanctifying power of the gospel, especially where it rises to a high degree, is a just, and effectual, and constraining conviction to them, that the gospel of *Christ* is true. "He that believes has the witness in himself," 1 *John* v. 10. These christians, even though of the meaner and lower rank of understanding, arrive at such divine virtues as the deist with all his pretences to reason and knowledge never arrived at. Thus the great God honours the sacred religion, that he has given to men with the produce of that sincere piety, in plain, humble, and unlearned christians, which is not to be found amongst infidels; hereby their faith is confirmed, and hereby they are fitted for the heavenly felicity.

Answer III. But, to cut off all other pretences at once, I think we may dare to affirm, as I have intimated before, that if any disbeliever of the gospel of *Christ* in *Great Britain*, with his utmost labour of soul, with great watchfulness, humility, and fervent prayer, seeks after the knowledge of the truth by all proper means, and at the same time practises with an exact and careful conscience, all the duties that he can find out by the light of reason, he will certainly be led into the belief of the truth: He will have such abundant evidence of the gospel of *Christ* given to him, as shall turn him from an infidel into a christian, and I give these reasons for it.

Reason I. God himself has promised in his word, that a diligent, humble, and faithful enquirer after true wisdom, that is, religion, and the knowledge of God, shall not  
be

be disappointed, but shall obtain his end. This is the evident purport and intent of several scriptures cited before, *Prov. ii. 4.* "If thou searchest for wisdom as for hidden treasures, and liftest up thy voice to the Lord for understanding, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord." *Eccles. ii. 26.* "For he giveth to those that are good in his sight, wisdom, understanding, and knowledge." *Luke xi. 9, 13.* "Seek and ye shall find, ask and it shall be given you," *John vii. 17.* "If any man will do the will of God, then shall he know concerning the doctrine of *Christ*, whether it be of God or no." *Jam. i. 5.* "If any man want wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." The blessed God who makes such promises as these, remembers them well, and will not fail to accomplish them to the sincere enquirer, and the humble petitioner.

Reason II. God has confirmed the religion of his Son *Jesus*, with the awful sanction of a most dreadful curse, "He that believeth not shall be damned:" *Mark xvi. 16.* Now an infinitely gracious God will not suffer a humble, zealous and honest enquirer after himself, in the midst of gospel-light, to run into such pernicious errors as to incur an eternal curse. His mercy therefore will certainly irradiate humble and sincere souls with a heavenly sun-beam, and effectually secure them from final unbelief and damnation. It is God himself has wrought in them this honesty of heart, this sincere zeal of enquiry, and he will fulfil the work of his own hands, and lead them into truth and peace.

Reason III. The light of nature, which the deist professes to take for his guide, if duly followed, will certainly lead him to believe the gospel: For it will powerfully incline a honest mind to believe, that a religion which is so worthy of all the perfections of God, and so suited to all the necessities of man, a religion so divinely attested by prophecies before, and by miracles afterward, and surrounded with other powerful arguments, must needs come from God; since the light of nature assures him, that the God of truth will never suffer such heavenly seals to be set to a falsehood or an imposture: For if it be an imposture it comes from hell, and God would never let it bear the manifest signatures of heaven.

Upon this view of things, it appears to me pretty clear and conclusive, that a deist in *Great Britain* who is really sincere, and persevering in his enquiries after the truth, will sooner or later become a christian, and that the mercy of God will never suffer him to live and die an infidel.

#### QUESTION VII.

"**D**O all unbelievers in all ages, fall under that sentence of damnation? If we had lived in *Judea* in the days of *Christ*, and had seen the miracles with our eyes which *Christ* is said to have wrought, we might have perhaps found evidence enough in them to have believed the gospel: Surely that dreadful curse, which you speak of, can be pronounced only against those who resisted their eye-sight, and would not believe it: But the case is quite altered at this distance of time and place, when we have only an account of these wonders delivered down to us in books, which were said to be done almost seventeen hundred years ago\*."

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\* See an undeniable and convincing proof of the "reasonableness of believing the history of the gospel, though written so long ago, and the "unreasonableness of infidelity," in an excellent sermon lately published by doctor *William Harris*.



To this I answer, it must be granted, that as several of the miracles of *Christ* were performed in the sight of multitudes, so those persons who had the happiness to be eye and ear-witnesses of them, in that one respect, have some advantage for faith beyond those who live in distant ages: But if we should enter into a detail of this enquiry, it may be we should find that the men of letters in this nation, and in our day, are favoured with more advantages for faith, and several other springs of evidence which compensate the loss of that one: And upon the whole survey and just balance of things, comparing their times with our's, perhaps it would appear, that we in this age have equal or superior reasons for the belief of the gospel, beyond what most of them enjoyed, who lived in the time of *Christ* or his apostles. To this end let us attend to the following considerations.

Consideration I. Though there were several persons blessed with the actual sight of many of these miraculous works, yet there were also multitudes who lived in the age of miracles, who perhaps never had opportunity to be actual eye-witnesses of one single miracle wrought by *Christ* or his apostles. *Herod* had long desired it, and yet it was not granted him, *Luke ix. 9.* Many there were who asked our saviour to shew them a sign from heaven, but he did not think proper to gratify their humour, nor was it fit that signs and wonders should be made too common: Sometimes he reproves their curiosity, and calls them "a wicked and adulterous generation, probably because he knew their obstinate and cavilling temper, that they derided his preaching, and did not give due credit to the many undeniable reports that were made concerning his miracles, and therefore he would shew them no new ones.

Observe farther, that as there were many in the days of *Christ*, who never beheld one of his miracles actually wrought, so it is most probable there were multitudes who never saw above one or two of them: There were but comparatively few of the same persons, who happened to be often actually present, and were eye-witnesses of very many of these different wonders; for though they were not done in a corner, yet they were wrought in distant towns and villages, where not a quarter of the same persons could be present. As for their knowledge of the rest of these miracles, which their own eyes saw not, it must be conveyed to them by the report and testimony of others: And perhaps these reports might not be always so just, so exact, so authentic as the narratives which we enjoy, because these were committed to writing by the apostles themselves who saw them.

It is probable also that few of those persons who lived in the days of our saviour, had ever so large, so particular and so complete an account, as we have of all the various miracles which are transmitted down to us in the histories of the gospel.

If then many of them never saw one miracle, if those who saw one or two, must come at the knowledge of the rest of the miracles of *Christ* the same way that we do, that is, by report, and if we have a much larger and more complete account of them, than most of the *Jews* were favoured with, and that by as sure and credible a report, that is, by the writing of eye-witnesses, I would humbly enquire whether this may not compensate, if not overbalance their advantage who lived in that age, even though they saw a miracle or two with their own eyes.

Surely all that collection of the miraculous works of *Christ*, and the gifts of the blessed Spirit to the apostles, whereby wonders were wrought in several nations for many successive years, which is conveyed down to us by early and authentic records which are not charged with forgery, and which are the surest preservers of ancient facts, may at this distance of time, lay as strong a foundation for our faith, and give us as just an

an evidence to the gospel of *Christ*, as the two or three miracles, or perhaps some single one, which was the most that might be seen by a great part of their contemporaries.

The same spirit of cavil and unbelief, which reigns now in the hearts of men, and makes so warm an opposition to the light which attends the gospel in our day, would, in all probability, have vented itself even under the very blaze and splendor of these divine operations. They could have found some philosophical contrivance for the solution of the heavenly wonder; they could find reasons to doubt of some of the circumstances of the fact; they could suspect that the blind or deaf, or dead person did not pass under sufficient scrutiny before he was healed or raised, that they might be assured he was really deaf, blind or dead. And thus a miracle or two would not have convinced their own eye-sight. In short, it is too evidently true, in every age, what our blessed saviour says in his age, that "they who will not hear *Moses* and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rose from the dead," *Luke xvi. 31.*

But it is time to proceed to the second consideration, to shew that the men of enquiry in our day, have probably as strong an evidence of the truth of the gospel, as they might have had if they had lived in the days of *Christ*.

Consideration II. Let it be observed, that there were some predictions of the ancient prophets relating to the gospel, which have been fulfilled since our saviour went to heaven: Particularly the unbelief of the *Jews*, and their being rejected out of God's favour, and the multitudes of gentiles flocking in to *Christ*. There have been some prophecies spoken by our saviour himself, which have been since accomplished in the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the calling of the gentile church, the persecutions of the apostles, the crucifixion of *St. Peter*, &c. There have been also other predictions of the apostles and apostolic men fulfilled since that time, viz. the nature, the principles, and the rise of anti-christ, which was foretold both by *St. Paul* and *St. John*, the binding of *St. Paul* at *Jerusalem*, the universal dearth in the days of *Claudius Cesar*, both predicted by *Agabus*, &c. All which joined together, give an additional strength to the evidence of christianity in our day.

Consideration III. Reflect also on the amazing success of the gospel among the nations: How it gained surprising victories over great men and philosophers, how it made it's way through armies and palaces, how it triumphed over the opposition of enemies, the laws of princes, the torments and terrors of sword and fire, the utmost rage of men, and the spite of devils, over the craft of the heathen priests, the madness and superstition of the people; and all this without the force of arms, without the powers of human learning and rhetoric, without the baits and allurements of this life, and without any of those aids which are wont to be thought necessary among men, for the propagation of a new religion. Surely this prodigious success and victory of the gospel, can be imputed rationally to nothing else but the finger of God; and it diffuses a new brightness and evidence around the religion of *Jesus*, beyond what those who lived in the days of *Christ* could see or know.

Consideration IV. Let it be remembered too, that this religion has now stood the test of the most severe and critical enquiries of it's adversaries: It has been searched and tried by the men of learning and wit and reason in the several nations of the earth,

earth, for almost seventeen hundred years; and certainly a religion which has been brought to the test so often, and passed through such strict inquisitions, and yet still maintains it's ground, and that not only among the lower part of mankind, but among men of unbiaſſed minds, freedom of thought, and equal ſenſe and reaſon to the beſt of it's enemies, ſuch a religion, I ſay, may juſtly be ſuppoſed to have acquired ſome further ſtrength of evidence hereby.

Conſideration V. To all the other conſiderations this may be added, that perhaps the internal and innate evidences of the truth of the goſpel, were never ſet in ſo powerful and convincing a light as in the preſent age: I mean ſuch as ariſe from the excellency of it's doctrines and precepts, rules and motives, from it's perfect conformity to all the principles of natural religion, and from it's ſupplying all the defects thereof, from it's happy correſpondence with all the perfections of God, and it's all-ſufficient relief of the wants and miſeries of fallen man, from it's manifeſt tendency to the honour of God, and the well-being of man both here and hereafter, above all the religions that ever were known, believed or profeſſed through all ages of the world. I can hardly ſuppoſe that ever this ſort of evidence for chriſtianity was ever diſplayed in any former age, in ſo large and full, ſo regular and harmonious a manner, as has been done by ſome of the ingenious chriſtian writers of this age. And, in my opinion, this evidence may be accounted equal to the mere eye-ſight of one or two leſſer miracles, at leaſt in the eſteem of the men of elegant thought and refined reaſon, ſuch as our modern unbelievers would ſain appear.

Upon the whole, though it be granted, that the evidence of the goſpel of *Chriſt* as it ſtands in our day, doth not ariſe quite ſo high, nor give quite ſo ſtrong a foundation for our faith, as it did for the faith of the apoſtles, who ſaw moſt of his mighty works, and converſed with him, and of ſome of the *Jews* who had the beſt advantages in the days of *Chriſt*; yet I can hardly think it's preſent evidence to be inferior to what the generality of the *Jews* and gentiles enjoyed in primitive times.

But ſuppoſe I ſhould not have exactly adjusted thoſe proportions of light and evidence, between former and later days, yet we muſt affirm this to the honour of chriſtianity and the goſpel, and we may do it with juſtice and truth, that whereſoever it is publiſhed with all it's proper testimonials around it, it carries with it even in our day, a very ſufficient evidence to every ſtudious and faithful enquirer. For if it were poſſible for a humble and ſincere ſoul, under all theſe advantages, not to ſee ſufficient reaſon to believe the goſpel, this would be a heavy impeachment of the evidence and honour of chriſtianity, and conſequently of the care of *Chriſt*, for the propagation and ſupport of his church; it would look as though he had not provided his own doctrine with ſufficient proofs and arguments, to enlighten and perſuade a honeſt mind to embrace it; it would be an imputation upon the general goodneſs of God, as though he had appointed a religion, to continue through all ages to the end of the world, and yet had not furniſhed it with light and demonſtration ſufficient to convey it through the ſeveral ſucceſſions of time.

I think therefore it may be maintained, that the dreadful curſe which is ſo often repeated by the hiſtorians of the life of *Chriſt*, and which our ſaviour pronounces, when he was juſt leaving the world, upon thoſe who ſhould not believe his goſpel, where it is publiſhed with proper evidence, is not confined merely to the days of miracles, but but that it is a part of the great goſpel-commiſſion which he gave to his apoſtles, and which ſtands good ſo long as *Chriſt* promiſed to be with his miniſters and followers, that is, "to the end of the world," *Matth.* xxviii. 20. *Mark* xvi. 16. And

the guilt of rejecting it must always, in the nature of things, bear a proportion to the light and evidence with which it is recommended, whether in the primitive or the modern ages. For as all that rejected the doctrine of *Christ* in the primitive times, did not lie under equal guilt, because they had not equal evidence, so there may be great variety, in the degrees of the guilt of those who reject the gospel in the present age, according to their various advantages of understanding and means of knowledge. But I fear those who renounce and deride the highest evidence of the gospel in this present day, have a dreadful account to give at last, nor do I know how they will screen themselves from the heavy and eternal weight of that solemn curse.

The great God is wise and righteous, and full of mercy, and he would never have pronounced such a painful and terrible sentence, as damnation upon unbelievers in so many parts of his word, if he had not well known that no man can utterly reject christianity, attended with its proper evidence, but he must indulge some criminal and perverse turn and temper of mind, he must be influenced by some very culpable prejudices, and such obstinacy as deserves death and vengeance\*. *Christ* himself not only intimates this often, but plainly expresses it in that solemn denunciation from God, *John* iii. 18, 19. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that is, this is the hainous guilt that deserves condemnation, "that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." That God who searcheth the hearts of men, imputes it to a secret love to vice, that men are unwilling to be convinced of a religion, that reproves and forbids the practice of it. I would hope this is not always the case, but it is very plain that it is often so.

However, it is a bold and dangerous thing, for a creature to venture to expose himself to the curse of God, by renouncing the faith and religion of *Jesus*, his beloved Son, which is supported by such shining evidence, and guarded with so solemn and formidable a sanction.

But after all, if there can be found any such persons, that will still make pretences to a sincere enquiry after truth, and solemnly declare that they have been upright, honest, humble and diligent, according to the descriptions of sincerity before given, and yet that they cannot believe the christian religion, because they have not been able to find sufficient evidence or conviction of the truth of it, we must leave them to that God, who is the only searcher of hearts, and who will make it appear that he is a righteous judge, and not unmerciful to those who have any reasonable pretences to mercy.

But let them see to it, that their cause is good, and that their own hearts do not deceive them, in their pretences to sincere enquiry. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" *Jer.* xvii. 9. If the great Lord and judge of all at last, shall make it appear to their consciences with dreadful evidence, that they have failed in their pretences, and been wofully insincere in their searches after truth, all their hope is lost and cut off for ever, for they have refused the

\* Damnation is threatened to those who believe not the gospel, *Mark* xvi. 16. nor am I allowed to soften the threatening which the gospel has pronounced: It seems to me to be a very great reproach, which men cast upon *Christ*, to suppose that he should set forth a religion, to be received on pain of damnation, and yet that a sincere man may see no reason to believe it. I think every man should be cautious how he talks of sincerity against plain scripture, which he has opportunity to know and consider. Mr. J. B.

the gospel and promises of grace, they have counted the blood of the Son of God an unholy thing, and renounced the only atonement for sin.

QUESTION VIII.

**B**UT why must only one religion be the true? Why may there not be many true religions? May not the blessed God be well pleased with that great variety of worship and honours, which are paid him by his creatures in this lower world, even as a master of a family, or a prince is well pleased with variety of services paid him by his officers, subjects, and servants in their different stations in the family or kingdom: Thus while every one endeavours to serve and please God his creator, will he not accept them, though they practise religion in very different forms, and worship him even with contrary rites and ceremonies? Why may he not be best pleased with praise and homage offered by his intelligent creatures, in a vast variety of strains and modes, since he has made the irrational creation, on purpose to be honoured by their varieties of voice and action.

Answer I. Let us consider what are the greatest part of these different forms of worship and religion, which men practise, and we shall find very few of them are such, as can lay any tolerable claim to God's favour.

In all the four quarters of the world, except *Europe*, the bulk of mankind are heathens. All the large nations of *Africa*, except the north-east and the northern coasts, most of the northern and eastern parts of *Asia*, so far as we know, together with the natives of all *America*, worship idols, and not the one true God. They adore either the sun or moon, or the souls of their heroes and ancestors, or devils, or some fabulous deities, or strange images of the invention of their priests, or the appointment of their kings: And even the northern shores of *Europe*, where the *Laplanders* dwell, are filled with the same idolatry. Now can you think it becoming the great and blessed God, to accept that worship, where he himself is not the object of it? Will the jealous and dreadful God, "who will not give his name to another, nor his glory to graven images," *Isai.* xlii. 8. will he be pleased with abominable idolatries, and the worship of false Gods? These religions are contrary to the very light of nature; for a moderate exercise of their reason, would shew them the one eternal God, "who made heaven, and earth, and all things, he is not far from every one of them, yet they will not seek and feel after him," *Acts* xvii. 24, 27. but go on thoughtless in the way of their education, and persist in stupid and brutal ignorance: Surely that God, who hath made idolaters smart terribly, under the rod of his jealousy and indignation, in former nations and ages, "will be revealed in flaming fire, and take vengeance on them, who will not know him." *2 Thess.* i. 7, 8. "He will pour out his wrath on the heathens that know him not, and the families that call not upon his name," *Jer.* x. 25.

I am well aware that those persons who plead for these idolaters, will excuse them by supposing they worship the true God, under various names, and in several shapes or forms, signifying his various attributes or powers, or the several benefits we receive from him.

But I reply, that this is not true in fact, concerning the greatest part of mankind: For howsoever some few of their wisest men might have this opinion, yet the bulk of the heathen world always did, and do to this day worship the various idols themselves as so many gods, and disown the one true God. Ask the old *greek* and *roman* writers,

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ask the travellers of modern ages, they will agree to tell you, that the people generally worship and believe this variety of gods.

Perhaps, it will be said, that none of them could be so foolish, as to adore the very images of gold or silver, wood or stone, as their gods, but they adored some divine power, which they supposed to inhabit those images, after their fancied consecration of them.

But the prophet *Isaiab* will answer, "that the smith and the carpenter exert their labour and skill, they make the figure of a man, out of a mass of metal, or the trunk of a tree, "they fall down to it, and worship it, they pray to it, and say, deliver me, for thou art my god. They have not known nor understood better, so brutish are they and ignorant," *Isaiab* xli. 6, 7. xlv. 17, 19.

I add yet further, that others of them who were not so grossly stupid, as to worship the very metal, the wood or stone, yet, they paid adoration to *Bacchus* and *Mars*, to *Juno* and *Venus*, to fabulous deities or mere names, or to devils, whom they supposed to dwell in these images; but the only true God was far from their thoughts: And is this a religion worthy of the majesty of heaven, or fit for him to accept at the hands of creatures whom he has endued with reason?

And as for those few among them, who have acknowledged the one true God, even their wise men and philosophers, they complied with national idolatries, they held the truth in unrighteousness, that is, they unrighteously restrained the truth, which was in their consciences, or concealed it amidst all their unrighteousness of practice. They acted contrary to the light and dictates of their own consciences, and yielded themselves servants to the vile and idolatrous customs of their country, in many of their ridiculous and impious rites and ceremonies: They "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the images of birds, beasts and fishes," and worshipped creatures even while they knew the creator. And can these men have any claim to the favour of God, who would not dare to bear a testimony to his name and glory, among idolaters? These men, who when "they knew God, they glorified him not as God, but turned his glory into a lie?" *Rom.* i. 21, 23.

As for the nations who own the one true God, which are chiefly the *Jews* and the mahometans, the various ceremonies, with which they now worship him, cannot be supposed to be agreeable to his majesty, or to render the worshippers the objects of his delight; let us consider them distinctly.

The nation of the *Jews* has had the gospel of *Christ* preached, to them, but they have "put the mercy of God far from them" and abandoned his salvation, *Acts* xiii. 46. Their forms of worship, though they were once appointed by God himself, yet their term and season is expired, and they are now divinely abolished. Besides, they practise to this day what their fathers were guilty of in the days of *Christ*, viz. "They make void the commandments of God, by the multitude of their own traditions," *Mattb.* xv. 3. and superstitious rites which they have invented. God has directly cast them off, and rejected them because they rejected his Son *Jesus*; they were once his beloved people, but now, are not his people, nor beloved, for they persist in their hatred, of the beloved Son of God, and most of them have conceived the utmost aversion to the name of *Jesus*.

The mahometans own the true God, and practise many duties of morality: But how ridiculous and irrational is a great part of their religion or worship? What a silly book is the "alcoran," which is their bible? God requires "a reasonable service," *Rom.* xii. 1. But how many absurd fooleries, are mingled with their articles of faith and practice? Where shall we find any national religion besides the christian, that hath the countenance and support of reason? With what wild and impudent fables do  
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the writings of *Mabomet*, and the tales of his followers, furnish and fill the minds of the *Turks* and *Persians*, in *Europe* and *Asia*, and the *Moors* and barbarians, in *Africa*? And what numberless tenets and rites are found in their religion, which have no manner of evidence or defence, from the light of nature or common reason?

After all, if there are any persons found among all these nations, that have been, or shall be accepted of God, it is not their various ceremonies, or superstitious fopperies, that are the objects of his delight. These are rather, so many errors and faults in their religion, and stand in need of forgiveness. The only just ground of hope, that any of them can have of divine acceptance, arises not from their own ceremonies, but from their observance of some precepts of the light of nature, some broken traditions of divine revelation, some fragments of the gospel, and pardoning grace, delivered down from *Noah*, *Abraham*, or *Moses*, or derived from their acquaintance with the revealed religion of the *Jews* or christians, as I shall shew under the next question.

Answer II. If God had a mind to accept the various religions, which men have invented, and would delight himself in their divers fantastic forms of worship, why did he ever reveal to men any peculiar religion at all? Why did he appoint sacrifices to *Adam*? Why further discoveries to *Noah*? Why circumcision to *Abraham*? Why a variety of rites to the *Jews* under *Moses*? And why did he manifest himself in the last place, by *Jesus Christ* his son, and appoint a religion that surpasses them all, to be preached to all nations? I take these several revelations now for granted, since it would be too long to prove them here.

Now, since he hath revealed peculiar ways of pleasing and honouring him, and obtaining his favour, and that to various ages and nations, it is evident, that he did not design to give a loose to the wild fancies of mankind, to contrive a religion, each for himself, and to resolve to be pleased with any superstitions which they should invent.

If the servants of a family, or the subjects or officers of a kingdom, had special forms of service and duty assigned them, in order to please their superior, surely no prince, nor master, could be pleased with their humorous and fantastic pretences, to please or gratify him in another way, under the neglect of his own appointments.

However, this is sufficient for us, that since we in *Great Britain*, have a divine revelation so well attested, we are not left to our own fancy, to invent a worship for our selves: Nor will the great God ever be pleased with those, who reject his divine contrivances, and counsels in the gospel, and pretend to find new ways of their own to obtain his favour. The very pretence is too assuming and presumptuous for a creature, ever to hope for acceptance by it, in the sight of God his creator.

#### QUESTION IX.

**B**UT have not heathens and infidels been saved as well as *Jews* and christians? Did not *Job* and his four friends in *Arabia*, and *Melchisedec* king of *Salem*, and *Jethro* the priest of *Midian*, and *Cornelius* a heathen soldier, a centurion in *Cesarea*, all find acceptance with God, though they were gentiles or heathens, and worshipped him in a different way, from *Abraham* and *Moses*, and the nation of the *Jews*? Did not God sufficiently shew his approbation of them and their religion, though some of them lived near enough to the families of *Abraham* and *Israel*, and might have acquainted themselves with their instituted ways of worship? And doth

not *Peter's* speech to *Cornelius* confirm this? Read the story, *Acts* x. 1, 2, 3, 31, 34, 35. "There was a certain man in *Cesarea*, called *Cornelius*, a centurion of the band, called the *italian* band, a devout man, and one that feared God, with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision, evidently, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, *Cornelius*, thy prayer is heard, and thy alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Then *Peter* being sent for, opened his mouth, and said, of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." Why then may not a philosopher in *China*, a heathen in *America*, or a deist in *Britain*, if he follows the dictates of the light of nature, worshipping the true God, and practising the common duties of morality, find acceptance with God?

Answer. The last part of this question has, I think, a sufficient answer given to it under the former questions, when I proved that the mere light of nature is not sufficient to secure salvation to sinful and fallen man. What further force is added to this objection by the instances of *Job*, *Jethro*, *Melchisedec*, *Cornelius*, &c. I shall endeavour to answer in the following propositions, and herein, declare my sentiments with freedom, "How far any of the heathens may hope for salvation, and how little hope there is for a modern deist enjoying the full light of christianity."

Proposition I. Since mankind have broken the laws of their maker, and are become sinful creatures, and guilty before God, they have cut themselves off from all hope, of obtaining his favour and final happiness, by the law of innocency. "There is none righteous, no not one: They are all fallen short of glory and immortality:" Their own consciences, upon a just enquiry, must lay them under condemnation, "Every mouth is stopped, and all the world is become guilty before God." *Rom.* iii. 19.

Proposition II. The light of nature, which informed innocent man, that he must obey God in all things, may reach so far, as to inform sinful man, that he must repent of his transgressions, that must endeavour after new obedience, with a persevering constancy; and it may direct him to apply himself, to seek forgiveness and acceptance with God, by humble and fervent prayer: But this light of nature, cannot teach him to make atonement for sin, nor could ever assure any man, that his repentance shall be accepted so far as to obtain forgiveness\*.

The utmost stretch of the light of nature, is well described in the practice and hope of the *Ninevites*, in the book of *Jonah*, chapter iii. verse 8, 9. "Let man neither eat nor drink, but be covered with sackcloth," that is, "Let him abstain from his usual refreshments and pleasures, and cry mightily unto God: Yea, let them turn every one from his evil way: Who can tell, if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" The hope of the light of nature, even in a repenting sinner, can reach no farther than, "a who can tell," whether God will accept it?

Proposition III. Since the light of nature and reason, could not inform a guilty creature, what is necessary and sufficient to atone for sin, or appease the just anger and resentment of God against it, nor assure him, that an offended God would ever be reconciled to him, notwithstanding his repentance, it pleased God in his infinite mercy, to make a revelation or discovery of pardoning grace to our first parents, in and by

\* See the "insufficiency of natural religion," proved at large, in *Mr. Thomas Haliburton's* excellent treatise on the subject, in quarto, and in *Mr. Nathanael Taylor's* "preservative against deism," first and second part, octavo.



by some glorious mediator or saviour, and to tell them that this saviour should be born of the woman, that he should destroy the works of the devil, and relieve mankind from the curse and misery, in which the temptation of *Satan*, and their own guilt had involved them. This is the sense of the first promise, as it has been abundantly explained and proved by many writers †, wherein God foretold, “ that the seed of the woman, should bruise the head of the serpent, and that the serpent should bruise his heel.” *Gen. iii. 15.*

Upon this foot, sacrifices of beasts were instituted, to preserve these two notions in the memory of man, *viz.* that sin deserved death, and that God would provide a sufficient sacrifice in his own time, to expiate sin.

It is very probable, that God did not leave our first parents, without some clearer explication of this first promise, some plainer notices of his intended grace, and of this future saviour. It is likely, that he acquainted them with the reason and nature, and design of bloody sacrifices, and taught them more particularly, in what manner to address him for mercy, and how to please him in other necessary parts of worship and duty: For we cannot suppose, that God left mankind for almost two thousand years, to live upon the mere words of *Gen. iii. 15.* nor can we reasonably believe that *Moses* in so very short an abstract of the affairs of mankind before the flood, relates all the transactions that passed between God and man, nor all the revelations that God made to them of his grace, and the way of salvation by a mediator.

Proposition IV. All the persons of the successive generations, which arose between *Adam* and *Noah*, might have learned the necessary lessons of duty and grace, from *Adam* and *Eve*, and from those of their posterity, who conversed with them; and this is very easy to be supposed, by reason of the length of life, with which mankind were favoured in that early age of the world.

Proposition V. As *Noah* had received by tradition from *Adam*, these divine lessons, so doubtless, he had them as it were confirmed and renewed to him, by his frequent converse with God; wherein he received some further assurances of divine mercy, and further instructions in particular duties and privileges, *viz.* He was indulged to eat flesh, and to kill the beasts of the earth for his food: He had undoubted discoveries of what creatures were fit for food and sacrifice, by the clean beasts coming by sevens, and the unclean beasts by pairs, to be saved from the flood, if he did not know this before. Yet further, he received a command to eat no blood, and an order that the murderer of man should be put to death: And besides all this, he had God's covenant sealed to him and his posterity by the rain-bow.

Proposition VI. *Noah* being the second great patriarch, or father of all mankind, it is evident that the covenant of grace, or God's dispensation of mercy to sinful man, was revealed to all mankind the second time in and by him: For *Noah* was the progenitor of all men after the flood; and as he was a preacher of righteousness, doubtless he diffused this useful and important knowledge to his sons, and committed it to their care, to be conveyed to his posterity. Note, I shall call this the patriarchal religion, to distinguish it from the abrahamic, the *jewish* and christian.

Proposition VII. Since the days of *Noah*, there has been no new or further revelation of the mercy of God, and the duty of men, made universally to all mankind.

The

† See doctor *William Harris's* “ sermons on the *Messiah*,” and his explication of this text, *Gen. iii. 15.* and doctor *Sherlock*, now bishop of *London*, in his discourses of the “ use and intent of prophecy.” Discourse the third.

The revelation of further duties, which was made to *Abraham*, belonged only to his posterity, and did not oblige the rest of the nations to circumcision, &c.

The further requirements of various duties and ceremonies, that were given to the *Israelites* by *Moses*, obliged only that one nation to the observance of them: Though it must be acknowledged, the other nations, who had any communication with the family of *Abraham*, and the nation of the *Jews*, had rich advantages for the knowledge, preservation, and practice of the religion of *Noah*, by their communication with the posterity of *Abraham* and *Israel*.

The gospel of *Christ*, indeed, which was revealed near seventeen hundred years ago, requires the faith and obedience of all, to whom it is made known with clear evidence, whether *Jews* or gentiles; but I question whether it has been yet thus published to more than onehalf of mankind. So that this truth still abides firm, that the religion of *Noah*, was the last revelation made to the whole world.

Proposition VIII. From these considerations, it will follow, that whosoever among men, between the days of *Adam* and *Noah*, believed and practised the religion of *Adam*, if they had no further revelation given them, were accepted of God: And whosoever between the days of *Noah* and this day, have practised the religion of *Noah*, if they have had no further revelation brought to them, have a plain and evident interest in the favour of God, and the blessings of salvation, according to the promises made to *Adam* and *Noah*, and the religion which was severally prescribed to them.

Now here come in the hopes of grace and salvation for *Job* and his four friends in *Arabia*, for *Melchisedec*, in the land of *Canaan*, for *Jethro* a priest or prince in *Midian*, for *Cornelius* a roman soldier in *Cesarea*, and perhaps for several persons of other nations who have been accepted of God, though they were not of the seed of *Abraham*, of the nation of *Israel*, nor ever heard of the gospel of *Christ*: The religion prescribed to *Noah*, as the second father of all mankind, is certainly sufficient for their pardon, and acceptance with God, supposing it to be the only religion which was ever prescribed to them.

Here I ask leave to tarry a little, and answer two or three objections, before I proceed to the ninth proposition.

Objection I. Does not *St. Peter* tell the elders of *Israel*, when he had preached *Christ* to them, *Acts* iv. 12. "That there is not salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given amongst men, whereby we must be saved?" And thence, some persons may infer, that the actual knowledge of the name of *Christ*, and faith in him, since his religion was instituted, are absolutely necessary for the salvation of all men. To this I answer,

First, That the apostle in this place, does not assert the actual knowledge of *Christ*, to be necessary to all men, but only, that there is but one saviour provided for all men under heaven, and that is *Jesus Christ*. Now as the patriarchs and the ancient *Jews*, were saved by *Jesus of Nazareth*, and by virtue of his atonement, without knowing his name, and before he came into the world, so might those gentiles, if they maintained the substance of the patriarchal religion, be saved by the atonement of *Christ*, without the actual knowledge of his name. But I answer in the

Second place, That if the gentiles might be saved, by observing the patriarchal religion before the coming of *Christ*, they might also be saved by the same religion, where the name of *Christ* was never preached: For the coming, or not coming of *Christ*, can make no difference in the religion of those nations which never heard of it.

Objection

Objection II. But we do not read that *Melchisedec* or *Cornelius*, offered sacrifices as *Noah* did, or kept close in all the parts of faith and practice to the religion of *Noah*.

Answer I. We read that *Job* and *Jethro* offered sacrifices, *Job* i. 5. *Exod.* xviii. 12. And it is very probable, that *Melchisedec* did so too; for though he was a priest of intercession, and prayed for *Abraham*, and blessed him, yet this does not at all forbid our belief of his receiving, and preserving the institution of sacrifices from his ancestor *Noah*: Whether *Cornelius* offered sacrifices or no, the scripture is silent.

And as for the other parts of *Noah's* faith and practice, as they were derived partly from reason, and partly from revelation, though they were lost among several nations in a few ages, yet it is very probable that they were conveyed down through several ages in some other nations, and especially among those, who had any commerce with the *Jews*: For the chief thing, which the *Jews* themselves required of their proselytes of the gate, in order to their share of happiness in the world to come, was their conformity to the precepts of *Noah*. Those who practised them, were called the "devout or religious persons, and the men that feared God" in *Acts* xiii. 16, 43. and *Acts* xvii. 4, 17. among whom the apostles obtained the largest harvest of gentile converts in their first preaching the gospel. And probably, these are the same precepts in the main which were enjoyed by the apostles, in the xv. of *Acts* to the converted gentiles, excepting only that sacrifices were omitted, since the great sacrifice of *Christ* was offered.

Thus it is evident that *Noah's* religion was in the main, kept alive in some of the gentile nations, especially by such persons among them, as had most conversation with the *Jews* before their dispersions: and after their great dispersions by many captivities, there were several other persons among the gentiles, who by this means got acquaintance with the true God, and the religion of the proselytes of the gate, which was the religion of *Noah*.

The expression of *St. Peter* concerning *Cornelius*, *Acts* x. 34. is very easily explained by this view of things. "Of a truth, I perceive God is no respecter of persons," that is, I who was once involved in the common prejudices of my countrymen, and thought the *Jews* only were to be favoured, with the blessings of the *Messiah's* kingdom, I am now convinced, that God does not respect men of one nation, more than another, but in every nation whether *jew* or gentile, "he that fears God, and works righteousness, that is, he who practises the duties of that religion which is prescribed to him, is accepted of God." *St. Peter* does not say, a man may be accepted in every religion, but only in every nation; for *Cornelius* was probably a believer and practiser of the patriarchal religion, and was in a saved state, and reconciled to God, though he did not know the peculiar means which procured that reconciliation.

You will say then, why was *St. Peter* sent to speak words to him whereby he should be saved? The plain meaning is, that *Peter* was sent to teach him those particular transactions of divine grace, and the doctrine of the death and sacrifice of *Jesus Christ*, whereby God saves sinners; that by this means he might have clearer discoveries of his own acceptance, and be assisted in the ways of holiness, with incomparably more advantage and comfort, than ever he could have attained by following his imperfect notices of the patriarchal religion, and the precepts of *Noah*.

As for the sacrifices and abstinence from blood, and things strangled, which were parts of *Noah's* religion, it is not certain, how far *Cornelius* knew, or complied with them; I therefore proceed to a second answer to the objection.

Answer II. If through length of time, and the wide dispersion of some nations, and the negligence of their fathers, many of them lost some parts of the religion

of their ancestor *Noah*, yet several of them, might retain the most substantial and necessary articles of it. If they practised sincere love to God, and trust in his mercy, through some expected, but unknown methods of reconciliation, together with sincere repentance for their sins, and diligence in their endeavours after holiness, we have reason to hope, that a gracious and condescending God would accept of their hearty desires and endeavours to please him, while they believed and practised according to the utmost degrees of the discovery of grace and duty, that ever were conveyed down to them.

It is God alone who is their ruler and judge: He knows, how much doctrine and duty is necessary, for the salvation of every man, under the particular dispensations and advantages he enjoys: His mercy will make favourable allowances, for what parts of the patriarchal religion they never learned, because their fathers had lost or neglected, or forgot them: And he knows how far to make allowances of forgiveness also, for what tolerable follies and lesser superstitions, they or their fathers have added, if it has risen from an inward sincere and mistaken desire to please him. But God alone is a sufficient judge in this case, and we must leave them to his judgment.

Objection III. But in the new testament the scripture does not seem to speak of the heathens, as having any knowledge of divine revelation, or as practising the religion revealed to *Adam*, or *Noah*, or *Abraham*, but as left to the light of nature, "to the law written in their hearts, and to their own consciences, accusing or excusing them," *Rom. ii. 15*.

Answer. It is so indeed with the bulk of the heathen world, for most of them seemed by that time, when the new testament was written, to have forgotten the religion of *Noah*: But then, consider what a wretched state or condition it is, in which the scripture represents the bulk of the gentile nations, because by their own and their fore-fathers negligence, they had lost all the revelations of grace: "They are filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, full of envy, murder, malice, haters of God, without natural affection, covenant-breakers, implacable, unmerciful," *Rom. i. 29—31*. "Given up to work uncleanness with greediness," *Ephes. iv. 19*. "Strangers to all the covenants of promise, without hope, and without God in the world." Chapter ii. 12.

And if amongst this wretched herd of sinners, there should happen to be here and there one in a thousand, that humbly followed every glimmering track of divine light in his own conscience, and earnestly intreated the favour of God, I shall account for such a man's hopes in the tenth proposition.

Proposition IX. As for those families or nations, to whom God has made any new and further revelations of his mind and will, beyond the religion of *Noah*, and enjoined other duties upon them, they can have no hope of acceptance with God, unless they comply with these new revelations, and perform the duties enjoined. Let us consider them particularly.

If the seed of *Abraham*, who received an evident and authentic account of *Abraham's* religion, utterly refuse circumcision, or renounced their faith in the seed of *Abraham* as a favour, they must account for it, to God their judge, nor do I see how they can claim his favour.

If the *Jews*, before the coming of their *Messiah*, renounced the law of *Moses*, and rebelled against the discoveries of grace and duty, that were made to their nation, I see but little grounds for their hope.

If

If the *Jews* or gentiles, who have ever heard the preaching of the gospel of *Christ*, in it's clear light and evidence, renounce this gospel and this favour, and rebel against this grace, I cannot find any claim, that they can have to the forgiveness of sins, or to their acceptance with God and eternal life.

Proposition. X. Where there is an intire and invincible ignorance of all God's appointed methods of grace, both patriarchal, *jewish* and christian, if there should be any person humbly asking forgiveness of God, and diligent in following every dictate of his own conscience, and longing after some further discoveries of divine grace and his own duty, I will not deny but that God may condescend to save him, through the extensive merits of the mediator, by sovereign and unpromised mercy; though he cannot claim the pardon of his sins or acceptance with God, because he has no revelation of grace made to him.

Or if God see it necessary to acquaint him, with any explicit methods of his grace, in order to his salvation, I am persuaded, wheresoever he finds such a sincere soul, he will inwardly illuminate him, by his own Spirit of revelation, or will send an angel or an apostle to him, as he did to *Cornelius*, "to speak words to him, whereby he shall be saved." *Acts xi. 14.*

And I have given this as one reason of it before, *viz.* because, if there can be found any such humble sincere seeker after God, it is God himself, has wrought this religious temper in the heart, and he will not forsake the work of his own hands.

Proposition. XI. But the modern deists, who are obstinate in their infidelity, and the apostates in our age and nation, who have renounced their faith, can take no manner of sanctuary under the examples of these men, *Job, Jethro, Melchisedec*, and *Cornelius*; nor can they borrow a grain of ease to their consciences, nor one glimpse of hope from all the concessions I have made in favour of the heathen nations: For they have much clearer light manifested to them, than any of the persons I have been speaking of, either in ancient or modern times, and some of them at least, seem to wink against the sun-beams, content to dwell in darkness, and fond of heathenism.

I would ask any of our *english* infidels this plain question, Whether *Cornelius* himself could have claimed or expected acceptance with God and salvation, if he had refused to believe, and obey the doctrines and duties of the new religion, which God revealed to him, by the means of an angel and an apostle? And if they themselves abuse so glorious a light, as shines among them in *Great Britain*, not only *Job* and *Melchisedec*, and *Cornelius*, but even the poor *muscovites* and *laplanders*, and all the blindest part of the heathen world, will rise up against them in the great day; even *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, the negroes and hottentots of *Africa*, and the wild *american* savages, will stand in judgment against them, and condemn them. Those who have been, as it were, exalted to heaven, as *Capernaum* and *Bethsaida* were, in the discoveries of the gospel, and yet obstinately reject it, what can they expect but the fate and sentence of *Capernaum* and *Bethsaida*, that is, to be thrust down to hell, without pity or hope of pardon?

Methinks, I feel a pain at my heart, when I am forced to use such language. But "knowing the threatenings and terrors of the Lord, we endeavour to persuade men," 2. *Cor. v. 11.* that they would not oblige him to the terrible execution of them. O may divine light and preventing grace, over-power their chosen darkness, and lead them captive to the obedience of faith, and thereby to everlasting glory!

U u u 2

Q U E S T I O N

## QUESTION X.

**SUPPOSE** a man has taken great and sincere pains in searching into the evidences of the christian religion, suppose him heartily desirous to receive conviction of the truth, attentive to the force of every argument, and engaged in daily supplications to God, to lead him into the right way of salvation; and yet, after all, he solemnly declares, that the evidences, at present, arise no higher in his judgment, than to a mere probability: Suppose he can get no further than just to say, "I do rather think the gospel true than false:" Is such a one bound to practise christianity?

Answer. Yes, by all means: And that for these three reasons.

Reason I. In such sort of questions, where the truth and evidence depend much upon matters of fact, which were done in past ages, and distant nations, such as ancient miracles and prophecies, &c. we cannot arise to such a natural or mathematical certainty, as we may in questions about things present, which are the objects of our senses, or about propositions in geometry, where our reason sees the strongest proof and undeniable demonstration. In such questions, therefore, as the ancient prophecies and miracles, which support the truth of the *jewish* or the christian religion, we can arrive only at a moral certainty, by the use of our reasoning powers on these evidences: This moral certainty, is built on such a degree of evidence, that it is hardly possible in the nature of things, that the contested proposition should not be true. It is with this moral certainty, the generality of men in *England* believe there is a pope at *Rome*, that there is a king of *Spain*, or that they make fine silks in *China*, or that king *GEORGE* reigns in *Great Britain*. Now, if our evidence rises but to a probability, it ought certainly to influence our practice, since a moral certainty, which is all that I here plead for, is but the highest degree of this kind: We do not expect demonstrations in such a case, though the assent sometimes is so just and so strong, that, in many cases, it may be well called assurance. We may boldly and truly say, we are sure, that there is such a country as *China*, such a city as *Rome*; we are sure, there was such a man as king *Henry* the eighth of *England*, and *Alexander* of *Greece*; we are sure there was such a person as *Jesus Christ* in *Judea*, that he wrought miracles to prove his divine mission, and that he taught a doctrine which came from God.

Reason II. In a great part of the actions, which we perform in human life, we go upon much lesser probability, and think we have sufficient ground to act without a full assurance: We go to visit our friends at an appointed hour, because it is probable, we shall meet them at home: We travel from place to place, because it is probable, we may find the persons we seek, and do the business we design: We send to market for food, because it is probable, that flesh and herbs are there waiting to be sold: We make bargains about goods which we never saw, because it is probable, these goods are worth our money, and will be conveyed to us: We run great risks by sea and land, we venture our substance, and even life itself, across the ocean, and through a thousand dangers, upon mere probabilities: If therefore, it be but a probable thing, that the christian religion be true, it is the undoubted duty and interest of every wise man, to endeavour to secure the salvation, which the christian religion proposes by the practice of all its appointments: For if we neglect it, even according to our own opinion, it is probable, we shall be for ever miserable; and if we practise it, it is probable, we shall be saved: And the very probability of securing infinite happiness, and of escaping infinite distress, is sufficient to set a wise man heartily to work.

Reason III.

Reason III. There is no doubt, but, in the primitive times, there were many, both *Jews* and heathens, who were not arrived at a complete certainty, and full assurance of the truth of the christian religion, at first, when they professed it; but the arguments, on the side of the gospel, seemed, in their judgment, to be stronger than those against it, and therefore they embraced the religion of *Christ*: This is manifest from several of the writings of the apostles, wherein they endeavour to establish young and doubtful converts in a firmer belief of the gospel, and to guard them against wavering. Many of these came afterwards to be firm and established christians, confessors, and martyrs for the truth, and sealed it with their blood.

The light of evidence, which shines round the gospel, though it be great and glorious in itself, yet to a dim eye, or to a man but half awakened, may appear like the dusky twilight, or the faint and early dawn of the morning, but just discovering the path to happiness. Yet let the honest traveller to immortality, pursue his way by this feeble light; it is the best guide he has; let him not lie still or loiter, because he does not discern his path, with an indubitable assurance, nor see his way surrounded with meridian splendors.

It is sufficiently manifest, even to these doubting souls, that all other religions which pretend to revelation, fall vastly short of the excellencies of christianity; and that the gospel is far preferable to all of them, both as to its own inward worth, and to its outward evidences. If natural religion appear never so excellent in their eyes, this very religion of nature is all included in the religion of *Christ*. And if they have but a glimpse of evidence for the gospel, reason itself would require the practice of it; since it is an additional ground for their hope of divine favour, agreeable to reason, and superadded to the light of nature. And if, after all, their belief of the gospel should prove a mistake, and the religion of nature be the only truth, yet they can never imagine the God of nature, will condemn them for adding faith in *Jesus Christ* to the religion of nature, since it had probable evidences to support it.

Let persons, therefore, who are in these circumstances, together with their practice of natural religion, trust in *Christ*, and obey the gospel. Let them proceed in their honest search into the evidences of christianity: Let them love and value this religion as far they see it to be true: Let them pray earnestly for increasing light and conviction of the truth, and not nourish their doubts and multiply their scruples, by a wanton curiosity, or a cavilling spirit. Let them "do the will of *Christ*, as far as they know it, that, according to his promise, they may know, more assuredly, that this doctrine is of God." *John* vii. 17. I can hardly suppose that such a humble, sincere suppliant, and zealous inquirer into the truth of God, shall be left to continue year after year, and to live and die, in so fluctuating and doubtful a state of mind.

If I had lived in this frame of soul, and should be suddenly seized with mortal sickness, I would not only trust in the infinite mercies of God, as I was passing into the unseen world, but I would keep fast the little hold that I had of *Jesus*, the saviour. A merciful God, who has no where forbid sinners the use of a mediator, would never abandon and condemn me, for my sense of my own unworthiness to appear in his holy presence, and for making use of the mediation of such a person, who has the best characters, and pretences to the honour of that blessed office.

But on the other hand, if God has indeed appointed one only mediator between himself and his sinful creature man, and if he has given me some feeble knowledge of his name and office, and yet I refuse to accept of his interest, because I have not full assurance of it, and will venture into the immediate presence of God, without him;

him, I should have just reason to fear a terrible repulse, and an everlasting exclusion from all the blessings of his love.

## S E C T I O N IV.

*General exhortations to christians, derived from the foregoing discourse.*

**A**LL our reasoning and argument should tend to practice. If we are christians, and profess the faith of *Jesus*, we must cheerfully receive exhortations as well as doctrine.

Exhortation I. Is it of such infinite importance, to know which is the true religion, whereby we may please God and obtain eternal happiness, "then christians, let our hearts be filled with gratitude, and our lips with praise, that God has brought us up in the knowledge of the truth." We are here in a state of probation for eternity: The race is set, the goal is fixed, the prize appointed, and the various rules are divinely prescribed, by which we must conduct ourselves in this important race. Happy are those mortals, to whom God has made known the nature of this contest, the appointed laws of it, and the glorious prize. We can never sufficiently adore and bless the name of our God, who has brought us into being, in such a nation, and in such an age, wherein the gospel of *Christ* is published, that gospel, which contains all these momentous discoveries.

What is it but rich and peculiar grace, that has appointed our birth in *Great Britain*, where the name of *Christ* and his gospel are known, while millions of our fellow-creatures, made of the same flesh and blood, are travelling onwards to eternity, with few or none of these advantages? O! why was not I born among the wild and brutal nations of *Africa*, where they know neither themselves, nor their creator? Where they are not taught, nor have ever learned their own apostasy from God, and their necessity of a saviour? Why was not my soul united to a human body, in the midst of the *american* wilderness? Why am not I one of those fierce and ignorant savages, who know nothing of the dignity of human nature, nor have any acquaintance with the true God, their creator and their judge? And yet they are hastening onward, as fast as days and hours can convey them into an invisible and eternal state, utterly ignorant of that heaven, or that hell, which awaits all that depart hence: Who is it that has made me to differ? What is it but divine sovereignty and rich mercy, that has appointed my station in the land of christian knowledge? Is it not all owing to the free and unmerited love of the great God, that he has made such an amazing distinction between me and others? They are making haste into eternity as well as I; but their way before them is all darkness, for they have lost the ancient divine light given to their ancestors of old: And when they pass from this world into another, they must venture in the dark, and without any clear and solid hope; for this is the character of the bulk of the heathen world, that they are without God, without *Christ*, and without hope, both in this world, and in that which is to come. What can I do but stand still and adore that rich mercy, that has conferred upon me so vast and so distinguishing a privilege that reaches into the eternal world?

Come, bless the Lord with me, all ye happy souls, and highly favoured of God! who have been led into the knowledge of the gospel, from your younger years, and educated in the christian faith. Happy youths! who are not only born in such a land of light as *Great Britain*, but have enjoyed the blessing of religious parents, who have taken care to instruct you, in the great things of your salvation. You have had  
your



your tender minds impressed with christianity betimes, and stamped with the divine religion of *Jesus*. Like young *Timothy*, from your very childhood, "you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise to salvation." 2. *Tim.* iii. 15. Favourite creatures! who have been nursed up, in the knowledge of your creator; from your very cradles, and who have imbibed the words of truth, and the doctrine according to godliness. Happy souls, indeed, who have been preserved, by divine providence and grace, from sucking in those prejudices against the gospel of *Christ*, which have been the poison and the destruction of multitudes in our age! O bless the Lord with a joyful heart, and awake all the powers of nature within you, to bless this God of grace, who has cast your lot in a pleasant situation, in a land of knowledge, in a family of divine light and mercy. He has taught you betimes his law and his gospel, his justice and his grace, he has let you see your guilt and misery, and your effectual relief. "As for many other families and other nations, they have not known them, praise ye the Lord." *Psal.* cxlvii. 20.

Exhortation II. "Since you have been divinely favoured, with the knowledge of the right way to heaven, walk in it with all holy diligence and care." Since the rules of this sacred contest, for the prize of glory, have been revealed to you, and set before you, awaken all your powers into activity, and strive that ye may obtain the crown. It is not enough, that you know the right path which leads to heaven, if you are not engaged heartily in the christian race. A mere knowledge of the laws of it, will never bring you to the goal, nor intitle you to the heavenly prize. He that would be crowned must fight, must run, must strive, and exert all the powers of nature, according to the methods prescribed by divine grace, that he may be found an overcomer.

Lift yourselves, therefore, under the banner of *Jesus*, the captain of your salvation, by a most solemn profession of his name, and devotion of yourselves to him. Mortify all your irregular appetites; subdue your dear and darling sins; resist every temptation to iniquity; keep under your bodies, and every bodily inclination, that opposes the purity and perfection of the spirit. Let no pride or envy, no malice or revenge, no sensuality or intemperance, no cruel, or covetous, or selfish principles reign in you. "Abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul," 1. *Pet.* ii. 11. "Every man that strives for the mastery, must be temperate in all things:" And if the ancient *grecians* practised this self-denial to obtain a corruptible and withering crown, much more should christians, in their pursuit "of one that is incorruptible, and which never fades away," 1. *Cor.* ix. 25. Run with such vigour in this holy race, as though there could but one of you obtain the prize, "forgetting the things that are behind, stretch forward still, with the prize in your eye, till you lay hold of it." *Phil.* iii. 13. Let no hardships discourage you, no enemies or dangers sink your spirits. "He that holds out to the end, the same shall be saved," *Matt.* xxiv. 13.

Since the gospel of happiness is set before you, in so clear a light, be zealous to comply with all the holy commands of it. Give yourselves up to *Jesus*, as your saviour and your Lord. Trust in his atonement for the pardon of all your iniquities: Commit your souls to the conduct of his word, and to the sanctifying influences of his Spirit: Imitate the blessed pattern of so great a leader, and follow him who has marked out the way to life and immortality. "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience against the law of *Moses*, received a just recompence of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Son of God, and has been published, and conveyed down to us from those that heard it?" *Heb.* ii. 2—4.

Let

Let us not deceive ourselves with vain hopes, and make our knowledge of all the disputed points of christianity, and the mere orthodoxy of our opinions, the ground of our expectation of future glory. Let us not indulge so gross a mistake, as to put mere notions in the room of practice. An enlightened head was never designed to serve instead of a sanctified heart, neither in this world, nor that to come. No forms of religion, though they are divine, no doctrines, no articles of faith, no outward rites and ceremonies of worship, though revealed and prescribed by God himself, will answer for the defect of a holy life. Could you know the glories of the person of *Christ*, and discourse of all his offices with the exactness of an angel, or some unbodied spirit; could you practise all the forms of external christianity to perfection, yet all these would never recommend you to the divine favour, without an inward and sincere love to God and men: Without this, even the chiefest of the apostles would be but "founding brass, or a tinkling cymbal," 1 *Cor.* xiii. 1. A christian of the brightest notions, and the most refined speculations, can make no just pretences to a heavenly hope, unless he has found the sweet influence of the doctrine of *Christ* reforming his heart, refining his inward temper, and fitting him for the business and blessedness of heaven. If we would be crowned, we must not only know the laws of this holy contest, but we must also run and strive, and fight and wrestle against all oppositions, and persevere to the end.

Exhortation III. "Be solicitous to adorn the doctrine of God, your saviour, with a life of such piety and goodness, as may render your faith illustrious and amiable to the world, even to atheists and infidels." There is something in sublime virtue and pure religion, that strikes the eyes of men with a sacred light, and commands the veneration of the soul, and that sometimes in opposition to their own principles of sin and darkness. Disbelievers of the gospel, may first be won over to a good esteem of our religion, by the holy and heavenly behaviour of those who believe; and at last, they may be drawn to the knowledge and faith of what once they despised. The apostle *Peter* recommends this way of arguing to the pious women of his time, 1 *Pet.* iii. 1. and some of them perhaps were not able to dispute much for the truth. A divine life has powerful argument in it; it is a light that not only shines but burns.

And on the other hand, set a severe guard on yourself, that by your unholy conduct and vicious indulgences, you never give occasion to the deist to blaspheme, and to estrange his heart farther from the gospel. What a dreadful thing would it be, if at the bar of *Christ* an infidel, a condemned infidel, in all the anguish and fury of despair should stand up and tell me, "It was your unchristian and unholy life tempted me first to think there was nothing in christianity; your crimes made me an apostate from the faith, and it is by your sins that I perish for ever."

Exhortation IV. If you have any solicitude for the honour and preservation of the gospel in the world, if you have any tender concern for the souls of posterity, and the eternal happiness of the rising age, "use your utmost endeavours to plant the seeds of christianity in children, and to propagate the faith of *Christ* to the next generation." See that they learn to understand the principles of the christian religion betimes, and that they be not contented with words and syllables, and repeating terms and phrases by heart. Terms and phrases without understanding, will be but a poor defence against infidelity. Teach them the meaning of every thing in the catechisms which they treasure up in their memory, and let them know what it is they are taught to speak and believe.

Lead them also into the reasons of their belief of the gospel: Give them some arguments why they are christians; furnish their minds with something to say in vindication

dication of the religion they profess, that they be not baffled and beat out of it by every witty jest, or every cunning cavil of the adversary. But I forbear to enlarge here, because I shall speak more on this head in the next section. In general, remember that the gospel is entrusted with you for the next generation, and if they lose it and perish through your neglect, the blood of their souls may be dreadfully required at your hands.

Exhortation V. "Watch against every temptation to apostasy from the christian faith, and endeavour to guard and fortify your children and friends against seducers." Perhaps, in this dangerous age, you may have met with some allurements to infidelity, or your younger friends may meet with them. *Satan* has many busy emissaries, many subtle agents, who with fair words intice the souls of men away from the gospel of *Christ*. Or perhaps, you may have been attacked by the scoffs of wanton companions, and it may be, some of their impious cavils have hung about your imaginations, made too deep an impression upon your spirits, and entangled your thoughts with some of the artifices of infidelity. Oh! take heed of these dangerous snares, as you love your own souls; and let young christians be warned against them betimes!

Hearken to the exhortation of your friends who love you tenderly, who have met with the same temptations, and have answered them all, by the just principles of reasoning, and by the strength of a holy faith. With utmost zeal and affection for your souls, we "exhort and testify, this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand." *1 Pet. v. 12.* We have found it so, and desire from our hearts, that you may find it so too. Hear the blessed apostle *Peter* expressing himself thus, to the christians to whom he wrote, who in those primitive days, were continually in danger "of being drawn away from their steadfastness by the subtilty, or by the reproaches of the unbelievers of that age," *2 Pet. iii. 17.* And may the following directions or advices by the divine blessing become effectual preservatives to your souls, against the danger and mischief of infidelity, which is a growing evil, and a spreading plague of the age wherein we live.

## S E C T I O N. V.

### *Preservatives against apostasy from the faith of the gospel.*

Advice I. "ACQUAINT yourselves with the evidences of the truth of christianity, as far as your time, your capacity, and your circumstances of life will admit." Enquire into the true grounds and reasons of the christian religion. Endeavour to furnish your minds with such arguments as will justify your own conscience in the belief of the gospel, and will firmly support your profession and practice of it as rational creatures. God requires that a creature of reason should be a reasonable worshipper.

Though it is an invaluable privilege to have enjoyed a christian education, and to be trained up in the principles and practices of the true religion, yet do not content yourselves to take up your religion only upon trust, and under the mere influence of the authority of your fathers. Dare not build all your faith and hope merely upon your education, in a land which professes the gospel of *Christ*. It is a very dishonourable thing, to have no more reason to give why you are a christian, than a young *Turk* has why he believes in *Mahomet*; for then if you had been born and brought up in *Turkey*, you had also been a mahometan. The doctrine of *Christ*, as it is in itself the best of religions, so it is built upon the brightest evidences and the most solid foundations

dations, and such as are sufficient to convince the reason of every honest and sincere enquirer.

Think of the inward evidences that belong to our religion itself. Observe how completely it contains all the doctrines and duties of the light of nature, and exalts them all to a nobler perfection, than ever any of the ancient sages of heathenism could arrive at. Think how happily all the defects of natural religion are supplied by the gospel of *Christ*. Consider how honourably this religion answers all the ends and designs of God as a creator and a governor, and all the necessities and the desires of his intelligent and immortal creature man, since he is fallen from God, and cannot restore himself. And what more can be desired in a religion revealed from heaven? \*

Meditate on the external proofs of the gospel of *Christ*. Count over the many divine wonders wrought by our blessed saviour himself, and the amazing powers communicated to the apostles, in confirmation of their doctrine †: Behold the exact accomplishment of many prophecies given to the world in ancient days, which have been fulfilled in *Jesus the Messiah*, and his followers †. Observe the sincere honesty of the first propagators of this religion, who were eye and ear-witnesses of the glorious facts upon which christianity is founded §. Think of the wonderful progress that this religion has made in the world, and triumphed over all the opposition of princes and philosophers, of men and devils; and you will find a divine power has gloriously attended it, and evinced it's original to be divine ||.

Endeavour to gain a "solid and rational satisfaction of the truth, and divinity of the holy bible." There are sufficient reasons to prove that this is a book of divine revelations, which God has made in divers ages of the world, and given to men upon special occasions, in order to lead them into the knowledge of himself, and the right way to obtain his favour and eternal life. Many of the writers of it wrought miracles, to confirm the truth of what they taught, and the rest of the sacred writings are authorized and confirmed by men who wrought miracles.

Acquaint yourselves with some of those books which have been written, especially within these last thirty years, to prove and establish the truth of the religion of *Christ*, in opposition to the deists and infidels of our age: And furnish yourselves with just and rational answers to the chief cavils of our adversaries \*\*, that you may not be surprized on a sudden by "the subtilty of men, who lie in wait to deceive," and be robbed of the richest treasure of your souls, and of your everlasting hope. Remember the sacred advice of the apostle. 1 *Pet.* iii. 15. "Be ready to render, to every man that asketh you, a reason of the hope that is in you." Be ready furnished to give every man an account why you are a christian.

#### Advice II.

\* A treatise in quarto lately written by Mr. *John Reynolds*, and intitled "The religion of *Jesus* delineated," is a valuable book to shew the real inward excellence and glory of christianity.

† "See miscellanea sacra," essay I. and Mr. *Samuel Candler's* "vindication of the christian religion."

§ See Mr. *John Reynolds's* "third letter to the deists," which is an unanswerable management and improvement of this argument, for the truth of the christian religion.

|| See several of these arguments put together in a plain and convincing manner, in the bishop of *London's* late "pastoral letter," 1728. Most of them are treated more largely in doctor *Samuel Clarke's* "discourse of the certainty of the christian revelation."

\*\* Doctor *Nichols* in his "conference with a theist," in five parts, in two volumes octavo, has many solid solutions of their cavils, and their proposed difficulties, though perhaps, in order to humour the deists, and give them fair play, he has dressed up their arguments in a little too ludicrous or facetious a style: And he dwells too long and too learnedly on many of them for the use of common christians.

Advice II. "Have a care of mingling the pure religion of *Christ* with any human additions, either of doctrine or duty: For this corrupt mixture will give the adversaries of our faith a vast advantage against you?" When you shall have framed or received such articles of faith, or rites of worship, as the gospel does not contain, and you call this the christian religion, you disgust an unbeliever, and tempt him to renounce the whole, because of the vanity, folly, or absurdity of your additions.

Doubtless, this has been the case frequently in some christian countries. The papists have added so large a medley of their own to the pure religion of *Jesus*, that the more rational and thinking men, in *Italy*, are generally supposed to be deists; for they can never think, that such sort of christianity, as is practised among them, can be a religion that came from God. And I wish there had never been any reason to complain in protestant nations, that such inconsistent schemes of doctrines, or of ceremonies, or both, have sometimes been vended for true christianity, as has given an unhappy occasion to infidels to suspect the truth of the gospel itself.

Learn therefore to distinguish well, what is pure and simple christianity, from all the additional matters which have been mingled with it: For pure christianity will bear a much better defence, and you will stand more stedfast in the belief of it.

Now, to this end, I would advise you to converse much with the word of God, and especially with the new testament, which is more eminently the rule of our holy religion. It is there you read the doctrines and duties of the gospel, free from all the additions of men, delivered in the language of unquestionable truth, and in the words of a divine teacher, even the holy Spirit. There you learn the precepts and rules of piety and virtue, pure and unmingled with human traditions. Let this book be your constant counsellor, for it is an infallible guide. Learn your religion from this book, and see that you receive nothing, as an article of your faith or practice, but what is contained therein.

Converse much with those parts of scripture, wherein the most important doctrines of christianity are written, and the greatest and the most necessary duties of it are plainly prescribed and taught. Particularly, acquaint yourselves with the history of the life and death of *Christ*, and his divine instructions, as they are recorded in the four gospels. Read the epistles of *St. Paul* to the *Romans*, and to the *Ephesians*, and value most those discourses and writings of men, which come nearest to these divine standards.

Treasure up in your memory such passages of scripture as are best suited to teach and confirm the chief articles of your faith and practice, and let them be written upon your heart. The more instruction you get from the word of God in this holy religion, the more you will love it, and be established in it: And you will not be so soon shaken with every wind of doctrine, as if you borrowed all your knowledge of christianity, merely from the forms and the lessons men have taught you\*. Remember that *Christ Jesus* is your only master and Lord, and he is the same yesterday, to day and for ever. *Heb. xiii 8.*

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\* Perhaps, it may be necessary, in this place, to insert a caution, lest any should imagine I would here exclude catechisms, larger or smaller, and turn out systems of divinity from the use of the schools, churches or families. This is very far from my thoughts: I am a constant friend of, and advocate for those compendiums, or systematical writings: Their use and advantage is so great, that I think it hardly possible to teach any religion well, and particularly the christian without them. All that I advise here is, that children and youth should be led with all due speed, as their understandings admit, to see the articles of their catechisms contained in their bibles, and proved plainly by the word of God: And that they should be led by degrees to derive their knowledge and faith, more immediately, from the bible, and build their religion upon it.

In all the momentous enquiries and concerns of your religion, whether they be points of faith or practice, run continually to this sacred touch-stone, the word of God, and try every thing by this unerring rule. Frame your belief and your conversation according to this divine model. All builders, whether they labour in wood or stone, take care to have their rule, their square, their plumb-line always at hand to direct their work, and to prove the truth of it. We are also builders of our heavenly hope upon *Christ*, the divine foundation. Let all our belief and profession, all our labours and advances in this sacred work, be regulated by a perpetual recourse to the sacred rule that God has bestowed upon us, that our faith may stand the trial of men in a day of temptation, and that our work may stand the test, and approve itself to God at the last day, in the face of men and angels.

Advice III. "Ever maintain upon your spirits, an awful sense of the evil and guilt of your past sins, of the holiness and justice of the great God, who has threatened to punish sinners with everlasting misery, and then the gospel which discovers pardoning grace will be ever dear to you, and *Jesus* the Son of God, the saviour, will appear so desirable, that you will never part with him."

Be strict in the observation of your own heart and life, and compare it frequently with the perfect law of God : And then you will find such daily and continual returns of guilt upon your conscience, by the evil working of your passions, by the disorders of your spirits, by the frequent commission of sins, and the defects of your best duties, that you will highly value the gospel of *Christ*, the discoveries of divine grace, and the doctrine of reconciliation by the blood of atonement.

Make use of every fresh commission of sin, as a means to awaken your first sense of the great and dreadful evil of it, and of your desert of death and hell, for the violation of God's holy law : This will make you love the doctrine of the priesthood of *Christ* : You will delight in contemplating the glory of his person, who could become an all-sufficient sacrifice to expiate the guilt of your iniquities, and to deliver you from everlasting death.

If we lose this tenderness of conscience, and look upon sin as a little or harmless thing, it is no wonder that the doctrine of salvation by *Jesus Christ* sinks in your esteem, and you will be easily drawn away from the gospel of *Christ*. A common, cold and unaffecting complaint of the infirmities of human nature, and the general notion of the mercy of God, will be ready to make such a stupid conscience easy, and you will be tempted to run back from the gospel of grace to the religion of nature : But if you keep upon your own hearts, a perpetual deep sense of the heinous evil and dreadful demerit of sin, the cavils of infidels against the gospel, will have but little force upon your souls, unless they could shew you a better way to obtain forgiveness, than the atonement of the Son of God.

Advice IV. "Take all occasions to observe the inward corruption of your own nature, the sinful tendencies of your spirits, the evil passions which dwell in you, your natural aversion to strict holiness, and your weakness to fulfil those very duties which the light of nature requires : And at the same time, survey the temptations of a sinful world, which lie all around you, and attend you in every motion, to allure or affright you from God and goodness."

While these things are fresh and lively upon the spirit, you will maintain a high esteem for the gospel of *Christ*, wherein there is so much relief given to the weakness of nature, by the force of divine motives, and by the influences of the holy Spirit. There are rich treasures of grace provided to rectify the disorders of our degenerate nature, and to make us conquerors over the temptations of the world.

Meditate

Meditate often on your own weakness, to practise what conscience dictates, and God and reason command. Think of the perfection of the law of God, that it reaches to your very thoughts, and then think what "a law or evil principle there is in your members, warring against the law of your minds, and ready at every turn to bring you into captivity," *Rom. vii. 23.* Think how weak you are to subdue the sin that dwells in you, and to resist the temptations of a corrupt and degenerate age. Then you will highly esteem the gospel, which furnishes you with the most powerful assistances for this end, and you will find that no religion on earth pretends to any such valuable relief, under this distress and impotence. There is no salvation or remedy for ruined man, comparable to that contained in the blessed gospel.

Then you will value the powerful and heavenly motives, which the gospel proposes to awaken your hatred against sin, to turn your unwilling heart to strict holiness, and to change the corrupt inclinations of your souls. Such glorious motives are derived from the love of God, from the serenity and peace of conscience, from the fears of an eternal hell, and from the hopes of eternal happiness, as no other religion can furnish you with. You will then see how gloriously the gospel animates all the professors of it, to pursue great and exalted degrees of holiness, by the illustrious examples of the saints in all ages, and by the practice of *Jesus* the Son of God at the head of them. *Heb. xii. 1.* "We have a blessed cloud of witnesses gone before us," who assure us from the experiments they have made, that sin may be subdued, that temptation may be resisted, that corrupt nature may be formed into the likeness of God, and that those attainments which seem impossible to man, when left to the mere principles of nature, have been possessed by the disciples of *Christ*, and the believers of his gospel.

And above all remember the promised aids of the holy Spirit, to enlighten our dark minds, to subdue our rebellious wills, to change our unholy natures, and bring them into a conformity to God and his Son. The aids of this Spirit, are promised and given to those who seek them in the right way, by addressing God the Father in the name of his Son *Jesus Christ*.

Advice V. "Think now and then of the wretched and deplorable state of the heathen world, who have no knowledge of the gospel of *Christ*, and remember what you owe to this blessed gospel." Alas, for the heathen nations! In what gross darkness their souls are! How confused and absurd are their notions, even of the true God, and the religion of nature? How ridiculous is their worship? How cruel and barbarous are many of their superstitions? How are they immersed in vice? How abominable are many of their practices, and how profligate are their lives? How few of them have either thought or acted agreeably to the principles of reason, or to the dignity of human nature, or to the last revelation that was given to their fathers, that is, the religion of *Noah*? What a dismal account does *St. Paul* give of them, who was the apostle of the gentiles, and knew them well! They were "filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: They turn the truth of God into a lie, and his glory into the image of corruptible things, beasts and fishes, and worship the creature more than the creator:" *Rom. i. 25—30.* They are enslaved to the devil, "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience, strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, they have their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through

through the ignorance and blindness of their heart, and give themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." *Eph.* ii. 17. iv. 18. I know I have cited several of these scriptures before, but I cannot help the repetition of them on this occasion. Several other such dismal and shameful accounts does the apostle give us of their state and practice. Travellers in modern ages, inform us of the same miserable corruptions, and impious manners of the savages in the wilds of *Africa* and *America*: And perhaps we had been in the same state to this day, if the light of the gospel had never shone on the *british* islands.

It is true, there have been some few countries of the heathen world, a little reformed and polished by the light of nature, and by some commerce with the lands who have enjoyed revelation: But let it be remembered, that far the greatest part of them have lost the traditional remains of the religion of *Noah*, and are over-run with brutish ignorance and impiety: Many of them worship the devil instead of the true God. Let it be observed also, that it is concerning the learned and polite nations of *Greece* and *Rome*, that *St. Paul* brings in such a black catalogue of impious and abominable practices: It is the gospel that has refined the nations where it has been received, it is the gospel that has taken off the brutal character, and made them act like men.

What were the ancient inhabitants of *Great Britain*? Their light of nature and reason lay buried under a heap of wild superstitions, and bloody practices, before the gospel appeared among them: Nor is there any reason to think, that we should have been wiser or better than our ancestors, if we had never heard of *Christ* and the bible.

Our modern deists and apostates from christianity, are too vain and assuming, when they pretend to have spun out of their own understandings, any such schemes as they would give us for the religion of nature, as though they borrowed nothing from the prophets and apostles. Why did not our infidel fathers in the days of *Cassibellan* and *Arviragus*\*, frame as good a system of religion as their infidel sons pretend to do? It is the light of the gospel has opened the understandings of men, and awakened the natural light of reason, to display itself in fairer colours; and yet with a prophane ingratitude, they deride this divine light, and with strange vanity they boast of their pretences to a better religion, than the bible has taught us.

But let us who wear the honourable name of christian, give glory to the grace of our saviour, while we survey and pity the heathen world immersed in wickedness, and in brutal follies. Let us remember and adore the rising sun of righteousness, that has scattered the clouds and thick darkness from amongst us, and has introduced the light of life. And then let us ask ourselves this plain question, "are we willing to part with this bible, and renounce this gospel?"

Advice VI. "Meditate particularly, on the glorious and inestimable advantages that are derived to us from the religion of *Christ*, the blessed change of our state here in this life, the glorious hope in death, and the joyful expectation of future felicity." What an amazing difference between a blind heathen, who knows not the true God, nor loves him, nor performs his duty to him, and an enlightened christian, who knows and loves, who worships and obeys his creator and his God! Between a pagan drenched in brutal vices, in shameful immorality and impiety, and a disciple of *Christ* cleansed from his sins in the blood of *Jesus*, and renewed in the image of his heavenly Father! What a glorious and joyful difference between the inhabitants of *Corinth*, when they were "fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, abusers of themselves by unnatural

\* Two princes of *Britain*, one in the days of *Julius Caesar*, and one in the time of *Domitian*.



unnatural lusts, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, and the same persons when they were washed, when they were justified, when they were sanctified in the name of the Lord *Jesus*, and by the Spirit of our God." 1 *Cor.* vi. 9—11. "What a surprising and blessed change among the other gentiles, when instead of the "works of the flesh, uncleanness, witchcraft, hatred, wrath, envyings, murders, drunkenness, and revellings; they were blessed with the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance?" *Gal.* v. 19—23. If christianity hath not made this change every where conspicuous, it is because men take up with the mere name of a christian, and rest there contented, but neither seek nor desire the power and spirit, and life, of this divine religion in their hearts or their conversation.

But let us pass on from the scenes of life to a dying bed, and meditate the infinite advantages attending that important hour, which are derived from christianity and the gospel. Behold a heathen, whose course of life hath been made up of folly and guilt, now lying down in the dust, groaning and expiring, as a brute groans and expires, stupid and thoughtless of immortality. See another perhaps, deceiving himself with vain dreams and fables, of a sensual and luxurious paradise in some invisible regions: Think of these wretched creatures, laden with the guilt of all their past sins, entering into an unknown eternity, without *Christ*, without God, and without any just and solid hope.

Or come to the bed-side of a modern infidel, in his last moments, who in his days of health, apostatized from the faith of *Christ*, and renounced and derided the gospel: Perhaps, you will find him like a hardened sinner, obstinately deaf to all thoughts of God and religion, to all the monitions of his friends, and the remonstrances of his own conscience, unable to bear the reflexions of his mind, and therefore subduing them all, resolved to plunge himself headlong into the abyss of futurity, and take an immense leap from one world to the other in the dark. Another of the same tribe, perhaps, with some difficulty has persuaded himself, that his sins have not been many nor great, because he has neither been guilty of theft, murder, or adultery; and therefore with much ado he supports his spirits by a philosophic courage, and a laboured hope, that the infinite mercy of God will forgive his follies, though he has abandoned all the revelations of mercy, and the promises of pardoning grace. Behold a third, whose awakened conscience cries too loud for him not to hear it, and scourges his soul with cutting reproaches for his past crimes, while he lies on the edge of life, within the view of the judgment-seat of God: Now the little cavils against the bible, that passed for arguments in his gay and healthy hours, appear to have no force in them: Those impious jests which he threw out wantonly against the gospel, afford him not the least glimpse of merriment, but pierce his heart with inward and sharp remorse: All his feeble and false pretences to sincerity, which once gave him a little thin shelter, now vanish, nor will make so much as the shadow of a screen from the dreadful presages of approaching vengeance: He groans, he dies, under the keenest anguish of despair, and leaves behind him a terrible warning to succeeding apostates.

But let us leave these dark scenes of infidelity and terror, and approach the dying bed of a christian, whose religion has been the business of his heart and life; see the holy man lying chearful under the pains of dying nature, rejoicing in the hope of the pardon of sin, and a reconciled God, keeping fast his hold of the promises of mercy, and of *Jesus* the saviour, by repeated exercises of faith and love, meeting the last enemy death, with a serene joy in his countenance, and with triumph

in his soul, quitting flesh and blood, and all the scenes of mortality with a sacred delight, and entering into a new world of perfect holiness and perfect peace, to dwell for ever with his God and his saviour.

Upon such a comparison of things, such a survey and prospect as this, where is the man that would not say, "Let me die the death of a christian, and my last end be like his?"

Come, let us dwell a little on the glorious discoveries of the heavenly world, which the gospel has made, till our desires are warmed, and our zeal kindled to pursue and enjoy these sacred and sublime felicities, which infinitely transcend all the fancies of a heathen paradise, and rise high above our own present ideas.

It is the happiness provided for saints in the future state, to dwell with God; to see, know and converse with him, even with that glorious infinite Spirit who made them; to receive everlasting impressions of his love, and to love him again with most intense delight and satisfaction of soul; to be for ever present with *Jesus* the Son of God, "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person;" *Heb.* i. 3. to survey all his wonderful glories, and to learn the amazing transactions of his grace, his early counsels, his condescending labour and sufferings for the salvation of man; to be swallowed up in holy pleasure in the midst of those transporting wonders; to dwell in the midst of angels and archangels, blessed spirits of high rank and dignity, creatures of penetrating intellectual powers, and of un sullied purity; to converse with fellow spirits, freed from all the infirmities of fleshly nature; and to maintain a holy intercourse of knowledge upon all things divine and human, upon every theme that is worthy of the notice of a blessed and immortal spirit.

This is part of the business of that heaven which separate souls enjoy: But the resurrection of the body makes a large addition to these scenes of felicity, when the soul shall be again furnished with corporeal powers, and shall be entertained with a rich variety of objects suited to those powers, all conspiring toward the more complete satisfaction of the indwelling spirit. There our whole nature shall take in such objects "as eye has not seen, as ear has not heard, nor the heart of man conceived;" *1 Cor.* ii. 9. and all with an intense relish of sacred pleasure. And above and beyond all this, the eternal duration of this holy and happy state, spreads a new satisfaction through all the inhabitants of that happy world: This completes our heaven indeed, when we shall feel ourselves in the midst of the possession of those joys which we are firmly assured shall have no interruption, no end.

Let us meditate on such a heaven as this is, which our Lord *Jesus Christ* proposes to all his disciples. There is no such recompence of virtue, no such refined and noble delights to be found among all the fables of the heathen poets and priests, or the dark reasonings of heathen philosophers. They are but very poor, imperfect and foolish stories, that the best of those philosophers tell us, concerning the happiness of souls in the future state: Mean and low pleasures some of them have proposed for virtuous minds in the other world: Others of them tell you, that these delights shall have an end by an universal revolution of all things, and the souls of the blessed coming to act their parts again, in this world, after a long distance of years: And the best of these reasoners, have sometimes owned themselves at a loss, whether there, be any state of futurity, or no; whether, there be any reward for the righteous beyond the grave. It is "the appearing of our saviour *Jesus Christ*, that has not only, discovered to us the eternal purposes of divine love, and the grace which was given us in *Christ Jesus*, before the world began, but it is he also, who has

has abolished death, and has brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel." And it is in the virtue of these things, that the apostle *Paul*, rejoices in his present sufferings, and is not ashamed of them. *2 Tim. i. 9—12.* "For I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded, he is able to keep, that which I have committed to him, against that day."

If we would stand fast in the faith of *Christ*, let us imitate this blessed man: Let us think much, and often, of the final prize of glory: Let this incorruptible crown be kept ever in our eye, and it will have a sweet and powerful influence upon us, to keep close to the rules of the sacred contest, in order to attain the crown and prize. The glories promised in the gospel to overcomers, will sweetly constrain us, to run this holy race, and to fight the good fight of faith, till we obtain the crown.

Advice VII. "As God hath set forth the mediation of *Christ*, and the influences of the Spirit, for the life of our souls in his gospel, so let us daily live upon *Christ*, and his Spirit, by holy dependence and resignation of soul." Let your trust in him, be constant and explicit: Never address the great God in worship, without a direct eye to the mediator. Live upon his atoning sacrifice, and his powerful intercession under a continual sense of your sins and defects: Let the name of *Christ* be ever dear to your thoughts, and rest on it, as the only foundation of your hope of acceptance: Apply yourselves constantly to seek the influences of the good Spirit, under a sense of your own weakness and insufficiency.

I have been often thinking, that the great neglect of these two doctrines and blessings, *viz.* the proper atonement of *Christ*, and the promised assistances of the Spirit, among some of those who profess to believe the gospel, has been one considerable occasion of the growth of deism among us. For when christians themselves, shall make these peculiar privileges, and chief glories of our revealed religion needless, a sceptical person is ready to fancy, that the light of nature is sufficient to teach us all the rest, and then, what need is there of revelation?

Remember the sacred names, into which you are baptized: Surely the great and blessed offices of the Son and Spirit, are designed to run through our holy religion in the practical parts of it, to the end of the world. Ever follow this method of access to God the Father, by the mediation, death and intercession of his Son, and though the aids of the blessed Spirit. Let this form of religion be wrought into the very temper of your spirits, in a habitual manner, till you feel your soul live by the faith of the Son of God, and the grace of the holy Spirit, as you feel and find the animal life of your body preserved by the constant repeated appetites of hunger and thirst, and the satisfaction of them, by proper meat and drink. *St. Paul* was in no danger of departing from the doctrine of the gospel, while he could speak from his own inward experience, and say, "the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who has loved me, and given himself for me," *Gal. ii. 20.* And this naturally leads me to the next advice.

Advice VIII. "Though, you have attained never so clear an evidence of the truth of christianity by reason and argument, yet, never rest satisfied without the power and pleasure of religion wrought deep in your hearts." Never content yourselves, with the mere outward forms of a christian, and a cold round of duties, according to the dictates of the gospel: Such a circle of formal practices, even of the best religion, will be but a poor drudgery, and a heavy task, which you will be ready to relinquish in a hour of temptation, if the power, the love, and delight of this religion, be not rooted in your souls. This is what the apostle means, *Eph. iii. 13—19.* when he intreats the *epheians*, "not to faint at the tribulations which attend the gos-

pel, and therefore, he prays for them thus, *viz.* that God would grant according to the riches of his glory, that ye be strengthened with might by the Spirit, in the inner man, that *Christ* may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be 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, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

When you find your faith in *Christ*, as your high-priest, giving a glorious relief to your soul, under a sense of guilt and imperfections; when you feel the doctrines of his grace, speaking peace to your conscience, and pardon through the blood of the Son of God; when you experience a divine and universal change, wrought in the very temper of your spirit, by the influence of the precepts and promises of the bible; when you find such a sacred love to God and men, as the gospel recommends, wrought in your hearts by this gospel; when your perverse appetites and sinful passions are mortified by the power of this religion, and your souls are made holy and heavenly, and fit for converse with God, you will then have an inward, settled and comfortable evidence within your selves, that this is a divine religion indeed. *1 John v. 10.* "He that believes has the witness in himself:" And you will not easily be turned aside, from the belief and profession of this gospel, for you have felt it to be the power of God for the salvation of your souls.

Advice IX. "When you are satisfied of the truth of christianity, upon just and reasonable grounds, make it your constant prayer to God the Father of spirits, to establish you in this faith, and to preserve you from every temptation to infidelity." As we must invoke the divine assistance, to lead us into all truth, in our first enquiries in religion, so we must be constant addressers at the throne of grace, that the same divine Spirit, the enlightener and instructor may dwell with us, to establish our souls in the truth; and especially, in such a day of temptation as this is, we have need to be more constant and importunate in our petitions to heaven on this account. It is the Spirit of God that enlightens us in the knowledge of the gospel, and he seals our souls unto the day of redemption. He continues the communications of his own light to those that seek it. He is promised to abide with the disciples of *Christ* for ever, and to dwell in them as a spring of light and holiness. If we begin to grow self-sufficient, we begin to depart from the gospel, and we lay ourselves open to the power of every temptation. *Solomon*, the wisest of men, assures us, "he that trusts in his own heart, is a fool," *Prov. xxviii. 26.* And the man that presumes upon his own understanding, or his own strength, is very near to apostasy. *Peter* was a terrible instance of this folly: He boasted of his courage, above the rest of the disciples, and he was the only man that denied his Lord.

Advice X. "When you are once established, upon just grounds, in the faith of the gospel, do not rashly expose yourselves to temptation." Do not run into free conversation with infidels and apostates, without a plain call of providence. A needless indulgence of dispute, and fondness of controversy, upon this subject with subtil men, who lie in wait to deceive, has too often exposed young christians, and shaken their faith. Though there be various and abundant proof of the truth of the gospel, and it may be well defended upon the foot of right reason, yet every one is not fit to enter into these debates with men of wit and learning, who are engaged on the side of infidelity. Common plain christians should rather abstain from such sort of conferences, as will fill their minds with cavils against the scripture, and objections against the gospel. You know not what unhappy impressions a prophane jest, or a shrewd cavil may make upon your spirits: And as the devil is an enemy to the doctrine

trine and kingdom of *Christ*, so we have just reason to believe, that he is ever ready to assist the infidel party. Where the gospel is published with sufficient evidence, St. *Paul* tells us, that it "is the god of this world, that blinds the minds of those that believe not," 2 *Cor.* iv. 4. And he is ever ready to help them raise a dust, and to blind others.

A witty scoff thrown out against the truth, may pierce the mind deeper, and stick longer than a solid argument to support the truth. How well soever you fancy yourself settled in the principles of your holy religion, yet perhaps, you may hear some new subtil objections, or some witty turn upon the sacred history of the bible, that may weaken your belief, when you have not an answer ready at hand, to ward off the force of it. Some have been taken and ruined in our age by these snares of the devil, who have thought themselves as safe as you.

If the providence of God plainly call you into an infected house, and evident duty require you to venture your life in the midst of the pestilence, you may humbly hope for divine preservation and security: But if you venture without a call, you have reason to dread the event. A sincere and humble christian, may be led by the course of his duty into such dangerous company, and he may hope for the assistance of the Spirit, and the grace of God, to fill his mouth with arguments, and enable him to defend his faith, with holy skill and courage: But if he mingle himself in such sort of conversation at every turn, without any evident call of providence, and out of a mere idle curiosity of spirit, or from a presumption of the strength of his own faith or arguments, he has but little reason to hope for divine protection from these dangerous and fatal snares.

Advice XI. "When you see just reason to believe the gospel of *Christ*, and have your faith confirmed in it by solid evidence, let not every objection and cavil, which you cannot answer, shake your steadfastness, and cast you into doubts again." This is the common practice of infidels, whereby they deceive themselves, and it has been part of their craft, in all ages, in order to deceive others; they turn away their eyes from the bright evidence which is given to the gospel, and wink at the glorious lights that surround it, while they dwell on some little darkneses that attend it. They call off the eyes of others from the rational and convincing evidence, in order to fix them upon some of these obscurities and difficult passages in scripture, which are not so easy to be explained or accounted for, by reason of our great distance from the times, when those affairs were transacted, and those parts of scripture were written. And it is by these subtil methods, that they obtain their chief success, and deceive unwary and unstable souls. It is your safest way therefore, to keep your minds intent upon the plain force of argument, drawn from miracles and prophecies, and gifts of the Spirit, as well as from the inward excellencies of christianity, whereby it is sufficiently proved to be a divine religion; and let not any little cavils, which are raised against particular passages in the bible, intangle your thoughts, or shake your faith, which is built upon such firm and rational foundations. While reason itself stands on the side of christianity, let not a few puzzling questions make you forge the force of that reason, which establishes the gospel. t

The venerable and pious doctor *Owen* spake excellently well on this point, at the end of his little treatise on the "doctrine of the trinity." "It is a rule among philosophers, that if a man, on just grounds and reasons, had embraced any opinion or persuasion, he is not to desert it, merely, because he cannot answer every objection against it. For if the objections, wherewith we may be entangled, be not of the same weight and importance with the reasons on which we embraced any opinion,

it is a madness to forego it on the account thereof. And much more must this hold amongst the common sort of christians, in things spiritual and divine. If they will let go and part with their faith in any truth, because they are not able to answer distinctly, some objections that may be made against it, they may quickly find themselves disputed into atheism."

When we have taken a just survey of the arguments, whereby the religion of *Christ* is supported, when we have seen and felt the united and convincing force of them, let us rest established in our faith: It is not an advisable thing for private christians, out of a curious or wanton humour, to hearken after the cavils of infidelity, no more than to frequent such company. It is unsafe for them to attend to the quarrels, which the men of profane wit have raised against the word of God: Nor should they do it, unless divine providence calls them to it as part of their duty, and gives them time and leisure, to enter a-new, into the controversy, to lay open the objections, and to search out sufficient answers to them. Where any of these objections hang about the mind of a humble christian, let him speedily propose his scruples to a skilful minister, or a learned friend, that he may get rid of them as soon as possible, by clear and just solution of the difficulty that perplexes them.

Avoid the first workings of apostasy in the bottom of your heart: "Take heed, says the apostle to the converted *hebrews*, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God, and lest you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin," *Heb.* iii. 12, 13. While you give ear to the little criticisms and sophistries of the adversary, remember you are upon slippery ground: Look well to your feet, lest you are betrayed on a sudden, and carried away, into frightful lengths of doubt and darkness, for want of a helping hand near you.

It is true, the gospel of *Christ* has strong and immovable foundations richly sufficient for the support of it; there are abundant vindications of it published in the world, against all the assaults of wit and reasoning. But a sly and perplexing sophism may be cast into the mind and seize the soul, in an unguarded hour, when you may not have an answer ready at hand, and the poison may penetrate too far, and corrupt the mind before the antidote is found and applied.

Advice XII. "Maintain a solemnity of spirit, and a serious temper of mind in all your enquiries and discourses, on a theme of such everlasting importance." While our modern deists affect to shew themselves men of wit, and make a jest serve for an argument, they do not appear to be in good earnest, enquiring the way to please God, and save their own souls. God, and souls, and eternity, are no trivial ideas. It is no ludicrous matter to treat or discourse of them. Such jesters have no reason to hope for divine irradiations.

If you have occasion to speak of the obscure and difficult parts of scripture, do it not in a trifling humour, or with a licentious levity of spirit, nor indulge your lips to mix them with sneer and merriment. It is dangerous to jest with weapons that will wound the soul. When christians give themselves a loose, and venture at this rate upon the border of profaneness, they may be left of God, and be righteously given up to a spirit of unbelief. There are those, who once thought themselves believers in *Christ*, but by sporting, on the borders of this precipice, with wanton and unwary feet, they have found themselves carried down strangely into the deeps of apostasy: They have at last learned roundly to renounce *Christ*, whom they worshipped and ridicule the gospel, which they once revered; they have been plunged into vices, which they once abhorred; they have let go the name of *Christ*, and God has let them go out of his holy keeping, till at last they have become perfect heathens in every

every sense, without virtue or truth, without hope and without God in the world. The almighty governor of the world has made some tremendous monuments of justice and vengeance; his warning-pieces demand our awful notice.

Advice XIII. "Think often how much safer you are in the profession and practice of christianity, than if you should relinquish the gospel, and change it for mere natural religion." And the reason is plain, for the doctrine of *Christ* contains every thing in it which natural religion pretends to discover. All that is necessary by the light of nature, for us to believe and practise, both with regard to God and man, is included in the holy bible.

Therefore if the deist be in the right, the christian is certainly safe, for he worships the one true God, and fulfils his duty toward his neighbour; and there are none who pretend that God will damn or destroy men for entertaining a few other principles, which had so much evidence of coming from heaven to supply what was deficient in the light of nature, even if they should not at last be found to be true, since they are perfectly consistent with all our duty to God and man. But on the other hand, if the religion of *Christ* be divine, then the infidels, especially in *Great-Britain*, or in *London*, who have such glorious advantages for knowledge, can hardly excuse themselves, or hope for acceptance: For they deny those very parts of christianity, which are necessary to supply the defects of the light of nature. They deny the atonement of *Christ*, and the pardon of sin through the virtue of his atonement; they deny *Jesus* to be the great prophet, and the saviour of mankind; whereas he himself has told us by commission from the Father, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." *John* viii. 24. They deny the special and necessary doctrines of that gospel, which was commanded to be preached to the world, with this threatening, "He that believeth not, shall be damned," *Mark* xvi. 16.

Advice XIV. "Consider, seriously, the dismal state of apostates who depart from the gospel of *Christ*, and renounce their faith in *Jesus*, the Saviour." Consider the threatenings, the dreadful threatenings of the word of God, pronounced against apostasy. Let such solemn words as those, with which the apostle warms the christian *hebrews*, dwell ever upon your mind in all the sacred influence and divine terror of them. *Heb.* ii. 2—4. "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the holy Ghost, according to his own will?" *Heb.* vi. 4—6. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucifie to themselves the Son of God a fresh, and put him to an open shame." *Heb.* x. 26—30. "If we sin wilfully, that is, renounce the gospel of *Christ*, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and of fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised *Moses* law, died without mercy.—Of how much sorer punishment, shall he be thought worthy, who hath troden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace?—Vengeance is mine, I will recompense, saith the Lord. It had been better for them, as *St. Peter* expresses

ses it, not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them," 2 *Pet.* ii. 21.

"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon ungodly sinners," *Jude* verses 14, 15. and to accomplish the terrors written against the fearful and the unbelieving, as well as, the abominable and the murderers, and all liars; *Rev.* xxi. 8. against those who are afraid to profess his gospel, and those who deny the truth of it; against those who sin against the truth, and turn it into a lie; against those who resist the bright evidence of christianity, and by "refusing to believe the record which God has given of his Son, make him a liar also." 1 *John* v. 10. "Behold he comes in the clouds, and in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord *Jesus Christ*; and they shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2 *Theff.* i. 8, 9. The judge is at the door, he is ready to be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, to fulfil the curses, written in his book, against those who have renounced his doctrine, and rejected his salvation. How will the apostates from christianity be able to lift up their heads in that day, or endure the sight of his majesty? What will you say, when ye shall see that illustrious and divine person arrayed in the robes of power and judgment, and attended with ten thousand flaming ministers of justice, whose laws ye have refused to obey, and whose grace ye have disdain'd to receive? What will ye say for yourselves, who have known and rejected him, who have abandoned his grace and his laws together, after ye had once seen reason to receive them? What will they do in that day, who have seen and yet hated the Lord of glory? What an extasy of surprize and terror will seize your spirits, when ye shall behold him enthroned and frowning as a provoked ruler of the world, whom ye once derided as a poor wild enthusiast, and made him the subject of your mirth and mockery, or ye called him a vile impostor, and treated him with impious indignities? What do ye think will become of you, if the day should come, when the Lamb of God shall appear as "the lion of the tribe of *Judah*, and you shall be forced to call to the rocks and mountains to fall upon you, and cover you from this wrath?" *Rev.* vi. 16, 17. What skreen, do ye think, can defend you from his avenging power? Or what mercy can ye expect from his hands, when you practis'd this iniquity in opposition to such light and evidence, as were diffused round about you in *Great Britain*?

Perhaps you may laugh at the solemnity of this representation, and despise these scenes of terror as a painted fire; but methinks, if there be but a possibility that these things should be true, it would be a point of wisdom to provide against the dangers of such a dreadful hour: One would think it should awaken you, at least, to be exceeding serious, sincere and diligent in surveying all the evidences of the gospel, before you dare reject such a Saviour, and expose yourselves to his indignation without hope. And where there are so many fair appearances of just and solid reasoning, as there are on the side of christianity, methinks you should not dare to give your lips a loose in profane ridicule and scorn: Nor should you suffer some little darkneses and difficulties in the books of the new testament, to prevail against all the brighter discoveries of truth and argument, which support the religion of *Christ*.

If you have any love to your souls, let me intreat you to consider, that however you may be disgusted at some things, contained in the records of our holy religion, yet you can never prove, that the religion itself is false, in the main principles of it, as represented in those records: And remember this, that when your spirits are gone into the invisible world, if there you should find that *Jesus*, whom ye once derided,



to be Lord and judge of all, there is no more sacrifice for sin, no rectification of your obstinate errors, no repentance, no pardon there; but you must perish under his just indignation, and your souls are lost for ever.

But I turn my discourse to the disciples of the blessed *Jesus*, who believe in his name, and obey his gospel.

Happy persons are you indeed, and special favourites of heaven, if you have not only learned the great truths of christianity, and furnished your heads with them, but have felt your hearts powerfully impressed with them betimes, and have this glorious salvation begun within you. You have been awakened out of your mortal slumbers, and being convinced of your sinful state, and your danger of eternal death; you have seen the necessity of the pardoning grace of God, and an universal change in your own natures, in order to prepare you for eternal felicity; you have learned your own utter insufficiency to make satisfaction to divine justice for your own sins, and your inability to sanctify your own hearts, and to change them into holiness; therefore you have fled for refuge, to the hope that is set before you, and have found righteousness and grace in *Christ Jesus*. You have found the blood of atonement, and perfect righteousness in him, to answer for your guilt, and to justify you in the sight of God, and the power of divine grace to work repentance in your hearts, to create your souls a-new, and form you to a divine temper: You have felt the sweet and constraining influence of the love of a dying saviour, and found your hearts melted into holy and divine affections, and impressed with his sacred image: You are become his sincere and devoted servants, zealous for his honour here on earth, and in some measure, prepared for his enjoyment in heaven: Eternal life is begun within you, and you have a witness in yourselves that the gospel is true, even the record which God has given of his Son, *viz.* that eternal life is to be found in *Christ*, for you have found it in him, 1 *John* v. 10. "He that believes, has the witness in himself:" and I trust the grace of God, who has wrought this glorious change in your natures, and has begun this divine salvation within you, will carry it on, and fulfil it to the day of the Lord.

You have entered in this sacred contest, and are daily striving for the mastery against the world, the flesh and the devil; you have learned the rules that belong to this holy strife, and while you thus go on to strive lawfully, you may rejoice in hope and assurance of being crowned: You have been early acquainted with the laws of the christian race, and you have seen the heavenly prize set before you in such a light, as that you are allured to wish and to run for it, as your highest hope and blessedness: You have set your faces toward heaven in the christian path, and have travelled on thus far in the way of faith, repentance and holiness: Hold on your way, maintain your ground; the crown is not far off, the end of all things is at hand; *Jesus* the Saviour, the judge, and the rewarder is at the door; see "that no man take your crown." *Rev.* iii. 11.



THE  
H A R M O N Y  
Of all the  
R E L I G I O N S  
Which God ever prescribed:

CONTAINING

A brief SURVEY of the several public DISPENSATIONS  
of GOD toward man, or his appointment of different forms  
of RELIGION in successive ages.

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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**R**ELIGION, in the most general sense of the word, signifies that veneration or reverential regard, which man pays to God, his maker. This veneration is diversified, according to the various perfections of the divine nature discovered to us, or the various relations in which we stand to God.

All this is internal religion, so far as it is found in the heart; but, it is also to be expressed outwardly in the life, by the tongue, or the several powers of action, according to the daily occasions which are given us in the course of providence.

Religion in the heart includes in it, all that adoration we pay to God, because of his transcendent majesty, our acknowledgement of all homage and obedience due to him, as our sovereign, our fear, our love, our imitation, our trust or dependence and submission, &c. according as we conceive of him, as the first and best of beings, as wise and powerful, as holy, just and merciful, as our rightful owner, governor and judge.

The outward expressions of these inward sentiments of the mind, whether in voice, gesture or action, are to be regulated by the dictates of nature or reason, so far as that reaches; as for instance, nature seems to direct the lifting up of the hands and the eyes to God, in our solemn addresses to him, bowing the knee, or standing, or prostration in prayer to God, and laying hands on the head of another, when a blessing is pronounced on him, or implored for him; the voice of joy and singing is directed by the light of nature, in speaking the praises of God, or in our holy rejoicing before him; groaning and sighing, seems to be the language of nature also in our complaints to God; laying the hand upon the heart, denotes an appeal to God concerning our sincerity, &c.

These inward and reverential sentiments of the mind, may be also expressed by, or attended with a variety of other rites and forms, which God hath prescribed by revelation, in the several ages of his church: and God, only, has a right to prescribe them; for he only knows in what manner he will, or he ought to be honoured or worshipped. Sometimes he has appointed abstinence from particular food, sometimes putting off the shoes from the feet, sometimes offering sacrifice to God by fire, sometimes washing or sprinkling with water or blood, sometimes eating or drinking as a holy festival, &c.

I add further, also, religion includes in it all our personal duties towards ourselves, and our social duties towards our fellow-creatures, as well as our duties of piety towards God, so far as they are performed from a principle of veneration, obedience and love to our creator: For this principle turns the common actions of life into religious actions, which otherwise would be esteemed, but merely moral or virtuous, Scripture favours this representation. The apostle *James* seems to suppose it thus

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in the first chapter, last verse; "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." These moral actions done from a supreme regard to God, that is, before his sight, and as under his authority and approbation, render them truly religious.

When man was first created, and in his state of innocence, he was bound to fulfil all his duties towards God and man in perfection; and he had power to perform them; and these performances were his justifying righteousness in the sight of God, according to the law of nature and innocence.

In his fallen or sinful state, he is still bound by the light of nature and reason, to pay the same duties towards God and man; and that in a perfect manner too, for the law of God is eternal and relaxes not it's demands; and though man is continually failing in his obedience, either in thought, word, or deed, yet that conscience, within him, which teaches him the law, *Rom. ii. 14, 15.* accuses him when he breaks it.

The religion of a fallen creature, according to the light of nature, requires also some additions of duty more than a state of innocence, *viz.* confession of our faults, sincere repentance of every sin, and addresses to God for mercy, with hope in his forgiving grace, together with a return to diligence in new obedience after every fall or transgression, and a constant zeal to subdue and mortify all sinful inclinations and perseverance therein till death. This runs through every dispensation of grace.

And since none of these words are so perfect in the best of men, as to fulfil the demands of the law of God, or to justify the man before God, therefore after all, if fallen man be ever justified, that is, pardoned and accepted of God, it must be by his trusting or depending upon divine grace, in whatsoever way it is or shall be manifested. This is the only thing, beside what I mentioned before, that remains for him to do in order to his acceptance.

Observe here, I do not say, that this is sufficient to procure certain pardon, or to obtain the justification of a sinner; for natural reason cannot assure us that an offended God will forgive all our past sins, upon this practice. But this I may boldly affirm, that reason directs to this practice, as the only way wherein we can reasonably hope for the favour of God, and acceptance before him.

And, as this is the plain obvious doctrine which the light of reason teaches, so this was practised, not only by *Abraham* and *David*, but by all the good men of old, "in every nation, who wrought righteousness, and were accepted of God." *Acts x. 35.* This is *St. Paul's* doctrine of justification by faith, or trust in the grace of God without the works of the law, which he insists upon in his epistles to *Rome* and *Galatia*, though, it has most unhappily been perplexed and obscured by noisy controversies. In these papers, among other things, I have endeavoured to scatter those clouds, and set this divine truth in a most natural and easy light.

Since the blessed God saw the light of nature after the fall, insufficient to give the sinful creature any solid assurance of pardon and acceptance, he condescended to make some special revelations of his mercy and his will, to poor perishing mankind; and this he has done in several ages of the world, and in particular nations. Therein he has been pleased to reveal some further doctrines for men to believe, and some further duties for them to practise, which are not written in the book of nature: And they are such as these, *viz.* That God is ready to forgive all those sinners who return to him by sincere repentance, and who trust in his mercy, according to the different discoveries of it: That he will assist humble creatures in their return to God, and in their hearty endeavours to practise their duty: That he has appointed

a mediator, by whom sinners are to be restored to his favour: That this mediator is the Son of God: That he was to be born of a woman, to spring from the house of *Abraham*, and the family of *David*: That he should be the great peace-maker between God and man, to reconcile sinners to God, and to restore them to the image of his holiness; that to this end he should not only fulfil the law of God, but also endure many sufferings, and die for sinners, as an atoning sacrifice, in order to free them from guilt, and deliver them from deserved destruction.

Again, he has made known to men also, that this *Jesus Christ* the mediator is raised from the dead, is ascended to heaven, and there governs all things, till he shall return to judge the world; and that the dead shall be raised by him, to receive their final sentence from him, either a sentence of eternal misery, or everlasting happiness.

It is amongst these discoveries of grace and duty, that we must rank the several sacrifices, which God has appointed men to offer, and that not only of the flesh of sheep, and bulls, and goats, but also of corn and wine, &c. Sometimes he appointed particular places, wherein he would have worship paid to him, and sometimes particular seasons set apart for public worship: Amongst these also, he ordained various ceremonies of washing and sprinkling persons and things, to denote purification from sinful defilements, and finally that we must worship or honour God in his latest and best institution, by washing or baptizing with water, by eating bread and drinking wine, according to his special directions and appointments.

The belief of these truths, and the practice of these duties, when or wheresoever they were revealed and required, became a proper part of the religion of men in those places, and in that time: For their inward veneration to God, was to be expressed by these outward transactions in obedience to him. The chief design of these things in the various ages and places, was but to teach mankind, by degrees, in a way of emblem or figure, that God is reconciling a sinful world to himself, that he is recovering men from the sin and misery of their fall, by the mediation of *Jesus Christ*, his Son, and by the influences of his grace, or his blessed Spirit, and to engage them to comply with, and to pursue this reconciliation and recovery.

This general design of God to recover sinners, as manifested in these divine revelations, may be called the covenant of grace proposed to men. It was not published all at once, in its various and complete glory and beauty, but in many successive ages, and that to particular persons, and by them to the rest of men, so far as the great God appointed; viz. by *Adam* to his posterity, by *Noah* to his posterity, by *Abraham* to his family, by *Moses* and the prophets to the *Jews*, and by *Christ* and his apostles both to the *Jews* and gentiles. These transactions of God with men, and his appointments manifested to them, are usually distinguished into the several corresponding dispensations, which is the substance of the discourses in this book, and I think they are each of them, distinguished from the other, by one or more special sign or emblem of grace or duty.

As the discovery of this gospel, or covenant of grace, was not made all at once, but by slow degrees, to answer some evident, and some unsearchable purposes of God, so it was four thousand years, before it was fully revealed by the blessed apostles of *Christ*, and that under several dispensations of increasing light. Since the days of the apostles there has been no new dispensation, nor any new divine religion.

Every former dispensation of the gospel, was sufficient to save all those to whom it was made or proposed; and it was that very religion by which all, who were under it, were actually bound to seek their salvation, till the next dispensation was revealed to them,

them. This is so evident that it needs no argument for the proof of it.

And yet we must add also, that almost every following dispensation of the covenant of grace does, in some measure, help to explain the scriptural account of those which went before. As for instance, the dispensation of *Abraham* added some light to the patriarchal darkness: The dispensation of *Christ* casts numerous rays of illumination on the types and shadows of judaism, and *St. Paul*, in his epistles, has taught us to understand many of them, by pointing to those graces and blessings of the *Messiah* and the gospel, which were signified by them.

Nor can we have a complete view of this covenant of grace, as it is held forth in scripture, if we confine our thoughts merely to the short representation of the sacred writers, in their first discoveries of each dispensation. It is only a full survey of all the successive editions of this covenant, which can give us the most comprehensive, and the justest idea of it, in any one edition, or under any one dispensation. Each of them casts a signal and sensible light upon the other, and whatsoever was truly glorious in the whole of them, is, as it were, summed up and united in the last dispensation, that is, christianity, which answers the predictions and emblems of former ages, and reveals and unfolds many things, that seemed then to be veiled in darkness.

It should be remembered here, this short scheme of the dispensations of God, or the various religions of men, does not pretend to argue or debate much on any point, nor to trace out, and answer the objections that might be raised against these several religions; that would have required a large volume; these arguments are therefore to be sought in other writings. This is only a compendious arrangement of the discoveries of the grace of God and the duty of man, in such an order as God has prescribed them, and such as may best shew their consistence, their reasonableness and equity; and this may go a great way towards the evidence and proof of these representations, without long argument and dispute; for there is nothing but truth, which, in every part and view of it, is constantly consistent with itself, whether we consider it as contained in scripture or represented by right reason.



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THE  
H A R M O N Y  
O F

All the RELIGIONS which God ever prescribed to MEN,  
and all his DISPENSATIONS towards them.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

I. **T**HE public dispensations of God towards men, are those wise and holy constitutions of his will and government, revealed or some way manifested to them, in the several successive periods or ages of the world, wherein are contained the duties which he expects from men, and the blessings which he promises, or encourages them to expect from him, here or hereafter; together with the sins which he forbids, and the punishments which he threatens to inflict on such sinners: Or, the dispensations of God may be described more briefly, as the appointed moral rules of God's dealing with mankind, considered as reasonable creatures, and as accountable to him for their behaviour, both in this world and in that which is come. Each of these dispensations of God, may be represented as different religions, or, at least, as different forms of religion, appointed for men in the several successive ages of the world.

II. Hence it comes pass, that in describing the several religions of men, or the public dispensations of God, we do not so much enter into his eternal designs, or the secret and inward transactions of his grace, either with, or concerning the children of men, in order to bring them into his covenant of grace; nor do we search into his early and divine transactions with *Christ Jesus*, his Son, in the covenant of redemption, in order to the salvation of men: But it is sufficient, here, to set forth the outward discoveries of God's mind and will to men, in his public government of the universe, or those several constitutions by which he will either justify and reward, or condemn and punish mankind, as he is their supreme Lord and judge. These are the things most properly signified by his dispensations towards men, and which I propose as my present theme.

III. We must here take notice, in the first place, that natural religion, or that religion which rises from the nature of God and men, and from their relations to God and one-another, runs through every one of these dispensations; whether in a  
state

state of innocency, or after the fall. And wheresoever divine revelation or the scripture hath not given man positive, express and particular notice of his duty, there the light of nature or reason must be supposed to come in both before and after the fall of man, to clear up what is doubtful, and to supply what is wanting; even as revelation is to supply us, where the light of reason is defective or dubious.

Therefore, though our natural duties to God, *viz.* fear and love, trust and obedience, prayer and praise, together with the duties of justice, truth and love to our neighbour, must be supposed to belong to every dispensation; yet there was no necessity of repeating them continually under every dispensation; since the law and light of nature plainly dictate and require them; I desire this may be always kept in view.

IV. And under every dispensation, whether in innocency, or since the fall, there has been some further revelation of the mind, and will of God to men; some new doctrine or duty, precept or prohibition given for men to believe or obey, beside or beyond the mere dictates of the light of reason, or mere natural religion; and these are called positive laws or commands, as the others are called natural or moral.

Among these I am ready to suppose, the observation of the sabbath, that is, some appointed day for rest from labour, and for public worship, holds a considerable place; for it seems to me to have been instituted in paradise, during the state of man's innocency. *Gen. ii. 3.* and I think it has run through all the dispensations of God to man, though not with equal evidence.

And perhaps this appointment may have always carried in it some type or figurative promise of a state of rest and glorious worship, after all the labours of our state of trial are finished.

V. In each of these constitutions or dispensations, there is also generally some outward visible emblem appointed of God, to be a sign, seal or pledge of these blessings to be bestowed on man, by God himself; and there is some visible ceremony, some outward action or abstinence enjoined on men, as a seal or pledge of their acceptance of, and compliance with this constitution of God.

VI. These two things have been often joined in one and the same emblem, when it is considered on one side as appointed by God, and on the other as to be performed by man. Such a double use had all the sacrifices of atonement in the dispensations of grace before *Christ*. The divine appointment of them sufficiently denotes the mercy of God, and the actual performance of them, testifies that those men accepted of God's covenant, and consented to it, that is, in a way of outward profession.

Now let us proceed to describe the several particular dispensations of God and the religions which have been prescribed to men.

## C H A P T E R I.

*The dispensation of innocency, or, the religion of Adam at first.*

I. **A**S soon as God had created man upon the earth, he placed him under the first dispensation, that is, that of innocency; wherein *Adam*, considered as the father and common head of mankind, being formed in the image of God, innocent and holy, and standing in his favour, was bound to a perfect performance of all the duties of the moral law, or law of nature, which related to God, or to himself, or to his fellow-creatures; and he had powers given him by the God of nature, sufficient for the performance of them\*.

II. This dispensation, is commonly called the covenant of works, because the work done by man would have fully answered the demands of the law of God, it would have been his justifying righteousness, and have entitled him to the reward, "do this and thou shalt live," are the terms of that covenant. *Rom. x. 5.* This was his religion.

III. And God seems to have engaged himself to bestow immortality or eternal life on *Adam*, upon condition of his persevering in perfect obedience, by the emblem, sign or seal of this covenant, which was the tree of life planted in the garden of *Eden*, of which, if man eat he should "live for ever," *Gen. iii. 22.* There was a virtual promise in this emblem, sign or pledge.

But besides this intimation of a reward by the tree of life, it may be almost inferred by the light of reason, that where God is a commander of any self-denying virtue, or of any difficult duty, he will also be a rewarder of it; for he will make it appear, he is good as well as just, in all his commands, and designs the happiness of his creatures in case of their obedience.

And, in this view of things, it is most highly probable, that if mankind had stood innocent, and there had been no death through all generations, they would have been after some state of trial and obedience †, translated by degrees to some advanced state of happiness, in some heavenly paradise; for earth itself could not have contained them in all their increase and multiplications under the prolific blessing of heaven.

IV. There was also a threatening of death upon man's disobedience in express words; and the emblem, or sign of it, was the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and innocent man was commanded to abstain from eating of the fruit of this tree, as a special pledge and test of his obedience to God. *Gen. ii. 17.* "In the day thou eatest thereof, in dying thou shalt die," that is, thou shalt be subject to many afflictions and diseases, and at last to death itself.

V. Now, that this constitution or covenant was made with *Adam*, not for himself only, but for his posterity also, so as to interest them in the blessings or the curses of it, according to his obedience or disobedience, will appear from the effects of his actual disobedience or fall.

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\* Note here, Whatsoever particular precepts or prohibitions the great God might give to his creature, in a way of special revelation, man was bound to obey them all, by that general law of nature, which requires the creature to obey it's creator in all things.

† It is not certain that the posterity of *Adam*, if their father had stood innocent, and passed his trial well, would have had any dangerous state of trial, in their own persons, whether they should be happy or miserable: One would rather suppose, they would only have had a proper state of probation, as to greater or lesser happiness, according to their degrees of labour and duty. But this matter is not plainly revealed.

For when this covenant of works was broken, by the sin of man, he and all his posterity with him, lost their holy and happy state, and were subject to sin, misery and death. *Rom. v. 19.* "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners," or guilty and subject to death. *Rom. v. 12.* "As by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." It is plain, that sin is imputed to them by death's passing upon them. The words following seem to imply it, *viz.* "sin is not imputed where there is no law, but death reigned," that is, but sin was imputed, therefore there was a law or constitution which imputed it, and from this spring of iniquity and guilt, "all men are become sinners, and come short of the glory of God," that is, that glory and happiness which they had at first, and that further glory which God had promised if they had not sinned.

All mankind are born encompassed with sorrows and troubles, and with an inclination to evil, more than to any thing that is good: And even infants before actual sin are subject to death, as well as those who are actual sinners: For "in *Adam* all die," *1 Cor. xv. 22.* and *Jews* and gentiles, that is, all mankind are by nature children of wrath. *Ephes. ii. 3.* "As there is none righteous or holy, so there is none happy; no, not one." *Rom. iii. 10.*

VI. Now, since this is the scriptural account of the effects or consequence of *Adam's* sin on all his posterity, it is but reasonable and equitable to suppose, that if *Adam* had continued innocent and happy, all his posterity had at least come into the world innocent and happy also; and perhaps, been confirmed in their innocence and happiness by the same righteous constitution. A God whose name is love, and his nature justice and goodness, would be supposed reasonably to deal thus with his creatures.

VII. But *Adam* and his race are fallen, and sinful creatures now: And though we cannot with perspicuity and full assurance, determine so well what sort of circumstances might have attended us, if our first parents had continued obedient; yet this we know by the word of God, by experience in ourselves, and by observation of others, that we are now in a sinful and unhappy state, prone to sin from our childhood, and liable to acute pains, sufferings and death, even in our infant age, before any actual transgressions as well as afterwards.

VIII. This was the dispensation of God towards man, or his covenant with him in his original state of innocency, even the covenant of works; which being violated by the sin of *Adam*, and thereby, his posterity being brought into unhappy circumstances, it pleased God, out of his rich mercy to provide another and a better covenant, even the covenant of grace; which is a wise, holy and merciful constitution of God for the recovery of fallen man to his favour and image by his Son *Jesus Christ*. Now the different dispensations, under which mankind have been placed ever since, are but different editions or manifestations of this covenant of grace to men in several ages of the world.

## CHAPTER

## C H A P T E R II.

*The adamical dispensation of the covenant of grace, or the religion of Adam after his fall.*

I. **T**HE first dispensation after the fall, was that constitution of God to recover guilty and sinful man to holiness and happiness, which was given to our first parents, *Adam* and *Eve*, to be conveyed by them, with religious care, to all their posterity, who suffered by their fall. This is the first edition of the gospel, or the covenant of grace.

Herein God promised by the "seed of the woman, to bruise the serpent's head," *Gen. iii. 15.* or as is it now explained by *St. John, 1 John iii. 8.* and might be then, perhaps, explained by God himself, "that the promised seed came to destroy the works of the devil." This was the general blessing of this dispensation, as expressed in that early age of the world. It intimates the design of God for the salvation of men, by some mighty saviour, who should be born of a woman, and should recover them to the image of God, and his favour, from which they fell by the temptation of the devil: And, though it was not clearly revealed, at first, what this saviour was to do or suffer, in order to reconcile God and man, yet all the further steps and gradual blessings of this reconciliation, in every age of mankind, are owing to the undertaking and the promise of this saviour; and all tend to accomplish this first promise.

II. The duties herein required of man, were repentance for past sin; a return to new obedience, and sincere love to God, with a humble faith or trust in his mercy: This is an acceptance of the covenant of grace. All this, indeed, is not expressly recorded in *Genesis*; but probably, God made a more explicate discovery of these things, than is written in so short a history; and these things are plainly and expressly required in several of the following dispensations.

Besides, the very light of nature, under every dispensation of grace, requires all this, even repentance, faith, love and obedience, to be practised by every sinner that would find mercy of God: And what is plainly written in the law of nature, is not always repeated so distinctly in every dispensation of grace, as I intimated before.

This dispensation also, and, perhaps, all the following require further, that man should not only have faith or trust in general in the divine mercy, but as it is particularly promised to be manifested, by some mighty saviour, as far as he is revealed to them, who should be the seed of the woman, or one of her offspring, and who was afterward called the *Messiah*, that is, the anointed or the *Christ*, and was to be expected under this character.

III. The great and final blessing to be expected, under this first dispensation, as also, under the following dispensations of grace, is not immortality, or a continuance in life without dying: The blessed God has determined that diseases and afflictions, mortality and death, which were brought in by sinning, or by the breach of the law of innocency, should so far remain throughout all the generations of men, as to be a constant memorial of that broken law, and of the evil of sin.

Since, therefore, the good men of all ages, as well as the bad, pass through these diseases, sorrows, sufferings and death; and there is but little distinction made between the righteous and the wicked in this life, by the providence of God; it remains, that the final blessing belonging to good men under all the dispensations of grace, must be

some felicity to be enjoyed in a future world or another life : And that is the happiness of the soul in the everlasting love of God, and in the sense of his love, when the body is dead, together with some obscure hints of the resurrection of the body.

These blessings were more clearly revealed by degrees, as the dispensations of grace went onward, and especially in the last dispensation, that is, christianity. But, even in these early times, God translated *Enoch*, a most holy man, to heaven without dying, in order to give notice to the world by a visible example, that there was some future state of reward and felicity for such as walked with God.

IV. The emblem or sign annexed to this dispensation, was the appointment of sacrifices to be offered ; and it is justly inferred from the words of *Moses*, that, with the skins thereof, man was clothed, since beasts were not then slain for food. *Gen. iii. 21.* These sacrifices were figures of *Christ*, the seed or son of the woman, the great mediator, between God and man, and the true sacrifice of atonement, by which God is reconciled, and man is secured from deserved misery, as the skins of beasts secure him from harm.

This is called the adamical dispensation of grace, which in the proposal of it belonged to all the family of *Adam*, that is, to all mankind, for he taught it to them, and accordingly righteous *Abel* offered his sacrifice of a lamb, with acceptance before God. *Gen. iv. 4.* This dispensation reached till *Noah's* flood.

V. Observe, that under this first, and under all the following dispensations of the gospel or covenant of grace, as they are proposed to men, the natural law of innocency, which is usually called the moral law, not only with all it's precepts, but with it's penalties too, abides in force, and is by no means abolished : It stands perpetually in full power, and is written in the heart of man by nature, *Rom. ii. 14, 15.* to command every man to fulfil the precepts of it perfectly, as well as to condemn every man who does not perfectly fulfil them : And the only way of his release from this condemnation, is, by his acceptance of the dispensation, or the covenant of grace, by repentance and trust in the divine mercy.

Thus though every man enjoys the common blessings of life, and by God's long suffering is invited to repentance, and is put under some general and external proposals or encouragements of the covenant of grace, yet he lies under the sentence and curse of the broken covenant of works, till he stands intitled to the blessings of the covenant of grace, by his own acceptance of it.

VI. Let it be yet further observed, that reason and the law of nature, not only dictate our duty where revelation is silent, but the whole moral law in the precepts of it, was taken into every dispensation of the gospel, as a part of it, to be the constant and everlasting rule of man's duty ; for this law partly arises from the relation of creatures to the God who made them, and partly from the mutual relation of creatures to each other, and therefore it is unchangeable. And a perfect obedience to all the commands of it, is required under the dispensations of grace, as well as in the law of innocency or covenant of works ; for if perfect obedience were not required, then imperfection would not be sinful.

VII. You will say then, what is the difference between the two covenants ? I answer here, one great difference lies in this, that, under the law of innocency or covenant of works, the perfection of our own personal works of obedience, answering the demands of the law, was to have been our justifying righteousness, and was the only condition of obtaining the blessing promised, that is, immortality and eternal life ; and nothing short of this perfection was accepted of God : No law can justify those

those who are under it, unless it is perfectly obeyed. Here was no pardon of sin provided, nor any encouragement or promise given to repentance.

But, in all the dispensations of the covenant of grace, though perfect obedience to the moral law be still required, and this law continues to condemn those who break it, yet, for the sake of the mediator, and of what he was to do and suffer, this condemning sentence is taken of, or reversed by the mercy of God in this new covenant; our sins against every law, and all our imperfections of duty are pardoned, and our souls are accepted of God unto salvation, if we accept of and submit to the dispensation of grace; that is, if we return to God in a way of humble repentance for sin, with faith or trust in the discoveries of his mercy, so far as it is made known, or revealed to us, in our age.

Or, perhaps, we may better describe this our acceptance of and submission to every dispensation of grace, by such a faith, or hope in the mercy of God, so far as it is revealed, as raises in the heart an unfeigned repentance for having displeased him, with a sincere and hearty love to him, which love produces a holy obedience to his will, or an upright and hearty desire to obey it, as far as it is made known to men.

This last seems to be the most natural and proper way of describing our acceptance of the covenant of grace, under every dispensation, because it is a hope or trust in the mercy of God, which is, and must be the spring of true repentance, and new obedience in every sinner; for where there is no hope there is no encouragement to repent, or return to God. *Psalms* cxxx. 4. "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared, loved and obeyed."

VIII. Hence it comes to pass, that as under the covenant of works, man was to be justified by his own perfect righteousness of works, commensurate to the demands of the law, *Gal.* iii. 12. and *Rom.* x. 5. So, under every edition of the covenant of grace, men, who can no more be justified by their works, because they are imperfect, are to be justified by their faith, or dependence on grace, as *Rom.* iv. 1—16. \*. But this faith in the divine mercy, and forgiveness, doth in the very nature of it imply or in the necessary consequences carry with it, a hearty acknowledgment or confession of guilt, or want of righteousness in ourselves, as well as a sincere return to God, and constant desire to please him, arising from that humble trust or hope in pardoning grace. Thus *Abraham* and *David*, under their different dispensations, were both justified by faith, or trusting in mercy without a righteousness of works, as well as *St. Paul* and the *Romans* under the dispensation of christianity, as is most evident in *Rom.* iv. †.

IX. To make this yet more evident, let us consider that the very light of nature, which requires of every creature a perfect obedience to all the will of God, requires also, of every sinner, perfect repentance and a complete return to universal obedience to all the commands of God. But this cannot be done or expected under our present

\* This doctrine is the chief design of the third and fourth chapters to the *Romans*. See the note on the words *πιστις* and *πιστευω* at the fifth section of the VIII. chapter of this treatise.

† Though God justified good men by faith, and not by works, under every dispensation of the covenant of grace, as the new testament informs us; *Rom.* iv. yet there was no necessity, that every good man, who was justified, should know this doctrine expressly and distinctly, under every darker dispensation of God. It was enough if they practised repentance and new obedience, under the influence of faith or hope in the divine mercy, or a belief of the grace which God revealed. This runs through the chapter in *Heb.* xi. God forbid, that we should suppose the knowledge of these christian controversies, and sublime doctrines, to be necessary to the salvation of every good man, under the darkness of those early dispensations. How far this accurate knowledge may be supposed to be necessary, under the new testament, I will not debate here.

sent degenerate state : And therefore, wherefover men do truly repent of all sin, and return unto God with a honest heart, and sincerely, though not perfectly, obey his commands, and comply with the requirements of that dispensation, under which they live, from a hope of the favour and mercy of God, and under a sense of their failings do trust in divine mercy, so far as it is revealed, they shall have this faith or trust in the grace of a forgiving God, reckoned unto them, and accepted of him unto their obtaining a justifying righteousness, that is, unto their pardon and justification, or their having a right to impunity and eternal life. This is righteousness; and this is the plain sense of *Rom. iv. 3, 5.* "Faith is counted or imputed for righteousness."

It may not be improper, to dwell a little upon explaining this text. Observe here, first, that righteousness often in scripture, does not signify acts of righteousness, but a right to life, and so it is to be construed in this place. Observe, secondly, it is not said, that faith is imputed or counted instead of righteousness, which would have required the word *ὑπερ* or *ἀντὶ* : But it is *πίστις λογίζεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην*, that is, faith is imputed or reckoned to our account, as an important or necessary thing, in order to our having a justifying righteousness, or a right to impunity and life. Survey the whole verse, *Rom. iv. 5.* "to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is imputed for righteousness;" that is, it is not the works of obedience which any man performs, that are, or can be counted or imputed to him, in order to his justifying righteousness, or justification; for when he first commences a believer, he has no good works; and when he has any, they are all imperfect, and answer not fully the demands of any law of God: But it is his faith or trust and dependence on forgiving grace, on the account whereof God accepteth and justifieth those who have been ungodly, even before they have actually wrought any such works of righteousness, whereby they might pretend to a justifying righteousness of their own, having had no time or opportunity for it.

Some interpreters make *ἀσεβῆ*, the ungodly, in this place to signify the gentiles, as in some other scriptures; and so it stands as a parallel of *Abraham's* being justified by faith, in his uncircumcised estate, or before he obeyed God in being circumcised, as it follows, verses 9, 10. But still it is faith, and not works, which must justify such sinful creatures, as the best of mankind are, in the sight of God; because faith implies an acknowledgement of the imperfection and insufficiency of our best works, and a dependence on the forgiving grace of God.

As I take this to be the true meaning of such texts of scripture, so it must be granted that the scripture teaches us elsewhere to add also, that the constant and persevering endeavours of such penitents, after obedience and holiness, shall be approved, and even rewarded by grace, so far as finally to obtain heaven and complete salvation, through the meritorious undertaking of the mediator.

X. As this has been a matter of much controversy, let me endeavour to make it yet more plain to every reader. The best of men in this world have not a righteousness of works commensurate to any law of God whatsoever; for their faith and repentance, and even their sincerity, are all imperfect, and do not fully answer the demands of God under any dispensation: But we are saved by a humble and hearty acknowledgment of sin, with a perpetual trust or dependence on free grace; always supposing our faith to be attended with a return to God by repentance and constant endeavours to please him.

And though faith or trust in the mercy of God be, in itself, a work of righteousness, and though it be attended or followed by repentance and love, and worship and



and holy obedience, yet in the matter of our justification before God, it is not considered as a work of righteousness, or as fully answering the demands of any law of God whatsoever, and thereby claiming justification, by that law; but it is considered only as an act of the soul, whereby it humbles itself, empties itself, renounces itself and it's own works as a sufficient ground for justification according to any law, and whereby it depends or trusts merely in the grace of God through a sense of it's own guilt and imperfection. As when a son hath grievously offended his father by breaking his righteous laws or commands, and then throws himself down at his father's foot, and waits and hopes for pardon and acceptance, this hoping and waiting doth not justify him as a work of righteousness, but merely as renouncing all self-worthiness, and as a dependence on mercy; it is not considered so much as an obedience to his father's law, but as it is an acknowledgment of guilt, and trust in mere mercy. And this seems to be the true design of *St. Paul*, in the representation he makes of the matter, throughout the fourth chapter to the *Romans*, which is the chief place in the bible, where this matter is most expressly and directly treated of, and argued.

XI. Thus our acceptance with God arising from faith, and not works, none have any reason to glory in the presence of God: Justification by faith cuts off all boasting.

And, indeed, this seems to be one main design of the blessed God, in appointing our justification under all the dispensations of the covenant of grace, to be obtained not by works, but by faith, or trust in free mercy; viz. that since pride and self-sufficiency was one great spring, of the first sin and ruin of mankind; this pride of man might be humbled, that no flesh should ever have the least ground for boasting; and that the salvation of man might appear to be all from God, and be acknowledged to be a work of mere grace, *Rom. iii. 27, 28. Rom. iv. 2, 16. Eph. ii. 9.* Therefore, it is of faith, and not of works, that boasting may be excluded.

XII. And the apostle adds, "therefore it is by faith, that it might be all of grace." *Rom. iv. 11.* Therefore, neither the acts of love or zeal, or repentance, or fear, or worship, or any other actions of obedience are appointed to be the mediums or proper means of our justification, under any dispensation of the covenant of grace, because these actions carry in them, an appearance of our own doing something for God, our answering the demands of some law, and this would make it look like justification by a law of works: But faith or trust is that act of the soul, whereby, we renounce our own works, as the ground of our justification or acceptance; we acknowledge our own imperfection, unworthiness and insufficiency, and give the intire honour to divine grace, by our dependence on it. We are saved by grace, that God may have the glory of all.

XIII. It is worthy of our observation here, that though the violation of the first covenant or law of innocency exposed us to the curse of God, and brought us under many frailties, afflictions, and death itself, which are not cancelled and removed at regeneration or repentance; yet, by the covenant of grace, all these calamities which continue to attack human nature, lose their sharpest sting, and are sanctified to our advantage; they are made use of to help forward our repentance and sanctification, and our growing fitness for heaven. Even temporal death itself, which follows all these painful evils or curses, is also turned into a blessing, because it is made a means of delivering our souls from this body of sin and sorrow, and of introducing them into the presence of God, and the commencement of our heaven and happiness.

Thus

Thus much shall suffice, concerning the covenant of grace in general, and concerning the first edition of it \*.

## C H A P T E R    I I I .

### *The noachical dispensation; or, the religion of Noah.*

I. **T**HE second edition of the covenant of grace, was the dispensation of *Noah* after the flood: He was the second father of mankind. It is sufficiently evident, what an universal taint of iniquity had spread over all the race of *Adam*, when God, the governor of the world, saw it necessary in his wisdom to destroy mankind from the earth, for their abominable transgressions; because all flesh had corrupted it's way upon earth, so that there was not one person, or not one family left who maintained the purity of religion, besides *Noah* and his house. *Gen.* vii. 1.

II. Therefore, after this universal destruction by the flood, God was pleased to repeat and renew his dispensation of grace, in another public edition of it unto *Noah*.

It is true, this covenant is said to be made, not only with *Noah*, but with his "sons also, and with every animal; *Gen.* ix. 9, 10. that the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh:" But it is sufficiently evident, that there was contained in it the covenant of grace or salvation, for this was the great design of God in all his other covenants with men, since the fall; and if mankind be no more destroyed by a flood, it is that the covenant of grace may save men in following ages.

III. This edition of the covenant of grace, contained in it the same blessings, promises and duties, with that of *Adam* after his fall, and probably the same sacrifices also; Here were superadded some further precepts about the distinction of meats, the prohibition of eating blood, the punishment of murder, and the promises of the church of God, in the family of *Ssem*, as well as the promise, that the earth should no more be destroyed by water.

Note, that this promise manifested the grace and long-suffering of God to men, in order to call them to repentance after the flood. Of this promise the rain-bow was an appointed emblem or pledge, token or sign; and as such it stands round the throne of God, and *Jesus* the mediator in *Rev.* iv. 3.

IV. This dispensation was published, not only to *Ssem*, but to *Ham* and *Japhet* also, that is, to all mankind after the flood, by their father *Noah*, who was a "preacher of righteousness," *2 Pet.* ii. 5. By this dispensation, *Job* and *Melchisedec*, also, were saved, with many others in that early age of the world.

V. Let it be observed here, that though we have a very short account of this dispensation in scripture, yet as *Job* probably lived under it, there are some bright discoveries

\* Since *St. Paul*, in his discourses, on the doctrine of justification, to the christians at *Rome* and *Galatia*, makes it appear, that the constitution of the covenant of grace represents, not only christians to be justified by faith, but even *Jews* and patriarchs, *David* and *Abraham*; I thought it necessary to introduce this doctrine, in my representation of the first patriarchal dispensation, and to dwell something longer upon it here, because it runs through all the dispensations of grace and is common to them all, and a due knowledge of this, will render the whole scheme easier to be understood.

coveries of the resurrection of the dead, and of future happiness for good men, among the speeches of *Job*, especially in the xiv and xv chapters.

VI. Observe also, that this has been the last dispensation of grace, which has been made known, and offered to most of the heathen nations, or their fathers, even to all such as were not descended from *Abraham*, and have never heard of *Jesus Christ*. All these therefore abide under *Noah's* covenant.

## C H A P T E R IV.

### *The abramical dispensation; or, the religion of Abraham.*

I. **W**HEN the great God saw, that the greatest part of mankind in some generations after the flood, had let go the knowledge and worship of the true God, or mingled it with many superstitions and idolatries, he resolved to chuse out a special family for himself, in which the true religion should be continued through all ages, until the coming of the *Messiah*, and by that means also to the end of the world.

For this purpose, he chose the family of *Abraham*, who was a descendant of *Shem*, the son of *Noah*. First, God called him out of his own country, that he might leave all their superstitions and corruptions behind him, and then he appointed him to live in *Canaan*, a land over-run with idolatry and iniquity, that his house might be a standing monument for God, and a preservatory of true religion and virtue, in opposition to the degeneracies of the nations who dwelt all round him.

II. The next edition of the covenant of grace was, therefore, the same covenant of *Noah*, continued to *Abraham* and his family, with some clearer promises of the *Messiah* or Saviour. The gospel was preached to *Abraham*, viz. that the *Messiah* should arise from his posterity "to bless all nations of the earth in due season." *Gal.* iii. 8. This was the third edition of it, and was distinguished by the addition of a new blessing, viz. a promised inheritance in the land of *Canaan*, as an emblem or type of heaven, and future happiness.

III. And here it should be observed, that the promises that God would be the God of *Abraham*, of *Isaac*, and of *Jacob*, which are construed by *Christ* into the resurrection of the dead, *Luke* xx. 37. as well as the other promises of an inheritance which was typified by *Canaan*, were understood by *Abraham*, so far, as to mean a heavenly country, and a future recompence, as *St. Paul* informs us. *Heb.* xi. 10—16.

IV. Besides all the duties before required, God was pleased to add another special duty to this dispensation, viz. the peculiar precept of circumcision, which was enjoined to *Abraham* and his posterity. It was given partly as a seal of his justification by faith, *Rom.* iv. 11. and partly as a sign or emblem of the mortification of sin, and consequently of true repentance, as the commencement of it. Whence it came to pass in after times, that the scriptures speak of the circumcision of the heart, to signify sanctification, and to manifest the internal and spiritual design of this outward emblem or figure.

And it should be observed, that while *Moses* is using this language, in one place, he requires of the *Jews* to "circumcise their own hearts," *Deut.* x. 16. and in another, he promises, that God would "circumcise their hearts, and the heart of their

seed to love God, &c." *Deut. xxx. 6.* whence we may infer that it is God who promises to enable us by his grace to perform the duties which he requires. This runs through every dispensation.

V. This covenant is usually called the dispensation of *Abraham*, which in the literal sense, belonged chiefly to his family or posterity by *Isaac* and *Jacob*; but in the more spiritual sense, as it is explained by *St. Paul* in his epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, it extended to all nations, and included all the good men among the gentiles, who are the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, as *St. Paul* often represents them. See *Rom. iv. 11—16. Gal. iii. 9, 29.* though it was hardly possible they should know this so clearly, till *Christ* or his apostles explained it.

VI. In this dispensation of *Abraham*, it is therefore worthy of our observation, that the whole course of his life, from the time he was called from *Chaldea* to his death, was a continual series of acts of faith, or dependence on the promises and mercy of God, with acts of entire submission to his providence and obedience to his will.

This faith and dependence of his, was so exemplary, and so well pleasing to God, while he constantly acknowledged his own insufficiency, and trusted to the all-sufficiency of God, and to the promises of his grace, that he hereby became as it were a pattern or precedent of the way of man's acceptance with God, or justification by faith. *Gen. xv. 6.* compared with *Rom. iv. 3.* We are to be justified as *Abraham* was, when he believed in the Lord, and it was counted to him for righteousness, that is, he was justified or accepted of God.

His submission also, and his obedience to the will of God in difficult trials, was so honourable in that early age of the world, that hereby he was appointed a pattern to all future ages of obedience, as well as of faith. And the apostle *Paul* makes much use of the history of his life, in recommending his faith and obedience to their imitation; and those who practise it are called the seed of *Abraham*, and are said to be "blessed with the blessing of *Abraham*." *Gal. iii. 9.*

VII. So great favour did he obtain in the sight of God, that God was pleased to bestow the special blessings of the covenant of grace on his posterity, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, in the following generations, and to give them the land of *Canaan* also in possession. In the household of *Abraham* and his posterity, God set up a visible church for himself, which also was continued in their families after them,

This church in the days of *Moses* was formed into a national church, as we shall shew immediately; and thus continued till the coming of the *Messiah* or *Christ*, who was born of this race of *Abraham*, a great many ages afterwards, according to the ancient promise.

VIII. Here is a remarkable controversy and dispute among christians, whether the promise or covenant, made by God to, and with the seed of *Abraham* in *Gen. xvii.* and in many other places, where God promises to be the God of *Abraham* and his seed, is to be construed to extend to his carnal seed, the *Jews*, in any of the spiritual blessings signified thereby? Or whether the spiritual blessings signified thereby, belong only to his spiritual seed, who are the imitators of his faith and obedience, whether they be *Jew* or *gentile*?

And then it is debated also, whether the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, under the new testament, that is, true christians have any spiritual blessings promised, or entailed to their children by the strong assertions of *St. Paul*, concerning their interest in *Abraham's* covenant, and whether their carnal seed or offspring, have any general  
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and indefinite title to spiritual blessings, by virtue of these and the like promises to *Abraham*, as the father of the faithful: But I am not willing to embarrass this short essay with any such long and unhappy controversies.

IX. Let it be observed, that these three early dispensations of grace, are called the patriarchal dispensations, because they were first communicated to those three patriarchs, *Adam*, *Noah* and *Abraham*.

## C H A P T E R V.

### *The mosaical dispensation; or, the jewish religion.*

I. **T**HE same gracious covenant or gospel, was revealed further to the seed of *Abraham*, or the *Israelites* by *Moses*, together with all the same seals or emblems of sacrifices and circumcision, which signified atonement for sin, and sanctification or purification of our nature, God was pleased to discover this to *Moses*, as a fourth edition of the covenant of grace, and by him to the family of *Jacob*, who was the grandson of *Abraham*; that is, to the nation of *Israel* in the wilderness of *Sinai*; but not to the other nations of mankind: Though the other nations might and did reap considerable advantages, by God's setting up this one nation in the earth as a beacon on a hill to spread the light of true religion far around.

This was called the levitical or mosaical or *jewish* dispensation. And it is plain from *Heb. iv. 2.* That the gospel, that is, the true covenant of grace, or way of salvation, was preached unto them as well as unto us, though their dispensation is oftentimes, for special reasons, called the law in scripture\*.

II. Under this *jewish* dispensation, the moral law, in all it's duties, and the will of God in many and various particulars of his authority and his mercy, were more explicitly set before men: Their encouragements also to repentance and hope in divine grace for eternal life, grew greater by the many precious promises and blessings, both of pardoning and sanctifying grace, revealed to them, and many intimations and discoveries of the mercy of God, which they enjoyed. This was also eminently signified by the dwelling of God amongst them, both as their God and their king, in a visible glory, in his tabernacle or temple, upon the mercy-seat, in the holy of holies.

III. Here also, there were a multitude of new emblems added, that is, new ceremonies, new signs and pledges, both of the blessings of God and of the duties of man, as well as types and figures of the characters and offices of the *Messiah* or mediator;

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\* It is necessary to take notice here, once for all, that the word "law," is used in various senses in *St. Paul's* epistles. Sometimes it signifies the moral law, or ten commandments, sometimes the five books of *Moses*, and sometimes, the whole old testament; sometimes, it means the peculiar covenant of *Sinai*, and, at other times, it includes the whole *jewish* dispensation, or the covenant of grace, as it was exhibited to them, with all it's legal or levitical appendices. Now, it is only the connexion in which this word stands, that can distinguish and ascertain to us, in which of these senses the word "law" is used; and I hope what I have here written, will go a great way towards shewing us, what the holy writer means by it, in any particular text, and how to understand his sense and his reasoning, which is of great importance, in learning the difference between the law and the gospel.

all which are usually called the *jewish* ceremonies, and are too many to be enumerated here.

The chief designs of them were, first, to give the *Jews* a ceremonious worship in that infant state of the church, that they might not be tempted by the pomp and ornaments of heathen worship, to run into their idolatry. Secondly, to unite them as a nation in one form of religion and government, and to make and maintain an evident distinction of them from the rest of the nations round about them; who are called gentiles, which in the latin, greek and hebrew languages, signifies the nations. Thirdly, to typify and figure out to them the various glories of the *Messiah*, and of the gospel, in the duties and blessings of it, under the veils and shadows, and figures of that age, which are more clearly explained under the new testament.

IV. As this dispensation was begun by *Moses*, so it was carried on in the nation or church of *Israel*, during all the time of the judges, the kings and prophets, till the coming of *Christ*, or rather till his ascension to heaven, and pouring down of the Spirit.

The business and design of the prophets, was not to introduce any new dispensation among the *Jews*, but to give them further assurances of the coming of the *Messiah*, or the promised Saviour, to keep him in their view in every age, and keep their hopes alive, even in their lowest estate. The prophets gave them also, more particular descriptions of his character and offices, in order to prepare them for believing in him, when he should come. They spoke more particularly of the promises of pardon of sin, of the sanctification of our natures by the holy Spirit, with hints of a future state of recompence for the good and bad among mankind; all which appear more eminently, in the writings of *David*, *Isaiab*, *Jeremiab*, *Ezekiel* and *Daniel*.

V. It was also a further design of the prophets, to put them in mind of their duty, to reprove them for sin, and by many motives and examples, by invitations, threatenings and promises of every kind, both temporal and spiritual, to encourage, to warn, and to reform them, to awaken them to repentance and trust in divine mercy, and the practice of holiness, in order to their temporal benefit, and their eternal salvation; and with all, to maintain their obedience to the law of *Moses*, or the whole leuitical dispensation, which carried in it, the covenant of grace. So saith *Malachi*, the very last of the prophets, in the end of his prophecy, *Mal. iv. 4.* "Remember ye the law of *Moses*, my servant, which I commanded unto him in *Horeb*, with the statutes and the judgments;" for these were appointed to continue till the *Messiah* came, even till the Lord, who was the messenger or angel of the covenant, should come to his temple, who was to be introduced by *John* the baptist, under the name and character of *Elijab* the prophet, as is expressed, chapter iv. verses 5, 6. compared with chapter iii. verse 1.

## C H A P T E R VI.

*The peculiar covenant of Sinai.*

I. **B**UT it must necessarily be observed here, that in this dispensation of *Moses*, there were several outward precepts or ordinances, which were partly ceremonial or sacred, and partly civil or political, together with divers promises of a carnal and temporal kind, superadded to the gospel of grace and salvation; which precepts and promises, together with all the ten commands, considered distinctly, and apart from the gospel made up that *Sinai* covenant, which separated the *Jews* from the rest of the nations, and which was really in the nature of it a covenant of works. This is evident, because their works of obedience were to be their justifying righteousness, so far as to preserve their lives and comforts, in the land of *Canaan*, as *Moses* expressly teaches them, *Deut.* vi. 24, 25. "And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as at this day: And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments, before the Lord our God." Now this is very different language from what *St. Paul* speaks to the *Romans*, and to the *Galatians*, when he describes our righteousness for justification before God, according to the covenant of grace and salvation.

And if in any instances, the *Jews* had broken the rules or laws of this *Sinai* covenant, in outward actions, or ceremonial defilements, they were bound to offer particular sacrifices, or to apply themselves to special washings or fastings, or other methods of purification or atonement, and to a visible reformation; and then in the way of a law of works, they were absolved from the penalties threatened, that is, they were pardoned and freed from outward punishments, by the performance of these works.

III. But this *Sinai* covenant considered alone, was never designed to be that covenant of grace, whereby they should obtain salvation, or heaven and eternal life from God, as the Lord of souls and consciences.

*St. Paul* expressly says, that these sacrifices or rites of purification, "could not make them perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, nor could they take away sin, or reach any further than the purifying of the flesh." *Heb.* ix. 9, 13. and this evidently appears to reach only to the present life, from this consideration among others, that in the law of *Moses*, there were no sacrifices, atonements or purifications, ever appointed for capital crimes, such as adultery, murder, blasphemy, idolatry, &c. nor for spiritual sins, such as pride, malice, envy, atheism of heart, and such like; nor indeed for any offence whatsoever of a moral kind, which was not visible and injurious to the public welfare.

Nor did any of their sacrifices, do any more than set them right, as to the state or visible church. *St. Paul* gives a hint of this, when in *Acts* xiii. 39. he says, "ye, who believe, are justified from all those things, by *Jesus Christ*, from which ye could not be justified by the law of *Moses*."

This *Sinai* covenant, therefore, was made only between God, as the political head or king of that people, and the *Jews*, as his national subjects; or at most, but as sitting on the mercy seat, on a cloud of glory, as the visible head of a national  
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visible church: And it was not designed to reach to the concerns of another world. It was as I have said, by the works of obedience to this political or outward covenant, that the *Jews*, whether considered as a nation, or a visible church, or as single persons, were entitled to long life and peace, in the land of *Canaan*, and temporal blessings therein; and then by notorious violations of it, either as a nation, or as single persons, they forfeited these blessings\*.

IV. Let it then be well considered, that this *Sinai* covenant between God, as their national king, and the *Israelites* as his subjects, which is often called the law in scripture, and sometimes the first covenant, taken separately and apart by itself, was a very distinct thing from the covenant of grace, and was but a temporal appendix to it. Yet the covenant of grace, or that gospel of pardon of sin and eternal life, which more evidently, or more secretly ran through all the dispensations of God, since the fall, was included in the *jewish* dispensation also, as the most eminent part of it: This, gospel related to their eternal concerns with God, as the Lord of conscience. This, in some clear expressions, and in many types and dark hints, "was witnessed by the law and the prophets," as *Rom. iii. 21.* And it was this gospel, by which both *Abraham* and *David*, and the pious *Jews* were pardoned, and saved with an eternal salvation: *St. Paul* proves this in *Rom. iv.*

That great apostle, in his epistles to the *Romans*, and *Galatians* and *Hebrews*, is often teaching them, that this *Sinai* covenant, this law of *Moses*, with all the ceremonies of it, could not give them life. *Gal. iii. 21.* that is, peace of conscience, with pardon of sin, and eternal salvation; nor was this *Sinai* covenant ever intended or designed by God himself for this end, and it was in due time "disannulled for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof." *Heb. vii. 18.* yet the carnal *Jews* were very fond of applying it to this sense and purpose, expecting, that the blood of bulls and goats should take away their sins, and that this law of ceremonies, should make the comers thereunto perfect, and cleanse their conscience in the sight of God, as the Lord of souls and consciences.

And this is the reason why *St. Paul* gives them so frequent warnings against this mistake; particularly in the third and fourth chapters to the *Galatians*, where he represents the law as a covenant of works, which curses them who continue not in all things written in the law to do them; chapter iii. verse 10. and he represents the difference between this law and the gospel, by the difference between mount *Sinai* and

\* It is not improper, to make this observation by the way, *viz.* that God's dealing with whole communities, with societies, cities, or nations, through all ages of the world, in the visible dispensations of his common providence and government, has been very much, according to the tenor of this covenant of works, which he made with the *Jews* at *Sinai*, that is, that according as their public outward behaviour should be, whether virtuous or vicious, so his visible blessings, or visible punishments should attend them as proper recompences. And if they should by their iniquities, provoke God to punish them, yet upon their visible repentance and reformation, there should be a release from their bonds of punishment, and a restoration of their blessings; always provided, that they had not sinned in so very provoking a manner, as to be given up by God the governor of the world, to utter ruin and desolation. Plain evidences of this may be derived from the *Canaanites*, *Sodom*, *Nineveh*, *Babylon* and some others.

And there is this plain reason, for this part of divine conduct, *viz.* whatsoever single persons or individuals, have practised either virtue or vice, if they are not rewarded or punished in this world, there is another world, or a future state, in which the righteous God, as the judge of all, can, and will reward or punish them: But communities, cities or nations, belong only to this world, and are all dissolved, and have no being in the other, and can neither be rewarded or punished there as public bodies: And therefore God who exercises visible judgment on earth, when he pleases, will frequently reward or punish communities visibly in this world, to shew his love to virtue and piety, and his aversion to all sin, and to preserve an awful sense of his holiness and government among the children of men.



and mount *Zion* or *Jerusalem* in which *Zion* stood, the one as leading to bondage, and leaving the *Jews* under guilt and fear, the other as giving liberty, and life, and peace, chapter iv. verses 21—31.

And it is for the same reason that *Paul* says, *Gal. v. 3.* that “ he that is circumcised, as hoping for salvation by this covenant of *Sinai*, he is a debtor to the whole law,” Nor can he be saved this way, unless he obeys it all perfectly; and he that seeks salvation by such a covenant of works, is fallen from grace, or has left the doctrine of grace, verse 4.

V. Now, since this law of *Moses* taken by itself, as the mere *Sinai* covenant, was in the very nature of it a sort of covenant of works, “ for the man that doth the commands thereof, shall live by them ;” *Rom. x. 3. Lev. xviii. 5.* hence it comes to pass, that in the writings of *St. Paul*, who was well acquainted with all the dispensations of God, the law of *Moses*, in some places is not only called the first covenant, to intimate another or clearer dispensation of grace to follow it, but it is brought in sometimes also as a representation or specimen of that original covenant of works or law of innocency, which was made at first with man for immortality and eternal life; which law all mankind have broken, and by nature they all lie not only under the commands, but under the curse of it; and therefore by it no man can be justified or saved, as in *Rom. iii. 19, 20.* and *x. 5. Gal. iii. 10, 12.*

It is evident from several verses in these two epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, that the *Sinai* covenant does certainly represent the original covenant of works, and the curse of it, under which all men lie, by nature, for it is said, that *Christ* had redeemed the *galatian* gentiles, as well as *St. Paul*, the *jew*, from the curse of the law, by bearing the curse for them, verse 13. but the *Galatians* were never under the law of *Sinai*, nor did that law curse them, any otherwise but as breakers of the original moral law of God, “ Curfed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them: verse 10.

VI. And, indeed, we may take notice, that the original covenant or law of works, which required perfect obedience, in order to man's justification or acceptance with God, is frequently exhibited, and represented up and down in the writings of *Moses*, and set before the *Israelites* in many views, and that for several wise purposes: as, 1. To shew them what was the perfect rule of obedience and duty which God required of man; and, 2. To instruct them how much God insisted upon perfection of righteousness, in order to justification by their own works in his sight. He did this, also, 3. To convince them that they had all wretchedly transgressed this law of works, and broken this covenant of perfection: and 4. That they might despair of eternal life by this law; and that after all their necessary endeavours to obey this law, they might still betake themselves to faith, or a dependence on the pardoning mercy and grace of God; in short, it was to lead them to trust in that gospel, which is contained in the general promises given them by *Moses*, and typified by the sacrifices of their *Sinai* covenant, and other ceremonies.

VII. *St. Paul*, himself, in his writings makes use of these *mosaic* representations of the law of works, sometimes for this very purpose. See *Rom. iii. 20.* “ By the law is the knowledge of sin”, whether it be the *jewish* law of *Sinai*, or the original law of innocency. Again, *Rom. v. 20.* “ The law entered, that sin might abound”; which at least must have this sense, that the *jewish* law was introduced in the multitudes of it's precepts, in the perfection of it's requirements, and it's repetitions of the moral law, or law of innocency, that sin might evidently appear to abound among men, and that by the law they might be so deeply convinced of sin, as to become dead to the

the law, as St. *Paul* was, *Gal.* ii. 19. that is; that they might be dead to all hopes of eternal life by the law of works, when they saw the number of it's precepts, and perfection of it's demands.

VIII. Thus by the law, the *Jews* might gain, not only the knowledge of sin, but also of the curse or death that was due to it. *Rom.* vi. 23. "For the wages of every sin is there pronounced to be death:" and *Gal.* iii. 10. "curst is every one that continueth not in all things written in the law to do them." And thus *Paul* argues, that they might be excited to fly to the grace of God, to obtain pardon, or justification, or a justifying righteousness by faith, or dependence on grace through *Jesus Christ*. *Gal.* iii. 24. "The law was our school-master, strict in it's precepts, and severe in it's threatenings and punishments, to bring us to *Christ*, that we might be justified by faith."

He that diligently reads St. *Paul*'s epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians* will find much of this sort of reasoning about the *jewish* law; supposing it to contain in it, or at least, to represent and figure out, the first covenant or original law of works, by which we sinful creatures can never be justified, and according to which many of the *Jews* were ever ready to hope for justification by their own works.

And, probably, when the ten commands of this law, were pronounced from mount *Sinai*, it was called by *Moses*, *Deut.* xxxiii. 2. "a fiery law," because it was attended with such lightening and thunder, storm and terror, with a design to represent the curses of God, which attended every sinner, who had broken his general original moral law, as well as those who wilfully should break any particular law of God's making. *Heb.* xii. 18.

IX. Thus, though the word "law," in some scriptures represents the covenant of works, yet in some other places of St. *Paul*'s writings, the law of *Moses*, or the law and the prophets, including the whole *jewish* dispensation, is brought in by the same apostle, as exhibiting the gospel, though, not in it's full clearness, and as witnessing to the covenant of grace, or the way of obtaining righteousness or justification by faith; by which *Abraham* the patriarch, and *David* the *jew*, and all the *jewish* saints were pardoned, justified, and accepted of God, unto eternal life.

And, indeed, this covenant of grace, or gospel of salvation, through faith in the mercy of God by a mediator, with all the benefits thereof, *viz.* pardon, justification, adoption, sanctification and heavenly glory, was included therein, was witnessed by the law and prophets, and was typified by many shadows and figures of the *mosaic* dispensation. See *Rom.* iii. 21. and iv. 5—7. and *Heb.* iv. 2. "To them was the gospel preached, as well as unto us," as the words should be translated: "Even that same gospel, which was preached to *Abraham*," *Gal.* iii. 8. That gospel, which was the blessing of *Abraham*, containing the promise of the Spirit, to be received by faith, *Gal.* iii. 14. as well as the hope of righteousness. See this made further evident by St. *Paul*, explaining the types of that dispensation, *Hebrews* chapters ix. x.

X. It may be objected here, indeed, that the *jewish* dispensation could never include in it the covenant of grace, because *Paul*, the apostle, and *Jeremy*, the prophet, both say, concerning the gospel, "Behold the days come, when I will make a new covenant with the house of *Israel*,—not according to the covenant I made with their fathers, when I led them out of the land of *Egypt*: But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of *Israel*, in those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities, will I remember no more." *Heb.* viii. 8—12. by which it seems evident, that

that the first, or old *jewish* covenant, did not promise sanctification of the heart and pardon of sin, which are promised in the new covenant, or the gospel of *Christ*.

To this I answer, that the *jewish* covenant of *Sinai*, taken alone by itself was, as I have said before, a temporal covenant, or law of works, and an emblem of the original covenant of works, and did not include spiritual and eternal blessings, *viz.* pardon of sin and sanctification of heart; and yet it was upon this *Sinai* covenant, that the carnal *Jews* depended, and would depend, for these blessings, or for acceptance before God. But the whole *jewish* dispensation taken all together, did include these spiritual and eternal blessings in it, and they were bestowed in some measure on all the *jewish* saints, though they were mingled with many darkneses, and left the people under great fears of death, and many doubts, and much bondage of soul, as *Heb.* ii. 15. and x. 1—3. *Gal.* iv. 24. But in the days of christianity, and the proposal of the gospel to the *Jews*, these better promises of pardon and sanctification are much more numerous, more clear and explicit, and lead sinful men more directly into this salvation by *Jesus Christ*, as the reconciler, and by the holy Spirit, as the sanctifier, and these blessings are bestowed in much greater abundance. This occasions it to be called a new covenant, though, in truth, it is only a new and fairer edition of the ancient covenant of grace, much brighter than that which the *Jews* had at first, which was so mingled with, and partly obscured by the *Sinai* covenant.

XI. Thus it has been made evident, that the law of *Moses*, including the *Sinai* covenant, was so far an emblem of the original covenant of works, in the rigour of it's commands, "do this, and live, and in the severity of it's punishments, the soul that sinneth shall die." *Gal.* iii. 12. The man that doth them, shall live in them; and verse 10. curst is every one, that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them;" and it was also an emblem of the covenant of grace, and the benefits thereof, *viz.* pardon and sanctification in the purifications and atonements appointed by water and fire, and bloody sacrifices. *Heb.* ix 9, 13, 14, 24. and x. 1—4. "The law had a shadow of good things to come: It contained figures for the time then present: The holy places made with hands are the figures of the true, and the patterns of things in the heavens;" the greek words are *Σαῖν, παραβολή, ὑποδείγματα, ἀίτυπα, &c.* and the apostle argues upon this supposition; "if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer, mingled with running water, as in *Numb.* xix. 17. sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, that is, to the removal of ceremonial defilement, how much more shall the blood of *Christ*—purge your consciences from dead works, that is, from works deserving death, to serve the living God."

XII. But we must remember also, what I said before, that the law of *Moses* was not only an emblem, but was really a covenant of works, so far as it related to temporal blessings, in the land of *Canaan*; and it was really a dispensation of the covenant of grace, so far, as it contained in it various promises of eternal pardon and inward sanctification, and God's acceptance of those that repented of their sins, and trusted in his grace, so far, as it was then revealed.

XIII. It is a further remarkable evidence of this truth, that *St. Paul* distinguishes the two different ways of justification, by the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace, by texts cited from the law of *Moses*. See *Rom.* x. 5. compared with verse 6. "*Moses* describeth the righteousness which is of the law, saying, that the man who doeth those things, shall live by them: But the righteousness which, is of faith, speaketh on this wise, say not who shall ascend into heaven, &c. the word is near thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith which we

preach &c." Here you see, is both law and gospel contained in *Moses's* writings, if we can but learn to distinguish them, and not confound them.

XIV. Nor indeed, can I think of any other way, to account for this conduct of *St. Paul*, in citing so frequently the law of *Moses* in different parts of it, both to prove the universal condemnation of all mankind, both *jew* and gentile, by the law of innocence or covenant of works, and also to prove our justification by faith, through the grace of the gospel. This is the only clew, that I can find to lead me into the sense and meaning of the apostle in such texts, and, the only method that I know of, to reconcile the reasoning of that great and holy writer, in the account he gives us of the *jewish* and christian dispensations. But I now proceed.

## C H A P T E R VII.

### *Of the christian dispensation.*

I. **N**OTWITHSTANDING, God had done so much before in several ages, towards the salvation and recovery of mankind, from the ruins of their fall, and had set up his church in the *jewish* nation, to maintain the light of true religion there, within sight of the gentile kingdoms round about, yet the gentiles multiplied their iniquities and idolatries, and the *Jews* turned almost all their religion into superstition and empty formalities, so that true vital godliness and morality were in a great measure lost out of the world. Therefore the blessed God saw it a proper season to put an end to this dispensation of *Moses* or judaism, and to bring in the last and best of all the dispensations, and that is christianity, which is revealed to us in the new testament: This is the last edition of the covenant of grace, and is eminently called the gospel.

Herein, we have many plainer discoveries of the transactions of God with men, even from the creation; we have much clearer notices of our duty, and many richer promises of divine grace, than ever we had before, with greater assistances and encouragements to repentance, faith and holiness.

II. All this comes by *Jesus Christ*, the Son of God, the promised seed of the woman, the *Messiah*, &c. "The law came by *Moses*, but grace and truth came by *Jesus Christ*." *John* i. 17. *Jesus*, who was the Son of God, before all worlds, the appointed mediator of the new covenant, foretold by *Moses*, and by the prophets, is now actually come down from heaven, and dwelt with men. In his incarnation, his poverty, his preaching, his holy life, his many miracles, his obedience and death, in his sacrifice of atonement, his burial and his resurrection from the dead, in his ascension to heaven, his intercession and exaltation to the kingdom, he fulfils the various offices of his mediation, which the ancient prophets foretold, and which the apostles have described, and explained to us, *viz.* that he was a teacher of righteousness, a prophet, an example of holiness, a high-priest, a sacrifice, a saviour, an intercessor, a king, and a head of life to his body the church, both spiritual and eternal.

III. As in this dispensation of *Christ*, revealed in the new testament, we have a fuller and plainer discovery of our fallen state, our guilt and danger, our degenerate sinful natures, and our weakness to all that is good; so also we have much brighter manifestations

manifestations made of the pardon of sin, and justification of our persons, the methods of it's procurement by the obedience, sufferings and death of *Christ*, which made a proper atonement for sin, the adoption of us into the family of God, the sanctification of our natures, by the influences of the holy Spirit, to enable us to repent of sin, and mortify it daily, together with all our consolations in life, and hope in death. And besides all this, the future state both of saints and sinners, the resurrection of the body, the everlasting happiness of good men, and the eternal misery of the wicked, are brought much nearer to our view, as motives to our duty, and support to our hope: And they are set much plainer before us in all the blessings and the terrors of them, together with the duties of faith and love toward the Son of God, our redeemer.

IV. As I have also before observed, that the whole system of natural duties, or the whole moral law, is taken into every edition of the covenant of grace, so in the new testament also, or in the dispensation of christianity, it should not be forgotten, that we have a much larger, clearer, and fuller explication of the moral law in all the parts and precepts of it, with the more particular application of them to the occurrences of human life, and a more express notice, that they reach to the thoughts and desires of the heart, as well as to words and actions: So that our love and duty to God, to our neighbours, and ourselves, was never so plainly and fully set forth, either by the light of reason, or by revelation, as it is in this last dispensation. This is sufficiently evident in the sermons of *Christ*, and in the writings of his apostles.

To these I add also, the special exaltation of the duty of love to our neighbours, and forgiveness of injuries to a superior height in the gospel of *Christ*. Our love to one another is made the sign and token of our christianity; and our love even to enemies is required and enforced by the love of God to us, and an universal holiness of heart and life, proceeding from love to God and man, is frequently prescribed.

V. Under this dispensation, almost all the former emblems of the covenant of grace, required of us as duties, are intirely left out and abrogated; and the chief, if not the only emblems, signs, or seals, required in it, are baptism and the Lord's supper, which are usually called the two sacraments. This new covenant is as it were sealed, between God and man, in the promised blessings of it, and in all the duties, by God's appointment of these signs or ceremonies on one side, and by man's acceptance of them with a sincere heart on the other.

VI. One of these sacraments, viz. baptism, more peculiarly represents the blessing of regeneration, or the purification of our souls from the sinful principles that work in us, by the holy Spirit represented under the figure of baptismal water: Our submission to this ordinance, is our acceptance of this covenant.

The other, viz. the Lord's supper, more especially relates to our pardon of sin, through the death of the body of *Christ*, and effusion of his blood, which are represented by the bread broken, and the wine poured out in the Lord's supper: Our partaking of this bread and wine, is our consent to this covenant.

VII. Here then we may take notice, that in all these five dispensations of grace, there have always been some emblems or figures of pardon of sin, through the great atonement that was made, or to be made, by the death of *Christ*: Such were the sacrifices or the slaughter of beasts, under the four ancient dispensations, designed to prefigure this atonement, before it was actually made. And such is the Lord's supper, wherein bread is broken, and wine poured out, under the dispensation of christianity, as memorials of the dying body and blood of our blessed saviour, to bring this atonement to remembrance, after it was made.

VIII. There hath been also under the three last and clearest dispensations, some emblem to represent the mortification of sin, repentance and regeneration, or newness of heart and life, viz. abrahamical circumcision, the *jewish* washings, and christian baptism \*.

Whence I think we may reasonably infer, that these two doctrines of pardon of sin through the atonement of *Christ*, and regeneration or sanctification by the holy Spirit, are of vast importance in the covenant of grace : And that the christian, as he hath the greatest advantages by the clear discovery of these things, so is under the strongest necessity and command, to make these doctrines the matters of his faith, and these blessings the objects of his hope and prayer.

## C H A P T E R VIII.

*The doctrine of justification by faith, farther explained under the gospel of Christ.*

I. **T**HOUGH our justification before God is ascribed to faith, and not to works, under every dispensation of the covenant of grace †, yet, under the christian dispensation, our pardon of sin, and our justification and acceptance with God, are more clearly represented to us, and more strongly denied to be owing to our works of obedience, and are much more frequently ascribed to faith ; especially in those places where the holy writers are directly and expressly teaching us the way of justification, according to the gospel, such as the epistles to the *Romans* and the *Galatians*.

II. This faith is sometimes represented as faith in the gospel, faith in *Jesus Christ*, faith in the righteousness of God, and our saviour *Jesus Christ*, faith in God through *Jesus Christ*, &c. All these phrases imply or include acknowledgement of insufficiency in ourselves, and dependence on the grace of God, or the mediation of *Christ*. And they hold forth this lesson to us, viz. that we cannot perform works of obedience or righteousness, answerable to the perfect demands of God, so as to stand entitled to impunity and life thereby, under this or any other of his dispensations, as we have shewed before in chapter ii. therefore we cannot be justified by any law of righteousness, or any righteousness of works, which we can do : For *St. Paul* tells us, that if there had been any law which could have given life to fallen mankind, verily righteousness, or a right to life should have been appointed and obtained by that law." *Gal.* iii. 21. but now since we cannot obtain a right to forgiveness and acceptance with God unto salvation by our works, therefore it must be done by the righteousness of faith, or dependence, *Rom.* ix. 30. that is, a righteousness, or rectitude

\* We are told also by *St. Peter*, *1 Pet.* iii. 20, 21. " that the ark of *Noah*, wherein eight souls were saved by water, was a sort of emblem or figure like baptism, which now saves us, not by putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of *Jesus Christ*." But the parallel is not so obvious and easy, as to encourage me to mention, it as an emblem of regeneration or sanctification, in the dispensation of *Noah*; and there may be some doubt whether the apostle doth not introduce it here, rather as a figure or emblem of that part of our salvation which consists in our deliverance from the guilt of sin, and in pardoning grace.

† See this matter discoursed of in chapter ii. which should be reviewed, before this chapter is read.

titude in the court of God, or right to life, which we are made partakers of, by our trusting in mere mercy\*.

III. This blessing must come upon us, therefore, as a gift of righteousness as *Rom. v. 17.* or as a justifying righteousness imputed to us, as *Rom. iv. 5, 6, 22—24.* or reckoned to our account, because we have no justifying righteousness of our own working. And, therefore, it is often called the righteousness of God, because it is God out of his free grace appointed it, and it is God imputes or bestows it, or accepts us into his favour, as though we were perfectly righteous, when we believe or trust in *Christ*.

IV. It is called the righteousness of faith, the righteousness of God by faith, and that righteousness which is through the faith of *Christ*, as in *Phil. iii. 9.* because it implies an acknowledgement of sin and imperfection in our works, and a dependence, faith or trust on the mercy or grace of God, as manifested more clearly in the gospel, through *Jesus* the great mediator: Or a trust in *Christ*, who is called “the Lord our righteousness,” *Jer. xxiii. 6.* and who “is made of God righteousness to us,” *1 Cor. i. 30.* that is, we are justified for the sake of his doings and sufferings.

V. And therefore this faith is called faith in *Christ*, faith in his name, faith in his blood, faith in his righteousness. *Gal. iii. 24. John i. 12. Rom. iii. 25. 2 Pet. i. 1.* to shew that we must trust or depend on *Jesus Christ*, our mediator, and on what he has done and suffered, for our pardon and acceptance with God, or our justification †.

It is he hath wrought out such a perfect righteousness, by his obedience and sacrifice, which are perfectly well pleasing to God, and perfectly satisfactory to God, whom we had offended, and which are the true and only ground and foundation of our pardon, justification or acceptance with God.

VI. Thus we are justified by faith or trust, as an appointed medium, to be performed by us, in order to our interest in this blessing; and we are justified by the righteousness of *Christ*, or his obedience unto death, as the only foundation or ground of it: We are justified also by the free grace of God, as the prime author of this blessed transaction, and we are justified by the gospel or covenant of grace, as the great rule of divine conduct or government in this affair.

## VII. Nor

\* In this and the like scriptures, where mention is made of “the righteousness of God, of faith imputed for righteousness, of the righteousness which is of the law, the righteousness which is of faith,” &c. the word righteousness is taken in a forensic sense; not for one or more acts of obedience or holiness, but for a rectitude in the court of God, or a right to impunity and life.

† Here let it be observed, that the words *πίστις* and *πιστεύω*, which continually return upon us in reading the greek testament, should be frequently translated, by “trust and trusting” in *God*, or *Christ*, especially where the preposition *ἐν* or *εἰς* is added to it; and it should not be so often called belief or believing; for it is not such a mere assent as the english word believing means, that can justify or save us; but such an assent to the gospel of *Christ*, as excites hope or trust in mercy, and so draws forth the soul to love *God*, repent of sin, and fulfil the duties of holiness.

The hebrew words, which imply trust and dependence in the old testament, are represented often by *πιστεύω* in the new testament, as well as those which signify belief or assent: And therefore *David*, in the *Psalms*, where he expresses the inward actings of his soul towards *God*, is ever using the words trust and hope; and the translators of our new testament should have much oftener used them to express the true meaning of the words *πίστις* and *πιστεύω* in the sacred writers. As *John xiv. 1.* Ye trust in *God*, trust also in me. *Acts xvi. 31.* Trust in the Lord *Jesus Christ*, and thou shalt be saved. *Mark xi. 22.* Have trust in *God*. *Acts xx. 21.* Repentance towards *God*, and trust in our Lord *Jesus Christ*. *Rom. iii. 25.* He is set forth as a propitiation through trusting in his blood; and many other places. This is the constant sentiment of our protestant divines in their opposition to the papists, that “*fides est fiducia*.”

VII. Nor should it be forgotten in this place, that as *Adam* is more clearly described or represented, in the new testament, as the spring or head of all that sin, condemnation and death, which are imputed, or derived, or any way conveyed to all his posterity ; so our Lord *Jesus Christ* is called the second *Adam*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 45, 47. because he is the head and spring of that righteousness or justification, and right to life, which are also imputed, given, or conveyed to all his seed or posterity.

As the children of men, the seed of *Adam* fell into condemnation and misery, by the disobedience of *Adam*, their head and representative ; so believers in *Christ* are his seed, and are raised also to justification, life and happiness, by the active and passive obedience of their representative or surety, even the Son of God, of whom the first *Adam* was a type or figure. See *Rom.* v. 14, 18, 19. " As, by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation ; even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men ; that is, all those who are justified, to justification of life. For as, by one man's disobedience, many were made, or constituted, sinners, by a certain appointment or covenant ; so, by the obedience of one, many shall be made, or constituted, righteous, by another agreement or covenant : And they are interested therein by free gift on the part of God, and by faith or dependence on their part, as I said before.

## C H A P T E R IX.

### *Sanctification or holiness necessary as well as faith.*

I. **B**UT let it be always remembered, as under all the former dispensations, so under the christian, that this faith can never justify us if it be a dead faith, that is, such a faith as produceth no good works ; that is, where there is time and opportunity for them. *Jam.* ii. 17, 18, 20. It is only that faith that works by love, that is of any avail to our salvation. *Gal.* v. 6.

To trust in the grace of God, and to persevere in sinning against the authority of God, are subversive and destructive of one another : And the great end and design of God, in saving us by his grace, is to restore us to his holy image, and our duty, and to a willing obedience or submission to his authority, and by all these to make us capable of everlasting blessedness.

II. The very light of nature teaches us, it is in vain for rebels to expect or hope for favour from God, the ruler of the world, while they repent not of sin, but abide in a state of wilful rebellion. The scripture always supposes our return to God, by repentance, and continued endeavours to please him, if ever we would be received into his favour. It is absurd to imagine or suppose the contrary opinion.

It is granted that the obedience which we can pay to any laws or commands of God, under any dispensation of grace, is not so perfect as to answer all the just demands of God in that dispensation, but has still some sinful defects in it, and therefore it cannot become a righteousness, sufficient to justify us, or pronounce us completely righteous in the court of God ; yet reason itself constantly assures us, that God is too wise and too holy a being, to pardon and accept, or justify any creature, who continues in constant and wilful disobedience. This would be a mere prostitution of his grace to the service of sin, and the encouragement of farther disobedience.

This



This would be to make God the patron of iniquity, and *Christ* the minister of sin, *Gal. ii. 17.* This would be turning the grace of God into wantonness. *Jude, verse 4.* And this exceeding great mercy of God, the holy apostle supposes, should be a sufficient guard against wilful sin, while we hope to be justified by faith. "If we are justified by faith in *Christ*, what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid." *Rom. vi. 1, 2.*

III. Besides this same apostle assures us, "that we are chosen, adopted, and forgiven, for this very end, that we might be holy and without blame before God in love." *Ephes. i. 4—6.* Therefore is "our conscience purged by the blood of *Christ*, from dead works, that we might serve the living God." *Heb. ix. 14.* Therefore are we redeemed from sin and hell "by the precious blood of the Son of God, that we might be freed from the power of our iniquities, and become a peculiar people zealous of good works." *Tit. ii. 14.* Our holiness is one chief design of God, in all the exercises of his grace: And as we seek to frustrate his design, if we hope for his acceptance without pursuing holiness, so he will frustrate all our hopes.

IV. And, it is upon this account, that holiness of heart and good works in life, where there is opportunity for them, are insisted upon as necessary to our final salvation through all the bible; and perhaps in one or two places of the new testament, it is mentioned as necessary, even to our justification, as well as to final salvation: Not that our best works of holiness are such a complete righteousness as to answer the present demands of God, under the gospel, but because they are necessary to shew the truth of our faith, and to render it a living justifying faith, which could not justify us if it were a dead faith, or without works. It is a working faith that must justify us, as good works evidence and prove the truth and life of our faith.

V. The apostle *James* argues this matter, particularly in the last half of his second chapter \* . viz. That works must be joined to our faith to make it a justifying faith.

From all which it is plain, that, in whatsoever scriptures, faith is said to justify us without works, it can mean no more than this, viz. that we are pardoned and accepted of God through our faith, trust or dependence on divine mercy, and on the mediation of *Christ*, under a sense of the imperfection of our best works, and their insufficiency to answer the demands of any law for righteousness or justification. But still in other scriptures we are told, it must be such a faith as works by love, purifies the heart, and wheresoever there is opportunity, it produces the fruits of holiness in our lives; and therefore good works in this sense are needful to secure our justification, as well as they are very necessary, on many accounts, to honour God in this world, and to make us meet for final salvation. Thus the free grace of God in our justification is honoured, and yet holiness is effectually secured in all them that are saved.

VI. To conclude this head, let it be remembered, that since faith and repentance, and holiness of heart and life, are all necessary, in order to our salvation under the gospel, it is of infinitely more importance to see to it, that we pursue and practise this faith, repentance and holiness, than to be nicely and critically skilled in adjusting the logical relations of these christian virtues to our salvation, or our justification, or in ranging them artificially in their proper place and order. The most skilful

\* Yet it is not amiss to observe here, that the apostle *James*, where he treats on this matter, in the second chapter of his epistle, speaks of that faith, which is a mere assent to the truth revealed, for it is such a faith as devils have, and it does not arise to a serious and humble hope or trust in the mercy of God, for complete salvation, according to the gospel, which alone is supposed to be productive of good works.

ful, most zealous, and most orthodox person, will certainly fall short of justification and salvation, if he has not these good qualities of faith and holiness found in him; and the weakest in knowledge shall be justified and saved, in whom these qualities and characters are found.

## C H A P T E R X.

*The commencement of the christian dispensation; or when was christianity set up in the world?*

I. **T**HIS last and best dispensation of grace, *viz.* the christian religion, was not properly set up in the world, during the life of *Christ*, though he was the illustrious and divine author and founder of it: And the reason is plain and obvious, *viz.* because many of the peculiar glories, duties and blessings of it, as they are described in the *Acts*, and in the sacred epistles, did really depend upon those facts, which had no existence in *Christ's* own life-time, *viz.* his death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation. It was not proper, therefore, that *Christ* should publicly preach these doctrines of his atonement for sin, of faith in his blood, of his royalties and intercession in heaven, and our living upon them, &c. in too plain and express a manner in his own life-time, because it would have given too much offence to his hearers: and his wisdom taught him to preach the truths of his gospel to men, "as they were able to bear it. *Mark* iv. 33. *John* xvi. 12.

II. Therefore it was but seldom that he mentioned these things in his own personal ministry; and it was but just at the end of his life, that he instituted the second sacrament, or the Lord's supper, which discovers plainly, and in most express language, the blessed doctrine of his atonement for sin; and it was after his resurrection he completed the form of the first sacrament or baptism, wherein our regeneration by the holy Spirit is represented, and the holy Spirit is expressly named.

III. The kingdom of *Christ*, therefore, or the christian dispensation was not properly set up in all its forms, doctrines and duties, till the following day of *Pentecost*, and the pouring down of the Spirit upon the apostles from our risen, ascended and exalted Saviour. It was just before his ascension, that our Saviour told them, that they should preach his gospel to all nations, when they had received the promised Spirit, and they were to tarry at *Jerusalem*, till they had received this power. *Luke* xxiv. 42.

The preaching of *Christ* and his life, his death and his resurrection, laid the foundations of his kingdom, but it was the preaching of the apostles, after he ascended to the throne in heaven, that actually set up his kingdom here on earth.

IV. The three or four years of *Christ's* personal ministry upon earth, were a sort of medium, or a hour of twilight between the darkness of *jewish* veils or types, and the clear day-light of the gospel or christianity: It was rather a removing away the rubbish of traditions, superstitions, and corruptions of truth and duty, &c. as a preparation for the kingdom of *Christ*, in the world, than the very constitution of that kingdom.

Accordingly

Accordingly, the preaching of *Christ* ran thus, *Matth.* iv. 17. "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And the petition in the Lord's prayer corresponds with it. *Matth.* vi. 10. "Thy kingdom come."

He himself preached only to the *jews* and *samaritans*, and forbid his apostles to go quite so far at that time; for as he would not suffer them to preach to the gentiles; so neither to carry their ministry into *Samaria*, *Matth.* x. 5. whereas his gospel was designed for the heathens also, even for all mankind. This he often intimated in parables, during his public ministry on earth.

He foretold them also, that he had "many things to say to them, which they could not bear at that time." See *John* xvi. 12. And several other things which they heard and saw in secret, which related to the setting up of his kingdom, they were charged not to "declare, till the son of man was risen from the dead." *Matth.* xvi. 20. and xvii. 9. and what they heard from him then in the ear, they should afterwards publish, as upon the house-tops.

V. Thence it follows, that in order to learn all the doctrines and duties of christian religion completely, we must not only consult the history of the four gospels, which contain the life of *Christ* and his personal ministry, but we must also, consult the acts of the apostles after his ascension, together with their epistles to the churches; for therein, this our holy religion is more completely discovered and explained in many particulars, relating to *Christ's* atonement for sin by his death, our pardon and justification by faith in him, his intercession, his headship of the church, his kingdom over all, his final judgment, &c. For all this was more fully revealed to the apostles, by their conversation with *Christ* about "his kingdom, forty days after his resurrection," *Acts* i. 3. and by the large effusions of the gifts of the holy Spirit upon them, when he ascended to heaven, and sent them to plant and propagate the christian church throughout all the world.

VI. And though the apostle *Paul* was the last of the apostles, that is, was called by *Christ* himself, after his ascension to heaven, yet we who are of the gentile nations, are more particularly to learn our religion, in the several doctrines and duties of it, from his writings, who was in a more especial manner commissioned to be the "apostle of the gentiles," *Gal.* ii. 7, 8. and who had this mystery of preaching the gospel to the gentile world, revealed to him before the other apostles well understood it. "He received his gospel from *Jesus Christ* himself, by revelation, as he tells us." *Gal.* i. 1, 2. "And he came not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles," either in knowledge or gifts, or labours, in success, or in sufferings; but was more eminent and glorious, in his active and passive services for *Christ*, than any other, and perhaps than they all. *1 Cor.* xv. 10. and *2 Cor.* xi. 5, 6. And he hath left more of his epistles behind him, for the use of the gentile churches, than all the rest put together.

It is moreover evident, from several of this apostle's writings, that he had a most peculiar insight into the various and different dispensations of God to man, from the beginning to the end of the world. His writings, therefore, eminently demand our perusal, if we would learn our lessons of christianity.

## CHAPTER XI.

*The gradual change from judaism to christianity ; and the jewish and gentile christians at last united in one body.*

I. **I**T is also from the writings of St. *Paul*, this great apostle, and from his practice and conduct, that we must chiefly learn the gradual procedure of God, in the abolition of the *jewish* dispensation, and the complete introduction of christianity into the world, or among all nations, both *jews* and gentiles, which thing has some difficulties attending it ; but I think may be made easy by the following account.

II. Let us first take notice, that among all the former dispensations of grace, there was none but that of *Adam* and *Noah*, who were the two common fathers of all mankind, which was designed for all the nations of the earth, till the dispensation of *Christ* was introduced. By this last dispensation, the heathen nations, as well as the *Jews*, even all mankind, wheresoever the gospel comes, are called to repentance and salvation. *Matth.* xxviii. 19. "Go teach all nations." *Acts* xvii. 30. "He now commands all men every where to repent." *Rev.* xxii. 17. "Whosoever heareth let him say, come ; and whosoever will, let him come."

As for the two dispensations of *Abraham* and *Moses*, they were more confined to a particular family, and to their posterity, which made up the *jewish* nation. The nations of the gentiles, had indeed, some acquaintance with these transactions of God with *Abraham* and the *jews*, partly by their traffic, but chiefly by their captivities and dispersions. These were greatly useful indeed, to preserve and restore the knowledge of the one true God, not only among the neighbouring heathens, but among distant countries, *Greece*, *Persia*, *Assyria*, *Egypt*, &c. And as these things prepared the way for their receiving the gospel, so many prophecies of old did plainly foretel that the last dispensation, or the kingdom of the *Messiah*, should extend to all nations.

III. Though the apostles by the general words of their commission, which was given them at *Christ*'s ascension, *Matth.* xxviii. 18—20. had an early right to preach the gospel to the heathen nations, yet this was made evident to them, by slow degrees, and consequently, their execution of this commission was gradual, according as divine wisdom saw proper, to enlighten them, and as divine providence conducted them.

IV. The first public ministration of the gospel in it's glory, was to the *jews* only: It began at *Jerusalem* in the days of pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out on the apostles, and other disciples, in the form of cloven tongues. As they were ordered to begin at *Jerusalem*, *Luke* xxiv. 47. so it was a most illustrious success, which attended the first opening of their commission : For, on this great day, three thousand souls were converted, that is, among the native *jews*, and the profelytes of the temple, or complete profelytes, who were reckoned as natives, though they came from various nations, as appears, *Acts* ii. 5—11. "Some time after this, five thousand more were converted at *Jerusalem*," *Acts* iv. 4. "and the number of believers still increased, and many priests received the faith." chapter vi. 7.

V. After

V. After this, the gospel was preached to the samaritan *jews*, whose predecessors were a sort of mingled people, and derived partly from *jews*, and partly from heathens. *Acts* viii. 5. Then the christian converts proceeded to preach the same gospel in foreign countries, but still to the *jews* only, though they dwelt at *Phenice*, *Cyprus*, *Antioch*, &c. *Acts* xi. 19.

VI. The next sort of converts, who were received into the christian church, were such as the scripture calls the devout or worshipping gentiles, or men fearing God; many of whom might be profelytes of the *jewish* gate\*, and who all owned the one true God. *Cornelius* and his house seemed to be the first fruits of this rank of converts, at the preaching of *St. Peter* in *Cesarea*. *Acts* x. 44 - 48. After which, the gospel was preached also to these devout gentiles, at *Tarsus* in *Cilicia*, at *Antioch* in *Syria*, and other places.

VII. And by degrees, *St. Paul*, having further and speedier light given him, than the rest of the apostles had, and being eminently made the apostle of the gentiles, preached *Christ* to the idolatrous gentiles, for their conversion. Perhaps *Sergius Paulus* the governor of *Cyprus*, was the first fruits of the converts of this rank; and the first great harvest of the conversion of the idolatrous heathens, was probably at *Antioch* in *Pisidia*. *Acts* xiii. 7, 14.

VIII. Though the apostles themselves, as well as other converts, might have learned by the many parables of *Christ*, and by the express words of their great commission at first, that the gospel should be preached to all nations, even to all the heathen world: and though it was foretold by so many of the prophets, yet the prejudices of the *jewish* nation, cleaved so close to some of them for a season, that they could hardly tell how to admit the thought, that the idolatrous gentiles should receive the gospel, or be received into full communion with christian churches; or even that the gospel was designed for them, at least till they were first made *jews*, or profelytes to judaism: But by much conversing with *Barnabas* and *Paul*, and by many glorious successes of the word, among the idolatrous gentiles, and the influences of the blessed Spirit on their minds, they were convinced and encouraged at last, to let the gospel of *Christ* have this general flow, and spread among all the heathens.

IX. All this while, many of the *jewish* converts to christianity, thought they were bound to practise all the *jewish* ceremonies; for they imagined that whoever would come into the church or kingdom of the *Messiah*, they must come by the way of judaism, that is, they must be circumcised, and become *Jews* first, and practise the law of *Moses*, in order to be christians, though in reality, at that time, it was almost going so far out of the way. And this was what occasioned the great debate in the synod of *Jerusalem*, where, the famous decree was made about abstinence from eating bloud and things strangled, &c. *Acts* xv.

X. During these times, those devout gentiles, who might be profelytes of the *jewish* gate; and were converted to the christian faith, and probably also all the gentile

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christians

\* It has been generally taken for granted, that the distinction between the profelytes of the gate, and the profelytes of the temple, or of righteousness, was begun many ages before, and was maintained among the *Jews* in our Saviour's time, and the next following ages: If this should prove to be a mistake, it will make no important difference in the scheme I have proposed. The gospel was first proposed to the *Jews*, then to the devout gentiles, who owned the true God, whether they were profelytes in any sense or no, and then to the idolatrous gentiles; for it is evident, that the devout gentiles were nearer to the faith of *Christ*, and might reasonably attend to, and accept the gospel much sooner than idolaters.

christians \* who had been before idolaters, were for a season laid under the restraints of that apostolical decree against eating blood, things strangled, and things offered to idols, lest the *jews* or *jewish* converts should take too much offence, and scarce admit them into their communion, as being polluted.

And it is not improbable that these were the restraints laid by the *jews*, during all former ages, on the proselytes of their gate, or those gentiles who were allowed to live within the towns or cities of *Judea*.

This decree was transmitted round the gentile churches, *Acts* xvi. 4. who probably at that time, were made up of some idolatrous gentiles, as well as devout gentiles, or the *jewish* proselytes of the gate.

XI. It was for a very good reason, that the sin of fornication, which was always immoral and unlawful, was joined in that prohibition with blood and things strangled, and things offered to idols, because the heathens, by their eating blood, and especially in their idol-feasts, were tempted to fornication and many pollutions; and therefore this moral prohibition is set before their eyes, together with the other ceremonial prohibitions, to keep them more effectually from these practices, while they gave such offence to the *jewish* christians, and the *jews*.

XII. But as to those other ceremonial prohibitions, this apostolical decree seems to be but a temporary constitution or restraint; because some time afterwards the apostle *Paul* did not keep the *corinthian* converts, who had been idolatrous gentiles, under this restraint; but permitted them to eat things offered to idols, wheresoever their liberty could not be made an occasion of offence, or stumbling to other weaker christians, such as had not learned the complete liberty of the gospel of *Christ*, so well as they. *1 Cor.* viii. 7—13.

And when these practices ceased to give offence to *jews* or *jewish* christians, I can see no reason why the proselytes should not be free also, or why they should have more restraint laid on them than others.

XIII. That the prohibition of eating blood and things strangled, as well as of things offered to idols, was but a temporary rule, may further appear from the early and original reason of this prohibition, *viz.* because the life or blood of the animal was claimed by God, and given to God, to make atonement for the soul, which is very expressly asserted, *Lev.* xvii. 10—14. And by the pouring the blood out before God on the ground, the flesh was, as it were, sanctified to the use of food for the eater. And no doubt this was the chief reason why eating blood was prohibited to *Noah* and his sons, and it was derived down to the patriarchs, together with the doctrine of sacrifices. And so long as blood had any manner of appearance of making atonement in sacrifice, that is, till the dissolution of the *jewish* state, so long was blood forbidden to the *jews*, and to those gentile christians, especially who dwelt near them, or conversed with them.

But when the *jewish* state was dissolved, and all such brutal sacrifices were utterly abolished, then judaism vanished, and gospel liberty was more established; and there could be very few or none to take offence at the eating of blood. And then perhaps

St.

\* I add, and probably also, all the gentile christians, who had been idolaters, and were then converted, might be restrained, as far as the proselyted gentiles were at this season; because the reason of it is the very same, *viz.* lest offence should be given to the *jews*, and *jewish* christians. For, by the way, I may say it is scarce to be supposed, that the converted proselytes, or devout gentiles, who were so much better men, and so much nearer to the truth, should have heavier bonds laid upon them, when they received *Christ*, than those idolatrous gentiles, who were much worse men, and farther from the truth.

St. Paul's advice to other gentile churches became universal, and set them all free as, "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink," *Col. ii. 16.* "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles eat; asking no question for conscience-sake," that is, not inquiring whether it were offered to idols, or whether it were killed in the *jewish* manner, by letting out all the blood, and *1 Cor. x. 25.* "for to the pure all things are pure." *Tit. i. 15.* I know and am persuaded by the Lord *Jesus*, there is nothing unclean of itself but let no man put a stumbling-block in his brother's way." *Rom. xiv. 13, 14.* "Meat commendeth us not to God; neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we eat not are we the worse." *1 Cor. viii. 8.* Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving—for it is sanctified, not by pouring out the blood, but by the word of God and prayer," *1 Tim. iv. 3, 4, 5.*

XIV. But the gradual change from judaism to christianity will be more fully understood, if we attend to this which follows.

In the *jewish* dispensation there were three sorts of laws, viz. moral, ceremonial, and political.

1. The moral laws were everlasting, and belonged to all the dispensations of God, which relate to the children of men in all ages, whether patriarchal, *jewish* or christian, and were never abolished.

2. The political laws of the *jews* were the civil laws of that nation, which God, as their supreme king or political head, gave them by *Moses*, to be observed in their country, so long as their state or polity subsisted. The gentiles were never under these laws; and therefore when they turned christians, their conversion could by no means bring them into a subjection thereto; for christianity makes no alteration in the civil governments of this world.

The *jews* or subjects of the government of *Judea*, especially while they resided in the land of *Judea*, were the proper subjects of these political laws, whether they received christianity or no: And therefore *jewish* christians in *Judea* complied with them, till their polity was finished by the destruction of *Jerusalem*.

3. As for the ceremonial laws, they were particularly designed, not only to distinguish the *jews* from other nations, but also to be types and figures of the blessings of the gospel; and therefore as they are wisely appointed to foreshew these blessings of christianity, and to be a distinguishing mark of the *jews*, so they were as wisely worn out and abolished when christianity was introduced, and the partition wall of distinction between *jews* and gentiles was broken down. They were but shadows or figures for the time being, and must vanish when the substance appeared. St. Paul, in his epistle to the *Hebrews*, chapters ix. and x. and to the *Colossians*, chapter ii. evidently uses this argument for their abolition, the great design of them being fulfilled.

XV. It is plain therefore, that these ceremonial or religious laws were not lawful for the gentile converts out of *Judea*, to observe at all, as St. Paul writes in his epistle to the *Galatians* "If ye are circumcised, *Christ* shall profit you nothing." *Gal. v. 2.* since they were never appointed for the gentiles by the great God, nor imposed upon them by *Christ*; and he is zealous to maintain this their liberty against all *jewish* impositions and impostors, who would persuade the gentiles to be circumcised, and to observe their ceremonies.

XVI. As for the *jewish* christians, though they were not obliged to observe them as matters of religion, after the setting up of christianity, yet since all the *jewish* nation were so much prejudiced in favour of these ceremonies, and since the *jewish* christians

ians, and even some of the apostles, could so hardly be brought off from them, they seemed to be indulged for a season in this practice.

And even St. Paul himself, who was a *jewish* christian, at particular times engages in the practice of them; not as things which he believed necessary, in order to serve God, but as mere lawful and indifferent things, and as matters of present expediency, which were wearing off, waxing old and vanishing away, as *Heb. viii. 13.* that is, they were vanishing as fast as judaism hastened to its period, and as fast as human nature could bear the wearing out of its old prejudices: And therefore he became all to all at that time, that he might gain some proselytes, *1 Cor. ix. 20—22.* *To the jews I became as a jew, that I might gain the jews. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.* Therefore he took Timothy, whose mother was a *jewess*, and circumcised him, when he sent him out as a preacher, *Acts xvi. 1—3.* in order to ingratiate him with the *jews*, or lest he should give offence to *jewish* christians: Therefore he himself consented to go through the rites of purification as a nazirite, after the *jewish* manner, *Acts xxi. 23, 24, 26.* So graciously has God, the ruler of the world, condescended to the weakness of men, by indulging these indifferent things for a season in several parts of his transactions with them, and in divers ages, because human nature can hardly be led all at once into so great a change of principles and practices.

XVII. There might also be another reason for St. Paul and other *jewish* converts, to comply with some of these ceremonies for a season, because the ceremonial and political laws among the *jews*, were so intermingled, that it was sometimes very difficult; if not impossible, to distinguish the one from the other: And while the *jewish* polity lasted, several of these ceremonial laws might be complied with by *jewish* christians, under the civil government of the *jews*, considered as parts of that polity or government, though they might know their own real freedom and release, which Christ had given them from all *jewish* ceremonies, considered as matters of religion. \*

XVIII. But after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the dissolution of the *jewish* state, their political as well as ceremonial laws were utterly abolished; and by this time, not only the remaining apostles, but all the *jewish* christians, were let more clearly into the knowledge of their own liberty in Christ Jesus, and their freedom from every thing written in the laws of Moses, which was not moral.

Then the differences between the *jewish* and gentile covenants were taken away, and by degrees they came more perfectly to unite themselves together in all ordinances of christian communion, in their several churches through the world, according to the frequent directions and exhortations that St. Paul had given them in the xiv chapter to the *Romans*, and several other parts of his writings. See on this subject an excellent dissertation of Mr. Benson, at the end of his late paraphrase and notes on *Titus*.

Thus

\* Yet, perhaps, it may be worth enquiring, whether those ceremonies, which were plainly and purely religious, might not be appointed, partly for the public and visible honour of God, when he resided in a bright cloud in the tabernacle and the temple, as the visible head of a visible church on earth: And though he never did reside visibly in the second temple, yet when he rent the veil of the temple at the death of Christ, and when the holy of holies, which was his presence chamber, was thrown open and common, then God ceased to have any appearance of a residence there, and their church state was in a great measure dissolved, they having, if I may so express it, driven God from among them, by slaying his Son. And from that time their religious ceremonies might be so far abolished, as to become needless; yet they were indulged for a season, as indifferent things to the *jewish* christians, who had been used to practise them, till the holy city and the temple, or God's visible palace, were utterly destroyed, and those remains of a visible church were scattered through the earth.



Thus much shall suffice concerning the five dispensations of the covenant of grace.

## C H A P T E R XII.

### *Of those who have had no revelation.*

I. **A**S for all the persons, the families and the nations of mankind, who have lived under these various dispensations of grace, it is evident that they have had the means of grace and salvation set before them, to recover them from the ruin of the fall of *Adam*. If they neglect this great salvation, they must perish with great justice.

But as for those, who by the negligence and iniquity of their fathers, have lost all notices and traditions of all divine revelations, and of all the dispensations of grace, and particularly, of the last of them which their fathers enjoyed, whether it were patriarchal, *jeruisb* or christian, and which they were entrusted to convey to their posterity, these have nothing remaining, but that knowledge of God, his law, his government and his mercy, which they could derive from the light of nature, and reason, and observation. And, indeed, there were many religious observations which they could and ought to have made of the nature and mercy of the great God, and his gracious providence, his long suffering, and his continued benefits, as well as from the working of their own consciences, in accusing or excusing their conduct, &c. from which they might infer something of grace and hope.

II. It appears, by their daily experience, that they are sinners: Conscience tells them much of their duty, shews them the law of works, accuses them of sin, and condemns them thereby. The daily providence of God shews them they have time and space to repent of sin, and trust in his mercy; he hath given them the common comforts of life, and "filled their hearts with food and gladness, and thereby he hath left himself not without witness, both of his power, government and goodness to them." *Acts* xiv. 17. He hath intimated to them hereby, "that they should seek after God and his mercy, if happily they might feel after him, and find him," *Acts* xvii. 27. supposing they should or might "know that the long suffering and forbearance of God, should lead them to repentance." *Rom.* ii. 4. So that, at least, they might reasonably say with the *ninevites*, to encourage their repentance and their faith, "who can tell, but God may be gracious?" *Jonab* iii. 9.

III. All this, with many other things, seem to give us some notice, that the sinful race of the heathens and savages, even those who never heard of the gospel, in any revealed dispensation of it, are not left merely in the condition of fallen angels to perish unavoidably without any hope, or any grace to trust in, or without any encouragement or motive to repentance.

IV. It is true, their light is but dim, and their means of grace run very low; yet if there shall be found among these persons or nations, any, who fear God and work righteousness, who repent of sin and hope in a merciful God, we believe they shall be accepted of him, through an unknown mediator as *Cornelius* was: For this fear of God, repentance and hope, is God's own work in their hearts, and he will not condemn the penitent soul. *Acts* x. 35. *Prov.* xxviii. 13. Nor will he destroy his  
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own good work in the heart of man, nor shall any penitent and pious creature perish for not knowing and believing those revelations of grace, which he never heard of, and which he could never know or believe.

## C H A P T E R XIII.

### *The last judgment.*

I. **W**HEN all the dispensations of grace are finished—then comes the great day of judgment. Then all mankind, who have acted their parts on the stage of the world, in the several successive ages, shall appear together; those who are gone down to death, shall arise from dead at the call or summons of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who is appointed judge of the quick and the dead: That is, of those who shall then be found living at his appearance, as well as of those who shall be raised from the grave.

II. In that great and solemn day, every man shall be judged according to that dispensation of grace, under which he lived, whether it were that of *Adam* or *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Moses* or *Christ*: And sentence shall be passed upon every man according to his works, that is, according to his compliance or non-compliance with the rules of that dispensation.

III. Those who have refused to repent of sin, and to trust in divine mercy, so far as it was revealed in the dispensation, under which they lived, they stand already condemned by the original moral law of God, or the law of innocence, which they have broken; and they shall have that condemnation, as it were doubly sealed upon them, for refusing to accept of offered grace. *John* iii. 18, 36. “He that believeth not, is condemned already:—And the wrath of God abideth on him, because he hath not believed on the Son of God.” But those who have repented of sin, and trusted in grace, and lived according to the dispensation under which they were placed, they may hope the condemning sentence of the broken law is reversed, and that they shall be publicly acquitted and absolved from their guilt, they shall have all their imperfections publicly forgiven for the sake of what *Christ* has done and suffered, they shall be accepted, and their good works approved, they shall be acknowledged as the children of God, and be adjudged to eternal life, “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.” *Matth.* xxv. 34.

IV. Here, let it be observed, that in the sense of the gospel, good men while they are here upon earth, stand justified in the sight of God, as we have seen before, not by any righteousness of their own works, for they have no such righteousness; but by faith in his mercy, through a mediator. This is for the “honour of divine grace, which justifies them freely through the redemption that is in *Christ*.” *Rom.* iii. 24, 28. and iv. 5. yet in the “day of judgement, men shall be justified or condemned according to their works and their words in the sight of the world.” *Rom.* ii. 13—16. *Matth.* xii. 37. because this public judgment is appointed for the honour of divine equity or justice, to make it appear to all the world, that God distributes rewards and punishments to persons who are fitly qualified for the one, or the other, *Isai.* iii. 10. “Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their  
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their doings. Wo to the wicked ! it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him." And our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the appointed judge of all men, hath the same orders to execute, for "he shall render to every man according as his work shall be." *Rev.* xxii. 12, 14, 15. "Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. But the dogs, forcerers, idolaters, liars, &c. are all without," they are excluded from heavenly blessings, by the judge of all the earth, for they are utterly unfit as well as unworthy to enjoy it.

V. To make this matter yet plainer, and to reconcile the different representations which are given of our justification by faith in this life, and our justification by our words and works at the day of judgment, it must be considered, that every christian, who is admitted into heaven, may be said to have a twofold right to it. *viz.* there is a right of inheritance which is by faith, whereby we are justified, and become the children of God, and joint-heirs with *Christ*." *Gal.* iii. 26. *Rom.* viii. 17. being interested by the free gift of God in the benefit of his Son's purchase, that is, the inheritance of heaven: And there is also a right of congruity or fitness, which arises from actual holiness of heart and life, whereby we are prepared for the actual possession of this inheritance. So an infant may have a right of inheritance to his father's estate, by his birth or adoption ; but he has not a right of congruity or fitness, till he grow up to twenty-one years, or to the age of discretion and capacity to enjoy it, and then he is put into the possession. I think this distinction will sufficiently reconcile the appearing difficulties.

VI. As for those persons, those nations or ages, that have so far lost all the revelations and dispensations of grace, that they know nothing of their own duty, or of the grace of God, but what the light of nature teaches them, they shall be judged according to those teachings of the light of nature, or that knowledge of God, of his law and his government, of his grace and their duty, which they might have arrived at by the right exercise of their conscience and reasoning powers. This seems to be the sense of those words of the apostle, *Rom.* ii. 12—15. "as many as have sinned without law, that is, without a written or revealed law, they shall perish without law ; and as many as have sinned in, or under a written or revealed law, they shall be judged by that law ; the gentiles which have not any written law, are a law to themselves, which shews the work of the moral law written in their hearts ; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts accusing or excusing them."

But how far divine compassion shall exercise itself further in unpromised ways towards any of those persons or nations, who by the negligence and iniquity of their parents, had lost all the revelations of grace, is to be left to the wise, the righteous and the merciful judge of all men.

## C H A P T E R    X I V .

*Conclusion of this essay.*

I. **A** DUE survey, of these dispensations of God to man in this light, perhaps may enable us to understand many parts of the bible much better, since it will happily account for many difficulties in the old testament and the new, which seem to me very hard to be solved in any other way, to the satisfaction of a diligent enquirer.

II. And as I have been led into this scheme, and manner of conceiving the transactions of God with men, by a diligent perusal of the holy scriptures, rather than by any human creeds, confessions or systems, either ancient or modern, so, I cannot but recommend the serious consideration of it to those who are resolved to follow the same method of study, and read the scriptures, to learn from thence the articles of our christian faith and practice. Let them like the noble *bereans*, search the scriptures, and see whether this representation of divine things does not come very near to the truth, and make scripture more easy to be understood by shewing the connexion and consistence of every part of it with all the rest.

III. It is confessed after all, there may be several difficulties still attending this scheme of the dispensations of grace, and, perhaps, some mistakes in it; I am but a weak and fallible creature, and "the ways of God are unsearchable to man, and his judgments past finding out." *Rom. xi. 33.* But let it be observed, that among a hundred men, every one can much sooner find faults in any system of divinity, or in the scheme of any science, than one of them will draw up a scheme or system, which hath no difficulties.

IV. It has been often found, both in human and divine sciences, that when some particular parts of a scheme or system appear a little disagreeable to our sentiments, as perhaps this may do, we are presently ready to correct them; but, we find also in a little time those supposed corrections, or their necessary consequences, will not comport with other most plain and evident truths, that relate to the same subject, and we then are forced to retract our corrections. While men in this frail state are searching into the deep things of God, we must be content with some remaining darkneses: If there be any short summary of these transactions of God with men, which is more consistent with itself, which is nearer to scripture, and has fewer difficulties than this, I shall be glad to receive it and submit to it. "O Lord! Send out thy light, and thy truth; let them lead us to thy holy hill, let them bring us to the tabernacles" of thy grace, and to the mansions of thy glory. *Psal. xliiii. 3.* Amen.

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THE  
D O C T R I N E  
OF THE  
P A S S I O N S  
EXPLAINED and IMPROVED.



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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**T**HE motions of the heart of man are infinitely various : The different forms and shapes, in which our passions appear, the sudden and secret turns and windings of them through the heart, with the strange mixtures and complications of them, in their continual exercise, are innumerable and nameless. It is as hard, almost, to reduce them to a perfect scheme, and to range all their excursions into exact order of science, as it is to bring them under complete government in practice.

Yet, since it is of such vast importance in human life, to regulate their motions, that they may not become utterly exorbitant and mischievous, I thought it proper, for this end, to make a diligent enquiry into the nature of these mingled powers of flesh and spirit, to take a survey of them in a comprehensive view, and draw them into a little system. With no small care, I have attempted, to range them in some tolerable order and method under general names, to trace out and observe their causes, their effects, their influences on human affairs, and the various purposes which they serve in the life of man. This is not only desirable, as it is a part of the science of human nature, or the knowledge of ourselves, without which, we can never pretend to be philosophers ; but this may also give us some assistance toward the forming proper rules for their better management, and the bringing these active and restless promoters, or disturbers of our happiness, under a moral and religious discipline ; and without this, we can neither be men of wisdom nor piety.

The natural affections of man, are designed for valuable ends in life, when put under due government : They will render difficult duties easy, and relieve many of the troubles and fatigues of the present state. But if they are let run loose without controul, or, if they are abused, and employed to wrong purposes, they become the springs and occasions of much mischief and misery.

The interests of virtue and vice are greatly concerned in this matter. The regulation of the passions, is a thing of unspeakable moment to us, considered either as men, or as christians. Ungoverned passions break all the bonds of human society and peace, and would change the tribes of mankind into brutal herds, or make the world a mere wilderness of savages. Passion unbridled, would violate all the sacred ties of religion, and raise the sons of men in arms against their creator. Where passion runs riot, there are none of the rights of God or man secure from it's inferences.

But when these vehement powers of nature are reduced to the obedience of reason, it renders our conduct amiable and useful to our fellow creatures, and makes virtue shine in the world in it's proper ornaments ; this will go a great way to procure our own ease and happiness, so far as it is attainable in this life, and it will tend to make  
our

our neighbours happy as ourselves. What is the true use or abuse of the passions in religious affairs, is very little mentioned in this treatise, because it is the whole professed subject and design of those discourses of the love of God, &c. which were joined with this treatise in the first edition in it, and I intend shall be shortly published again\*: But these two books now stand separate, that readers of a different genius may please themselves. Thus much I may be permitted to say here, that the soul which governs it's affections by the sacred dictates of reason and religion, and keeps itself at a proper loose from every creature, stands much less exposed to the injuries and sorrows of life, and is better prepared to part with all earthly comforts at the call of providence. Such a happy temper of mind will enable us chearfully to resign life itself, with all it's mortal interests, at the appointed hour, and to enter gloriously upon the nobler employments, and the diviner joys that await us in the upper world.

\* This "doctrine of the passions," in the first edition of it, stood merely as an introduction to the "discourses of the love of God, and the use and abuse of the passions in religion:" But being corrected and enlarged, it is now published alone as a distinct treatise. "The discourses of the love of God," &c. are also printed by themselves.

THE



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T H E  
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P A S S I O N S, &c.

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S E C T I O N I.

*The various senses of the word.*

**T**HE word passion, in the abstracted and logical sense of it, denotes the receiving of the action of some agent : As if an archer bend his bow, the archer is the agent ; the bow is the patient ; the bending, as it comes from the archer, is the action ; but as it terminates in the bow, it is called the passion. But this is intirely a philosophical sense of the word, and never used in common life ; therefore I dismifs it.

Yet we may just take notice, that the term passion sometimes signifies any painful suffering of soul and body : For, it is in this sense we use it, when we speak of the passion of *Christ*, whereby we mean his agony in the garden, and especially his death on the cross ; and so it is used in our translation of the bible, *Acts* i. 3. “ He shewed himself alive after his passion.”

Passions, in this discourse, signify the same with natural affections in general, such as love, hatred, joy, hope, anger, sorrow, &c.

Here we may observe, that the term passion is often used in conversation in a more limited sense, to denote one of these particular affections, *viz.* anger or sudden resentment ; as the word affection is used sometimes also in a limited sense, and signifies love. So we say, *Moses* was once in a passion, whereby we mean he was angry ; or *Jonah* was a passionate man, that is, he was given to sudden and violent resentments : And, in the same manner, we say, *David* had an affection for *Jonathab*, that is, he loved him : Or *St. John* was a very affectionate man, that is, he was of a loving and kind disposition. But in this discourse we take passion and affection to mean the same thing, and to extend to any of these powers or principles in human nature, which were just mentioned ; such as love, joy, &c.

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The name of passion seems to have been given originally to these affections of human nature, either from the impressions or commotions which the animal powers receive by the soul's perception of that object which raises the passion, or from the impression or sensation which the soul receives by this commotion of the animal powers, or perhaps from both these, as this subject will be afterward explained.

## S E C T I O N II.

*The description of the passions, together with a general division of them into three ranks.*

**I**T is evident from the nature of things, that there must be in pure and separate spirits some affections correspondent to most of those passions which our spirits feel who dwell in animal bodies. They have love and hatred, desire and aversion, joy and sorrow, fear and hope, as well as we: But while we dwell in these bodies, the affections of our minds will be accompanied with some commotions of animal nature, and some peculiar sensations, whereby, as I hinted, they obtain the name of passions. Now it is exceeding hard, if not impossible, for us precisely to distinguish how far the animal nature, and how far the mind or spirit, are concerned in producing all these effects, and in raising these sensations or commotions which we call passions. I shall confine myself, therefore, in this discourse, only to give some account of these complex workings of our compound nature, as we find them in our present embodied state.

The passions may be thus described: They are those sensible commotions of our whole nature, both soul and body, which are occasioned by the perception of an object according to some special properties that belong to it. See Section III. Remark 2, and 3.

An object which is suited to excite the passions, must have one of these three properties, viz. it must be either rare and uncommon, or good and agreeable, or evil and disagreeable: Or at least we must have such an idea and apprehension of it before it can excite any passion in us.

Now if we will distinguish the chief passions of our nature according to their objects, and confine ourselves to the common words and names whereby they are usually called, we may make three ranks of them; which for distinction's sake, I shall name the first, second and third rank. The two first are primitive, the third is derivative.

The first rank of passions are these three; admiration, love, and hatred.

If the object be rare or uncommon, it excites admiration or wonder.

If we look on it as good or any way agreeable to us, it may engage our love; but if it be evil or disagreeable, it moves our hatred. Note here, I take the words good and evil, and consequently, the words love and hatred, in a very large sense, which I shall account for afterwards.

The second rank of chief passions are the divers kinds of love and hatred, which also are distinguished by their objects.

If the object appear valuable, it raises a love of esteem; if worthless, the hatred is called contempt.

If the object appear fit to receive good from us, it is love of benevolence, or good-will : If it appear rather fit to receive evil from us, the hatred is called malevolence, or ill-will.

If the object appear pleasing, and fit to do us good, it raises the love of complacence, or delight ; if it be displeasing, and unfit to do us good, it excites a displicence, or dislike.

From love and hatred in their different kinds, but chiefly from complacence and displicence, arise several more chief passions, which may be called the third rank, and which are also distinguished by their objects.

Note, In this pair of passions, complacence and displicence, and in all the third rank, which is chiefly derived from them, the pleasing object is more properly called evil, than in the passions before-mentioned.

If the good be absent or unpossessed, and possible to be obtained, the passion of love grows up to desire ; if the evil may possibly come upon us, the hatred expresses itself in aversion, or avoidance : Though there may be also an aversion to some evil from which we are sufficiently secure.

If there be any prospect of obtaining the absent good, there is a passion excited which is called hope ; but if the absent evil be likely to come upon us, it raises the passion of fear.

Fear also arises from a present or expected good in danger of being lost : And there is a hope of security from some absent threatening evil, or of deliverance from some evil that is present.

If the good be actually obtained, or the evil prevented, it excites our joy and gladness ; if the good be actually lost, or the evil come upon us, it causes sorrow and grief.

Whoever helps us to attain this good, or prevents the evil, excites in us gratitude : Whosoever hinders our attainment of good, or promotes the evil, raises our anger.

There are very few, if any, of the passions for which we have any name, and which are usually taken notice of in the heart of man ; but they may be reduced to some or other of these general heads, as I shall explain them.

I do not pretend to lay down this distinction and arrangement of the passions of man, as an uncontroverted or certain thing : But upon the best survey I can take of the various workings of the heart of man, as well as of the several authors who have written on this subject, I do not find any of them lead me into an easier or better scheme than this. A good logical scheme and arrangement of things has some advantages in it ; it shews us the relations of various things to each other, their correspondences, their similitudes, and differences ; and it greatly assists the memory : But it is still of more importance to describe the several passions with justice and truth as they are in nature, than to range them in logical classes and just order.

### S E C T I O N III.

*A further account of the nature of the passions, in some remarks concerning them.*

**I**T appears by what I have already said, that the passions are certain principles or powers in man of a mixed nature, belonging partly to the soul or mind, and partly to the animal body, that is, the flesh and blood : For it is evident, that when

we perceive any object with such properties as are before-mentioned, we find usually some ferments of the blood, or natural spirits \*, or some alterations which affect the body, as well as we feel special impressions on our minds. What these special ferments are, or what the distinct commotions of the nerves, or inward parts of animal nature in the several distinct passions, is not easy to determine with exactness: It requires a good skill in anatomy, and long and watchful observation of the workings of the several passions, to write on this subject with success. The ingenious *Descartes* has aimed at it in his treatise on this subject, and perhaps hath as happily performed it as could be expected, considering how much less acquaintance with animal nature the learned world had arrived at in his age.

I proceed now to give some further account of these pathetic powers of human nature, by the following remarks.

I. It is not necessary that the object which excites our passions, should be something actually present with us; for if there be but the idea of it found in the mind or imagination, it is sufficient to raise intense passions; sometimes horror and fear may be unruly and violent when the objects or occasions of them are far distant; but they are supposed to be approaching: And sometimes the very absence of pleasing or displeasing objects may be the occasion of grief or joy; but it is then the perception of this absence that is the immediate cause of them.

II. The passions are wont to be described as mere inward sensations †. But since there are some few of the passions that include acts of volition in them, or some propensities or outgoings of the will, as well as perceptions of the mind, such as the passions of desire, aversion, and their species, I chuse rather in this place to describe the passions in general, as some sensible commotions of our whole nature, both soul and body, which description may perhaps more fully comprehend all the passions.

III. Though most of the passions are confessed to be sensations, yet I have frequently in my "discourses of the love of God, &c." called them active and sprightly powers, because some of them include the act of the will in them, and very few of them are so intirely passive, but they have a tendency to excite the person to lively and vigorous actions of some kind or other: And indeed this is the chief design of them in the nature of man.

IV. Because several of the passions, or these commotions of animal nature, do particularly affect the heart, therefore the heart, in the common sense of mankind, is reckoned the seat of the passions, and they are sometimes called the passions of the heart. It was probably from this observation, that some antient philosophers and writers, among other nations, as well as the *jews*, supposed the heart to be the special seat and residence of the soul or intellectual spirit, and on this account the heart in scripture, as well as in heathen writings, is used to signify the soul itself.

V. The ferment of the animal juices, and the motion of the blood, are not the only things which are affected while passion is raised; for most of the passions have some effects on the colour or features of the countenance, and especially on the eyes, and

\* What I call here natural spirits, are sometimes called animal or vital spirits, which are supposed to be the springs or mediums of animal motions, both inward and outward: But whether these be some refined spirituous liquids, or vapours drawn off from the blood, or whether they be nothing else but the elastic or springy parts of the air drawn in by respiration, and mingled with the blood and other animal juices, is not yet agreed by philosophers.

† I have sometimes described the passions, as the soul's sensations of some commotions in animal nature, arising from the perception of peculiar objects. And I think it is not of much importance whether they be called the soul's sensations of commotions in the body, or sensible-commotions of soul and body. I am sure both are included in every passion.

and discover themselves by gestures or voices, or other outward signs: So sorrow is discovered by tears and groans, mirth by laughter, joy by a smiling countenance, and anger by frowning, &c. Whence it comes to pass that many of them are so happily imitated by painters.

VI. It is true, that the passions are generally, if not always, raised or occasioned by the perception of some object, according to the special properties that belong to it; yet there are several things in the nature and the life of man which greatly dispose the heart to particular passions, and render it much more susceptible of them; such as age, constitution, health or sickness, weather, &c. which I shall hereafter enumerate more particularly.

VII. Though the complexion of some persons make them more susceptible of these pathetic commotions in general than others are, and though the natural or accidental state or circumstances of some persons, and at certain seasons, dispose them more to particular passions, such as fear, anger, joy, hope, &c. yet there is scarce any person, whatsoever be his complexion, or his age, or his circumstances, who makes a strict and narrow observation of what passes within him, but will find almost all the passions of nature, at one time or other, rising in him in greater or less degrees.

VIII. Though the chief, and the original passions are these which were before named, viz. wonder, love, hatred, esteem, contempt, &c. yet they include a great variety of particular affections under them. In many of the passions the ferments of flesh and blood, and the sensations and motions of the mind, are so exceeding swift and momentaneous, they are so joined and complicated with each other, and they run so often into one another in an undistinguished mixture, that it is exceeding hard to give such an accurate and distinct account of all of them as one would wish or desire.

IX. There is another thing, also, that makes a just and accurate scheme of the passions very difficult, if not impossible; and that is, that the language of men has sometimes made one word to signify very different passions or appetites; as for instance, the word love signifies gluttony, which is the love of eating good victuals; and friendship, which is the love of an equal intelligent being; and ambition, which is the love of honour; and concupiscence or lust; all these are called love. So modesty, which is the spring of innocent blushes, and the guard of virtue; and that blush of confusion and dishonour, which is the just effect of guilt, are both called shame. These are different ideas, but the same name still.

Again, the language of men hath sometimes combined and associated several ideas of different passions into one word, or name; such as jealousy, suspicion, envy: And sometimes where the passions themselves have scarce any difference, yet there are different names for them; as anger, and wrath, and fury: And there are many other combined passions that have no name. A perfect scheme therefore is not to be expected.

X. Finally, I would give my readers notice, that several of these principles, qualities, or tempers in men, which I have ranked among the passions, may be called virtues and vices; as pride, envy, good-will, compassion, &c. and are so described by the writers of morality: But since they are often attended with particular ferments or commotions of animal nature, and distinct sensations of the mind, I have given them a place among the passions.

These things being premised, I proceed now to give some account of each general or original passion, with the particulars contained under it.

## S E C T I O N IV.

*Of admiration or wonder.*

**T**HE most primitive and original passions, or those of the ~~first~~ rank, are admiration, love, and hatred.

First, admiration. When we perceive any object that is rare and uncommon, that is new and strange, either for it's kinds, or for it's qualities; or when we meet with such an occurrence or event as is unusual or unexpected; or such as is at least unusual, at such a particular time and place, we are struck with admiration or wonder: And that without any consideration, whether the object be valuable or worthless, whether it be good or evil. We wonder at a very great or a very little man, a dwarf or a giant; at a very little horse, at a huge snake or toad, at an elephant, or a whale, or a comet, or at any rare performances of art, as moving machines, such as clocks, watches with a variety of uncommon motions and operations; we wonder at a piece of extraordinary wit, skill or learning; even, at artificial trifles, as a flea kept alive in a chain; at any uncommon appearances in nature discovered by a telescope, a microscope, &c. Admiration has no regard to the agreeableness or disagreeableness of the object, but only the rarity of it. And for this reason wonder seems to be the first of the passions.

If the object which is rare and uncommon appear to us on a sudden, or in an unexpected moment, we give it the name of surprize.

If our wonder arise to a high degree, we call it amazement or astonishment.

This passion discovers itself by lifting up of the hands or the eyes, and by an intense fixation of the sight or the thoughts. When it rises very high on a sudden, it will stop the voice, and reduce the person as it were to the fixed posture and silence of a statue for a few moments, this is called stupor. And if fear be joined with it, it will produce more unhappy effects.

Let it be observed, that this passion has properly no opposite, because if the object be not rare or new, or if the appearance be not sudden or unexpected, but a mere common and familiar thing, or an expected occurrence, we receive it with great calmness, and feel no such commotion of nature about it; we treat it with neglect instead of wonder: Now, neglect is no passion. The rest of the passions, at least the most of them, go in pairs.

Let us take notice also, that admiration is most frequently excited in young persons, and such as have had but little opportunity of furnishing themselves with the knowledge of various things, either in nature or providence, or in the sciences; whereas wise and learned men, who have seen or known a large variety of objects and events, seldom find things rare and new, or strange enough to wonder at.

I might observe also, that those who are of a very heavy and stupid genius, have not curiosity or sprightliness enough in their constitution to take notice of things new and strange; and they are not very subject to admiration.

Thus it appears, why wise men and fools do not so often wonder, as persons of a middle rank of genius or improvement.

The great end and design of this passion of admiration, is to fix our attention upon the admired object, to impress it more effectually upon our memory, as well as to give a sensible delight to the mind of man, which loves newness and variety;  
and

and especially where the object has any thing in it that is valuable or agreeable, which would incline us to esteem or love it. This leads me to the next general passions of the first rank.

## S E C T I O N V.

*Love and hatred.*

**T**HE motions of the mind, and the correspondent ferments of the blood, are very numerous in our natures, and are not always happily distinguished by those words and names, which have been commonly applied to them. When we treat of any subject, we must for the most part take the names of things as we find them, for there is no possibility of making the bulk of mankind for whom we write, change their usual forms of speech, in order to obtain a more philosophical exactness.

The next primitive passions therefore, I continue to call love and hatred.

Love, in general, implies some approbation of, or propensity towards what appears to us as good: Hatred, is a disapprobation of, or aversion to what appears to us as evil. But the words good and evil, in human languages, being extended to a vast variety of different objects, the names of love and hatred, but especially love, have been used in as great a variety of significations, and are become very equivocal words, that is, words of many meanings. And therefore, I take love and hatred here, in so general a sense, as may be applied to all those passions which arise from the several objects, which may be called good or evil.

In this general sense therefore, the word good may signify any thing that we can look upon with esteem, with good-will, or with delight; and evil may be extended to mean whatsoever we view with contempt, with ill-will, or with disgust: And hence arises the second rank of general or primitive passions, *viz.* esteem and contempt, good-will and ill-will, delight and disgust, all which are but different kinds of love and hatred.

## S E C T I O N VI.

*Esteem and contempt.*

**T**HE first sort of love is called esteem, and its opposite is contempt. I grant that these words, esteem and contempt, may be sometimes used to signify a calm and sedate judgment of the mind, concerning those objects which are either valuable or worthless. Yet if we will enter into ourselves, and consider our own inward sensations, and what passes within us, we shall find that when we esteem or despise any thing, in a high degree, it will cause some ferment of the blood and natural spirits, or some commotion in animal nature.

I know some writers have made esteem and contempt to be species of admiration: But there are several reasons for which I think they are much better ranked under love and hatred, especially, since they suppose some degree of good or evil, that is, worthiness or unworthiness in the object.

Esteem is that passion which arises from the mere consideration of some excellency, or something that is valuable in an object, and it belongs either to persons or things.

Contempt

Contempt arises from the mere consideration of a worthless object, and especially if it be proposed to us with a pretence of excellency in it. So we esteem a good picture and the hand that drew it, or a good piece of clock-work and it's author: But we contemn an ill painting or any bungling performance, as well as the maker of it, that is, considered in that view. And if any plain and common engine be made well, yet if it be proposed to us as a pretended piece of art, in that view we despise it.

If our esteem be raised by an object which has any thing in it either grand and sublime, or solemn, and sacred, it is called reverence or veneration. So we reverence the persons and the counsels of our parents and superiors: We have a veneration for the holy bible, for the memory of the prophets and apostles, and for the names of St. *Austin*, and Sir *Isaac Newton*.

And, I think, when this veneration or high esteem has God for it's object, it may be properly termed adoration or inward worship.

Our esteem of God, or adoration, manifests itself in never mentioning his name without awe and reverence, in bowing the knee, in prayer and praise, in all the several forms of outward devotion, and in quick resentment of any dishonour done to him. Our high esteem or veneration of a man appears in a humble respectful behaviour toward him, speaking his praises, imitating his excellencies, and resenting his dishonours. Contempt discovers itself by turning the back, shrinking up the nose, thrusting out the lip, by derision and laughter, and terms of ridicule and jeering.

As we esteem an excellent object, and contemn what is worthless; so, it may be inquired here, whether there be not a sort of affection which arises especially towards an intelligent object that has some disagreeable or dishonourable qualities, and which we may call disesteem or disapprobation. Dishonourable qualities are distinct from those which are merely worthless, and raise a motion of the mind, a little different from contempt. Nor yet is disesteem quite the same thing with displicence.

As we manifest our esteem, disesteem, and contempt of other persons and things; so we ourselves may be the objects of the same affections working in our own minds.

If we esteem ourselves and our own good qualities no higher than they deserve, it has been called by some writers generosity, which is a just sense of one's own worth, and which has some valuable effects in human life: But this word is more used for bounty.

A due courage, a just fortitude, and magnanimity, a readiness to meet dangers, or to undertake great exploits, are the natural effects of this generosity.

And, if at the same time, we consider that our nature is subject to many errors, follies and weaknesses, and that we have been guilty of many actions that diminish our reputation, honour or worth; that will raise in us some disapprobation or disesteem of ourselves. This is the becoming affection of humility, which is very consistent with the generosity before-mentioned.

If this sense of our own weakness spring not from a just judgment and estimation of things, but merely from a certain frailty and infirmity of the mind, and arise to a greater degree than it ought, and especially if it sink the spirits, and overwhelm us with an unreasonable confusion, it is called abjectness of spirit, which often appears in a sort of awkwardness in behaviour, in perpetual and unreasonable bashfulness, in sheepish and downcast looks, and unmanly carriage and conduct.

From this abjectness of spirit, rises cowardise and meanness of soul, and an inability to attempt any thing great and glorious, as well as an inclination to practise mean and low flatteries, and base submissions without reason.

But,



But, on the other hand, if a man has too high an esteem of his own good qualities, and his own merit, this excites the vicious affections of pride and self-sufficiency, conceit and vanity. This is sometimes called arrogance, because it assumes and attributes to self more than is due: Sometimes it is termed self-admiration; but then the word admiration here does not signify wonder, but esteem.

From this pride and self-conceit, many times springs an undue courage, or boldness to attempt what is too high and hard for us; which is properly called temerity, or rashness, and is not true fortitude, or greatness of soul.

Hence also arise haughtiness and insolence in our carriage toward our fellow-creatures, and scorn and disdain toward those whom we think much beneath us.

We have so much of pride, vanity, and self-love in us by nature, that we take all occasions to borrow from every thing that has any relation to us, some fine plumes to dress ourselves in, and to advance our self-esteem. We value ourselves for our country or nation, for our native town, for our ancestors or family, if any thing excellent or honourable have been ever reported concerning them. We are so senseless, as to pride ourselves in being first in trifles, or chief even in worthless or vicious qualities.

This evil principle of pride is discovered oftentimes by an affected mien and air, by a toss of the head, by a lofty look, by a stately and strutting gait and gesture, by dwelling at a looking-glass, by talking much of one's self or family, by speaking to equals in a scornful tone, as though they were much our inferiors, and by speaking to inferiors and treating them as though they were cattle.

Though the terms of scorn and disdain are generally applied to the character of pride and arrogance, yet they may be sometimes used in a good sense; as when a man of honour, a man of virtue, a person of a generous and great soul disdains and scorns to stoop to any mean and base practice, even under the strongest temptations.

Here, let it be observed, according as I have before hinted in general, that generosity and humility may be called virtues rather than passions; because the ferments which are raised by them in the blood and natural spirits, are very small, and not often sensible; But pride and abjection of mind, may be justly counted passions, as well as infirmities or vices of nature; for both of them betray themselves very sensibly in animal nature, in the outward behaviour, in the countenance and the gestures.

Though these two passions, *viz.* abjection and pride, seem to be contrary to each other, yet they very commonly meet in the same persons: For those who in prosperous circumstances are puffed up with pride, and carry it with a haughty disdain and insolence towards their neighbours, are oftentimes found to be of a mean and cowardly soul, and sink into the greatest meanness and abjectness of spirit, when adverse providence and calamity attend them.

The mind that is generous and humble, that has a just and becoming apprehension of its own worth, and a lowly sense of its frailties, maintains generally a more equal temper in different circumstances of life, and possesses the pleasing virtue which we call equanimity.

## SECTION VII.

*Benevolence and malevolence.*

THE second sort of love is called benevolence or good-will. But before I divide it into several kinds, I would distinguish it from the love of complacency or delight; and indeed, if words or names were now to be coined and appropriated to these two sorts of love, as they are called, I should scarce use the word love to signify both of them, since their acts and objects are so very distinct, as will appear by what follows.

The object of benevolence, is a thing or person fit to receive good from me: The object of complacency, is a thing or person fit to do me good, or to give me pleasure.

Benevolence is an inclination or propensity to seek the happiness or welfare of any being: Complacency is the derivation of some degree of happiness to one's self from any being\*.

Complacency is a passion, that terminates always finally in one's self, to make one's self easy and pleased, though another thing or person may be the object of it: Benevolence always terminates in that which is the object of it, in order to make that object easy and happy, whether it be ourselves or our neighbours.

Benevolence or good-will therefore chiefly and most properly has some sensible being for the object of it, as man or some other animal: But we take complacency or delight in garments, flowers, houses, herbs, meats, drinks, books, conversation, or any thing that pleases us, as well as in our animal or intellectual fellow-creatures, or in God our creator.

Complacency always supposes some present good in the object suited to our desires or delights; benevolence sometimes is laid out upon an object that has no such present good in it, as we can desire or delight in, but only some foundation of future good, or some capacity to be made good or agreeable. A pious man can never love wicked men with the love of complacency or delight; but he may exercise the love of benevolence towards them to pity them, and to wish their recovery. So our Saviour could not love the bloody city of *Jerusalem* with complacency, because it killed the prophets, and blasphemed God and his Son; but he loved it with benevolence, and wept over it some tears of compassion.

There may be, and there are a thousand objects of benevolence or good-will, in which we have no complacency or present delight. God, and angels and good men exercise benevolence towards sinners, in whom they have no complacency: But there can hardly be any person, or any sensible being, in which we take delight, but we have a good-will to it, and wish it's welfare.

Thus, though benevolence and complacency greatly differ in their nature, yet often meeting and centering in the same object, the word love is applied to signify both, and too often without a just distinction.

Having

\* I desire it may be observed here, and throughout this discourse of the passions, that I describe them all as they are found in men, and not as they may be, by way of analogy, transferred to pure spirits, or to God himself: For when these human passions are ascribed to God in scripture, or in theological writings, we must a little alter our idea of them, and remove every thing from the divine idea that is frail or imperfect.

Having premised all these things, let us proceed to discourse of the love of benevolence or good-will, and it's contrary, malevolence or ill-will, and to distinguish them into their several kinds.

Benevolence consists in a hearty concern for the welfare of any sensible being, or a propensity to do good to it. In a large sense indeed the word may be applied to that respect which we sometimes shew to inanimate beings, which are not supposed to be sensible. If we see the fine garden at *Kensington*, or the noble paintings of *Raphael* at *Hampton-court*, we wish them a long continuance in their beauty, and that no rude hand may ever destroy them. But this benevolence or love of good-will, is more properly exercised toward intelligent or sensible creatures only.

Though every man in reality bears good-will or benevolence toward himself, yet the word benevolence, generally means the good-will or love we bear to another.

If the being which is beloved, be accounted inferior to the lover, it is called the love of simple benevolence, or good-will; without any other name; so a master may love his servant. If the beloved object be esteemed equal to the lover, there is generally some mutual complacency or delight mingled with it, and it gains the name of friendship; so one friend loves another. If the object be superior, then this love of good will is joined with esteem, and it is termed honour and respect; so a servant loves his master. But if God himself be the object of it, there ought to be the highest esteem, as well as the greatest degree of complacency joined with it; and thus love grows up into devotion. Though it must be confessed, the word devotion has been sometimes used also with regard to one's country, one's religion, or one's prince, as well as to one's God.

This love of benevolence or good-will, while it wishes well to the objects of it, does oftentimes dispose us to think well of them too, which is called charity, or a charitable opinion. It inclines us to beneloquence, or speaking well of them; to civility, or speaking kindly to them; to humanity or beneficence, that is, treating them well, or doing good to them, according to the wants of the one, and the prudence and capacity of the other. This good-will generally discovers itself in a pleasing countenance, a soft and smiling air, affability of speech, gentleness of behaviour, and a hand extended to invite or relieve the oppressed and the miserable.

The love of friendship does, as it were, unite itself to the object; it produces a communion of benefits, and causes a mutual communication of good offices between the lover and the person beloved.

The love to superiors, which is called honour, respect, and veneration, generally carries with it subjection to the object beloved, and makes us use our utmost endeavours to observe, and please the person beloved, by submission and by obedience.

Devotion to God, which is the highest love, obliges us to perform all proper acts of adoration or worship towards himself, as well as to obey him in all other things which relate to ourselves, or to our fellow-creatures.

This endeavour to please and serve our superiors, whom we love, when it rises high, is called zeal, whether it regard God or a creature: We shew our zeal for our king or our country, as well as for our God.

Yet we may observe also, that zeal is sometimes manifested, for some particular notions or practices; not only where God or our superiors are interested, but wherein our own opinions, or humours, or inclinations, are chiefly concerned, or the opinion of some sect or party to which we are attached.

If the object of the love of benevolence be in miserable or mournful circumstances it is then usually stiled pity and compassion: And this is one of the tenderest affec-

tions which belong to human nature. If the miserable object be inferior, our inclination to help and relieve it, is called mercy and charity; and if the object be poor, it is called bounty and liberality.

If the object of the love of friendship be in misery, it gains the name of sympathy, whereby the lover expresses an inward sense and fellow-feeling of the pains and sorrows which his friends sustain: Though perhaps, this might as well be brought in under the passion of sorrow, unless we extend the word sympathy to signify our communion in all the joys and sorrows, and all the concerns of our friends.

Now let us consider how malevolence or ill-will manifests itself. It implies in it a desire of some evil to fall upon the hated object: It discovers itself in frowns and lowering countenance, in uncharitableness, in evil sentiments, hard speeches to or of its object, in cursing and reviling, and doing mischief, either with open violence or secret spight, as far as there is power.

Whether the hated object be superior, inferior, or equal, it may keep the same name, and be called ill-will; If it extend to parents, masters and good magistrates, it becomes a spirit of rebellion: If it arise against God, it grows up to horrid impiety.

If our ill-will or hatred express itself particularly toward an object, considered merely in mournful and miserable circumstances, it is then called cruelty and inhumanity, or hard-heartedness. This evil temper inclines persons to insult their fellow-creatures under their miseries, instead of pitying and relieving them.

If our hatred arise to a high degree, and more especially, if it be without a cause, it is called malignity and malice; which is a most hateful temper in the sight of God and men, and is one of the chief parts of the image of the devil.

## S E C T I O N VIII.

### *Complacence and displicence.*

**T**HE third sort of love and hatred are complacence and displicence. If the object be agreeable to me, and suited to give me pleasure, the love which I express to it, is called the love of complacence or delight; and this extends, as I have hinted before, to trees and fields, to meats and drinks, to business and studies, and to every inanimate thing that is capable of giving me pleasure, as well as to animal or intelligent beings.

The love of complacency or delight, has almost an infinite variety of ways to express itself, according to the various objects of it. We gaze upon a pleasing figure, or gay landscape, or beautiful picture, we listen to music or agreeable discourse, we walk long in a fine garden, we smell to flowers, we eat and drink the food that we love, we are intent on delightful studies, we dwell in the company of our friends, and prolong the enjoyment of the thing that pleases us.

If this complacency rise exceeding high towards objects that are inferior, and, especially, if it exceed the bounds of strict reason, it is called fondness: So children are fond of birds, and of their painted toys.

Yet, here I would take notice once for all, that there is something of this complacency or fondness, which is very innocent and agreeable in the love which God our creator has ordained, between kindred or the nearest relations, and which, in general, is usually called natural affection; but being superadded to the various names of love

love or benevolence to inferiors, superiors, or equals, renders each of them a sort of distinct species, for which there are scarce any names in our language. Parents love their children with a fondness and tenderness, added to simple benevolence: Children love their parents with fondness and veneration; husbands and wives love each other with a fond and tender friendship; brothers and sisters find also a mutual fondness superadded to the mere love of equals.

This fondness for near relations is manifested by the eyes, by the lips and voice, by the countenance and behaviour, and by a thousand nameless airs of kindness and tenderness, which nature teaches and understands: Nor do we know how to give distinct names to these different sorts of love, unless we borrow them from the latin name of those relations, and call them parental and filial, conjugal and fraternal love, all which imply benevolence joined with a special kind of complacency,

Perhaps, some readers might think it a strange unpardonable omission, if in a treatise of the passions, I should be quite silent of that passion, which is known to be one of the strongest, that is, the love which a man bears to the woman whom he seeks for a wife: But this has such complications and peculiarities in it, that I leave it to the description of other writers. And as for the lewd and vicious passions, which unjustly assume the same name, they are not fit to be mentioned in this place.

As an agreeable object gives complacency or delight; so where the object is disagreeable, it raises displicence, dislike, or disgust. The word disgust is borrowed from the disagreeableness of food to our palate, and it is most frequently used in such a case, where the object has been once agreeable, but now ceases to be so.

If this displicency rise to a very high degree, we call it abhorrence; and sometimes by a metaphor borrowed from disagreeable food, it is called loathing. This is manifested by some distortions of the countenance, and by shutting the eyes, stopping the ears, turning away the face, or leaving the room.

Where this disagreeableness between the person and the object is something very peculiar in nature, or is wrought into the very constitution of persons by some early accident in life, or by some long and indulged habit, it obtains the name of antipathy: So some persons have a natural antipathy to a cat or a spider, or to some particular sort of food; and the effects of it are oftentimes very sudden and strong; it occasions sweating, paleness, tremors, fainting, &c.

Most, or all of these general passions, may be exercised toward ourselves or toward others. As the love of esteem may have self for the object of it, so may the love of benevolence or good-will, as was hinted before, and so may the love of complacency or delight. We desire the welfare of ourselves, we may be pleased with ourselves, and delight in self. When self is the object, all these are properly called self-love, and all the various kinds and branches of it are called selfish passions\*.

The most of these selfish passions are innocent, when kept within proper bounds, and were designed for the service of man, to guard him from evil, and to promote his welfare; yet there is something more generous and honourable when the passions of esteem, benevolence, and complacency, are exercised towards others. An universal

\* The ingenious author of "the nature and conduct of the passions," calls those affections which relate to the happiness or unhappiness of other persons public passions or affections, and makes several agreeable and just remarks upon them. Most of the particular and derivative passions may also be public as well as selfish; for they are but the effects of the love of benevolence, or the love of complacency, or their contraries, according to the variety of their objects. We desire good for ourselves or for others: We hope for the happiness of ourselves or our neighbours: We fear, and are solicitous for the welfare of our country, as well as for our own: We rejoice in public prosperity, and mourn over public distress.

love and benevolence desiring the good of all sensible beings is a noble character ; but still it must be limited by a submission to the will and wisdom of God, who governs all things well, and has not seen fit effectually to secure certain happiness to all his creatures.

## S E C T I O N IX.

### *Desire and aversion.*

**W**E proceed now to the third rank of passions, which I call derivative, because they spring chiefly from the love of benevolence and complacence, and their contraries.

In this rank the first pair that occur are desire and aversion. When we look upon an object as good, and suppose it possible to be attained, our desire goes out toward it, which is a tendency or propensity to obtain some absent or unpossessed good. When we look upon an object as evil, which may possibly come upon us, it awakens an active passion, which we may call aversion or avoidance, and it implies a tendency to escape this evil.

Though these inward principles of desire and aversion seem to have more of the will in them than the other passions ; yet if we examine our own hearts, we shall find some strong sensations of the workings of animal nature, attending these acts of the will, and therefore they may be properly called passions.

Here I would have it observed, that in our animal natures there are some propensities or desires that arise without any express ideas of the goodness or agreeableness of their object to the mind before-hand, such as hunger, thirst, &c. These we generally call natural appetites. But those desires which arise from our perception or opinion of an object, as good or agreeable, are most properly called passions. Sometimes both these are united.

In the same manner there may be some aversions which arise in nature before our mind expressly conceives the object to be evil or disagreeable ; such are some natural antipathies, which seem to be seated or fixed in the very flesh, or blood, or mere animal : So the sudden disorders of body which some persons feel at the sight or scent of a cat, or cheese, or at the approach of a toad or spider, &c. to which I may add the swift efforts of nature to avoid sudden and frightful occurrences, as thunder, lightning, &c. upon the very first sight or sound of them. I know not any single name we have for these sudden natural aversions ; they are usually mingled with the passions, and not distinguished from them. But those aversions only are, in the most proper sense, called passions, which arise first from the mind, considering the object as evil.

If our desire to do or receive good be not violent, it is called a simple inclination or propensity : When it rises high, it is termed longing. When any object raises our aversion to a great degree, it is usually named loathing or abhorrence, which is a species of displicency, as before. If we are constrained by superior force or excessive persuasion, to do or suffer evil of any kind contrary to our inclinations, this awakens such a sort of aversion as we call reluctance or regret ; though regret sometimes includes sorrow and repentance.

It may be just worth mentioning here, that when our desire sets our active powers at work to obtain the very same good, or the same sort of good, which another desires

fires and seeks, it is called emulation. This is oftentimes a noble principle of virtue, and is far from that base, and mischievous passion of envy, which has been too often confounded with it, or not sufficiently distinguished.

As our will to obtain some absent good joined with certain animal commotions, is called desire; so this desire reacheth also to things which appear necessary, as means to obtain this absent good: And in the same manner our aversion, hope, fear, joy, and sorrow, reach to all those things which appear necessary, as means to obtain the good, or to avoid the evil, as well as to the good or evil themselves. If a man knowingly and sincerely desires to obtain heaven, and avoid hell, he will consequently desire and delight in proper instructions, divine helps, religious duties, christian conversation, &c. and he will have an aversion to sin, temptation, folly and vanity.

There are several objects of desire in this world, and especially if the desire be immoderate, which give a distinct name to the passion itself. Desire of the pleasures of sense is called sensuality: Desire of honour, power and authority among men, is called ambition: Desire of riches has been called covetousness: Desire of knowledge, truth, peace, holiness, and heaven, have no proper names made for them, or affixed to them, that I know of.

The desire of honour, power and riches, are usually counted vices, when they rise high, and especially when they are only confined to selfish ends and designs: But when they have a design of public good, they may be virtuous and unblameable; for one may desire riches, honour, or power, with a sincere design to do more service to God and man.

## S E C T I O N X.

### *Hope and fear.*

**T**HE second set of passions which arise from love and hatred, are hope and fear. As the absent good which is proposed to us, when it is merely possible or attainable, raises our desire, so, as far as there is any prospect of it's being obtained, it awakens our hope: But so far as the attainment of it is difficult or unlikely, it excites our fear.

Here note, that the passions of fear and hope refer chiefly to such absent good as is not intirely in our own power, but depends in some measure on something without ourselves: for if it be intirely within our power, why do we not seize and possess it? why do we hope or fear about it?

Note further, that fear and hope do mutually and reciprocally gain the ascendancy over each other, as the attainment of the good which we pursue, appears more or less probable.

As the acquisition of good, so the avoidance of evil awakens our fear and hope in the same manner: If we may possibly escape it, there is hope; but if we may possibly suffer it, there is fear. These also reciprocally rise and sink, according to the probability of the absent evil coming upon us.

In this changeable state, fear and hope are not utterly excluded, when the good or evil is present with us; for even when we possess good, we may hope to preserve it, and fear to lose it: And when evil is come upon us, we may fear it's continuance, or hope for it's removal.

Our

Our fears and hopes arise according to our prospects and dangers of the future.

When our hope rises to the highest degree, it is called confidence or security; we are as it were sure of possessing the good we desire: As on the other hand, when our fear rises highest, and there is little hope left, it turns into despondency; and when all hope is banished, it becomes despair.

When our fear is very active and busy in fore-thought about the evil feared, it is called anxiety and solicitude: When we are afraid lest some other person should prevent our possession or enjoyment of the good desired, it awakens in us suspicion and jealousy, which are very busy and troublesome passions, and discover themselves by a perpetual uneasy watchfulness, and a degree of displicence and ill-will toward the objects of them.

If the enjoyment of the good desired depends pretty much on ourselves, and on our own conduct, and we are at a loss what means to make use of to obtain it, then our hope is attended with suspense or fluctuation of the mind. When this is overcome, the mind feels itself in a state of resolution and courage. The first gives a perplexity of soul, the last gives freedom.

If fear be mingled with surprize, or arise on a sudden to any violent degree, it gains the name of terror and consternation. The highest degree of aversion and fear united are called horror.

When fear settles into a habit, it maintains a most dreadful and insupportable tyranny over the mind, and makes life itself a burden.

Desire and hope manifest themselves by an eager stretching out the arms to receive the good desired; by an intent fixation of the eye on the person from whom we expect it; by breathing and panting after the object of our desires; by a chearful countenance, and the joys of hope intermingled with earnest wishes, and an impatience of possession.

Fear shews itself by paleness of the cheek, sinking of the spirits, trembling of the limbs, hurry and confusion of the mind and thoughts, agonies of nature and fainting. Many a person has died with fear. Sometimes it rouses all nature to exert itself in speedy flight, or other methods, to avoid the approaching evil; sudden terror has performed some almost incredibles of this kind. There is nothing, says a late writer, more quick and apprehensive than fear, nor any passion to which our powers pay a more speedy obedience; for it is in pursuance of that great law of nature, self-preservation. As by lively hope we do in some measure rejoice in the good before we possess it; so by sinking fears we do, as it were, suffer the evil before it comes upon us: And by this means many times our hopes and fears please and pain us more than the good or evil when they are present with us.

## S E C T I O N XI.

### *Of joy and sorrow.*

**J**OY and sorrow are the third set of passions derived from love and hatred. When the good we desire is obtained and secured, our fear and hope cease, and are turned into joy: Or if the evil which we would avoid, be actually come upon us, all our former hopes and fears about it sink into present grief or sorrow.

Sorrow



Sorrow and joy do properly belong to the mind of man ; sensual pain and pleasure to the animal nature united to it : Yet in a way of metaphor or resemblance, as grief is the pain of the mind, so joy may be called the pleasure of the mind.

When our joy is moderate, it is gladness : Moderate grief is called trouble or uneasiness of mind.

When these passions are raised on a sudden, and to the highest degree, joy becomes exultation or transport, and grief is distress and anguish of mind : And especially if overwhelming fear of further evil attend it, it is horror and extreme misery.

Contentment has a sort of gladness of heart belonging to it, when we limit our desires by our possessions : But when our desires are raised high, and yet accomplished, this is called satisfaction.

When our joy is derived from some comical occasion or amusement, it is mirth ; this is manifested by laughter : If it rise from some considerable opposition, that is vanquished in the pursuit of the good we desire, it gains the honourable name of triumph.

When joy has so often or so long possessed the mind, that it is settled into a temper, we call it cheerfulness or gaiety of heart : But if sorrow affect the constitution of the body, and the temper of the mind in this manner, it is generally joined with habitual fear, and it is named dejection, or heaviness of spirit, or melancholy. This is well described, a sinking sadness oppressing the whole man.

Good and evil, which are past or future, as well as what is present, will raise some degrees of joy and sorrow, but in a little different manner.

Evil foreseen gives us sorrow joined with fear ; good foreseen raises the joy of hope. And sometimes the joys and sorrows which arise from hope and fear of good or evil to come, are greater than those which we feel from the good or evil when it is come, as was intimated before.

In like manner, the recollection of former joy gives us some pleasure that we once possessed it, mingled with pain and grief that it is vanished and gone. So also the remembrance of former sorrows has some bitterness in it, while it revives them upon the mind ; but it is matter of joy to think they are finished, and shall not return.

When we rejoice upon the account of any good, which others obtain, it may be called congratulation, or sympathy of joy ; and when we grieve upon the account of evil, which others endure, it is pity and sympathy of sorrow : And this sometimes reaches even to objects where there is no hope of relief. Congratulation is benevolence and joy united ; as benevolence and sorrow united, grow into pity or compassion\*.

But there is a wicked passion called envy, which stands in direct opposition to pity and congratulation. Envy takes pleasure in seeing others made unhappy ; and it grieves and is uneasy that others should enjoy prosperity and peace. It is founded on ill-will, and appears in joy or sorrow mixed with malice. It generally wears a sour and uneasy countenance, though sometimes it puts on a malignant joy. Sometimes it awakens a spiteful sneer, and disposes to biting jests. It is a most hateful passion

or

\* It has been observed by an ingenious writer, doctor *Butler*, now bishop of *Durham*, in his sermons, that congratulation is rather an outward expression of the inward pleasure arising from another's happiness, than the inward sensation of that pleasure : And thus it rather answers to condolence than to compassion ; But that, strictly speaking, there is in his opinion no one single word or name for this passion of rejoicing in the good of others. Yet, since congratulation comes nearest to this idea, I venture to use that word.

or temper of mind, for it is not only odious to all others, but it wastes the very life, and destroys the comfort of him that carries it in his bosom.

Vexation and fretfulness is an active, busy, and galling sort of sorrow, that hangs about the spirit, teazes it, and makes it restless, and it is generally joined with anger against ourselves or others. But it is time now to enumerate some of the common and natural attendants of joy and sorrow.

The natural signs of joy are vivacity of the spirits, a sparkling eye, a florid and smiling countenance, a raised head, an erect posture of body, a pleasant freedom of speech, and sometimes it inclines the lips to harmony and a song; and sometimes also it raises the voice to shouting, and the person exults or leaps for great gladness of heart. Upon some tender occasions, love and joy joyn together, and produce tears.

The symptoms and effects of sorrow are closing and heavy eye-lids, a dead paleness on the cheeks and lips, a languid and gloomy countenance, eyes flowing with tears, or dim and wasted with weeping, an affectation of solitude, sitting in darkness and silence, or lying on the ground in an abject posture, an aversion to business, a cold indifference to every pleasure, a neglect of food and dress, of ornaments and delights, and a wasting of life, and the tiresome hours of it in sighs, and groans, and bitter complaints. Heretofore, among the *jews*, as well as some other nations, deep sorrow was manifested by plucking off the hair of the head and beard, by tearing the garments, by putting on sackcloth, and sitting in ashes.

From natural joy and sorrow I am led to other kinds of this pair of passions, which may be called moral joy and sorrow\*.

Moral joy is a self-approbation, or a complacency in self on the account of good actions done by us. This is called peace and serenity of conscience: if the action be honourable, and the joy rise high, it may be called glory.

Moral sorrow is the inward disapprobation or reproof of our own consciences, on the account of some evil action we have been guilty of. It is a displeasure with ourselves, and an inward remorse, repentance or trouble of mind for our own ill conduct; and when it rises high, it is a terrible passion indeed, and is called the anguish of conscience.

As moral joy or self-approbation is expressed by a serene and peaceful countenance, a calm pleasure on the face, and universal ease; so this moral sorrow or remorse rises so high sometimes as not only to vent itself in sighs and tears, but in tearing the hair, in beating the breast, in hollow haggard eyes, in hideous wailings, self-curlings, and gnawing one's flesh; especially when it is joined with despair of pardon or relief, and it sometimes ends in self-murder.

As inward sensations of glory frequently attend moral joy, so shame is a frequent concomitant of this moral sorrow, or it may be called one species of it; for as all moral sorrow arises from a consciousness of having done some evil action, so shame arises from a consciousness of having done an action which is dishonourable, contrary to the dignity of our nature, or to our good character in the esteem of God or men. It is manifested by avoiding company, by down-cast eyes, by hiding the face, or by blushing: When it arises high, it is called confusion of face and soul, for it puts all nature into a sort of tumult and confusion. Shame and sorrow should always join in true repentance for sin, whether against God, or against our neighbour.

Let it be noted also, that if any thing that is counted dishonourable among men be charged upon us, or imputed to us, though we are innocent, it excites shame:

And

\* Other passions which have virtue and vice for their objects, may be called moral also; but I have omitted them, because they have not distinct names.

And one may feel the passion of shame also arising, if any thing dishonourable, be imputed to, or done by our parents, or kindred, or friends, or country, or sect, or party, as well as by ourselves.

There is another passion something a-kin to this, which is also called shame, or bashfulness, or modesty, and which appears in blushes. It is a very honourable and becoming passion, which arises upon the name or mention of any thing dishonourable, though not imputed to us, or to any that belong to us: It is raised also by the appearance or practice of any thing lewd or scandalous in company: It is a kind of sorrow mingled with displice and aversion to the thing which is spoken of, or practiced: It is the natural guard of innocence and honour, especially in young people; and the blush is called the colour of virtue.

There is also a sort of bashfulness or shamefacedness, which young people are often exposed to when they come into strange company, when they are in the presence of their superiors, or when they are called to appear or act in public, which arises from self-diffidence, and from want of courage. This appears in blushing, or sometimes in paleness, or trembling and confusion, and brings a stop on the voice or frequent hesitation in speech. When it arises to such a degree, it ought to be overcome, lest it prevent all public usefulness for want of a becoming assurance.

I may here take notice of one thing, wherein all the affections, which go under the appellation of shame, agree, and that is, that they are designed by nature in their moderate use to prevent shameful and dishonourable actions.

## S E C T I O N XII.

### *Gratitude and anger.*

**I** COME now to the last set of passions, derived from love and hatred, and these are anger and gratitude. I confess, anger is usually named without any opposite: But I think, gratitude stands in a proper opposition to it, as will appear immediately.

Both these have a reference to such objects as are supposed to act with some degree of free-will or voluntariness; for we are not said to be angry with the stone or the sword that bruises or wounds us, nor can we properly be grateful to the ointment which heals our wound.

Anger is generally made up of displicency, and some degree of malevolence, or desire that the object of it should suffer some inconvenience: For if any person seeks to hinder or prevent us from obtaining the good we desire, if he seeks to dispossess us of the good we enjoy, or endeavours to bring upon us the evil we would avoid, we are displeas'd with him, and we would have some evil inflicted upon him; this we call anger or resentment. And this is sometimes eminently called passion, as I have intimated in the beginning of this treatise.

When I describe anger, as including some degree of malevolence in it, this does not always mean the wishing or designing of real or lasting mischief to the offending party; for parents are angry with their children whom they love fondly and wish them no other hurt but some present pain, to amend and cure their folly.

If anger rise to a very high degree, it is wrath, fury and rage; and it is called a short madness, because some persons, under the violent influence of this passion, sling about every thing that comes in their way, and appear for a time, as though they were void of reason: And some persons, by an excessive indulgence of it, have grown distracted.

If anger arising on some particular occasion, continue so long, as to be fixed and rooted in the heart, and refuse all accomodation or reconciliation, it is sometimes called rancour, and the attendant or effect of it is spite. When anger or resentment are perpetually ready to arise on every little occasion, this is a settled temper rather than a passion, and it has the name of peevishness, or a froward humour.

If the object of our anger be beneath us, so that we count it an indignity to suffer any thing from such a person, it gains the name of indignation. We are also fired with indignation against flagrant impiety toward God, or vile oppression and cruelty toward men, because these objects are highly unworthy of such impious, or such cruel treatment.

All anger is by no means sinful; it was made for self-defence, and it has many times a design to reclaim and recover the offender from sin and danger: But when it grows so violent against any person, as plainly exceeds all the rules of private self-defence, and evidently seeks and contrives to bring evil upon another, without any design of benefit to the offender, it is properly termed revenge or vengeance. This is always criminal in a private person: The laws of christianity forbid it utterly. And even when a public ruler puts the vengeance of the law in execution, and takes away the life of a malefactor, for the good of the rest of the world, it should be done without the passion of private anger; he should rather exercise his own pity to the offender, even when he condemns him to die, and makes him a sacrifice to the public vengeance.

Anger, when rising, is prevented by a spirit of meekness and forbearance; and when raised, it is subdued by a spirit of forgiveness.

Gratitude seems to stand in direct opposition to anger; for it is made up of complacence and benevolence upon the occasion of good received from another.

When a person has conferred any benefit upon us, and we have an inclination upon that account to confer some benefit upon him, we call this gratitude. The reverse of this is ingratitude; which is no passion, but a temper which inclines persons to neglect former benefits received, and make no acknowledgements or due returns of kindness. When it rises very high, it returns evil for good, which is a most hateful and criminal temper and conduct: Yet this has no distinct name, for the languages of men have not yet found a harder name than ungrateful.

Gratitude is a gentle principle, and makes little commotion in nature, besides a sensible pleasure when our benefactor is happy; and it excites our desires, contrivances, and active endeavours to make him so. Anger is a more tumultuous passion, and renders itself generally visible by many outward symptoms. Sometimes it looks red and fiery, sometimes pale and wan: It flames or scowls in the eyes; it wrinkles the brow into thick frowns; it enlarges the nostrils and makes them heave; it fills the tongue with short spiteful words, or noisy threatenings; and the hand with weapons of violence to assault the offender; and sometimes it causes a tremor through all the limbs.

But here it may be proper to take notice of two sorts of anger and resentment, which are wont to arise in persons of different tempers and complexions, and which have some different symptoms and effects.

The first is sudden and vehement; it discovers itself in a moment; it flushes in the face; it sparkles in the eyes; it awakens the tongue to sharp reproaches, and the hand to sudden revenge. This may be found in persons that have much love and goodness in their temper; and this violent resentment is much sooner appeased, the angry person is more easily reconciled to the offender, and ashamed of his own passion.

The

The second sort of anger is not so violent in it's rise. Sometimes it spreads a paleness over the countenance; it is silent and sullen, and the angry person goes on from day to day with a gloomy aspect, and a sour and uneasy carriage, averse to speak to the offender, unless it be now and then a word or two of a dark and spiteful meaning: The vicious passion dwells upon the soul, and frets and preys upon the spirits: It inclines the tongue to teaze the offender with a repetition of his crime in a sly manner, upon certain seasons and occurrences, and that for weeks and months after the offence, and sometimes for years. This sort of wrath sometimes grows up into a settled malice and rancour, and is ever contriving revenge and mischief. May divine grace form my heart in a better mould, and deliver me from this vile temper and conduct!

Thus I have briefly run through the passions, describing in a few words their nature and combinations, their usual appearances and effects. There are many other combined passions besides those which I have mentioned; for the motions of the mind, and ferments of the blood and juices in man are exceeding swift, and capable of almost infinite varieties. The short view which I have given, may enable some readers to form a better judgment of human nature, and it's various powers and infirmities: And by a wise inspection into their own hearts, and an observation of what passes there, as well as by converse with the world, they may much further improve themselves in the knowledge of mankind, and learn their own interest and their duty.

### S E C T I O N XIII.

#### *Several things that dispose us to different passions.*

**I** HAVE intimated in the third section, that there are several things, that belong to the nature and the life of man, which dispose the heart in general to more of these pathetic commotions of nature, or incline it to particular passions; I come now to give a more particular detail what those things are.

The natural constitution or complexion, whether sanguine or melancholy, choleric or phlegmatic, whether moist or dry, sprightly or dull, hot or cold, gives a greater or less disposition to passion in general, as well as to some particular passions of the heart. Those of a sanguine complexion are most easily susceptible of most of these commotions of nature; and especially the gayer and bolder passions, the sprightly, the pleasing and benevolent, such as love and joy: Whereas the melancholy temper disposes to grief, and fear, and consternation; the choleric to wrath and revenge.

The different ages of men have their different passions suited to them. Gaiety and gladness of heart, love, and hope and courage belong to youth, because of the firmness of their nerves, and vigour of their spirits, which are easily raised but not soon depressed. Youth also is more subject to wonder, because they have not seen so much of the world, and there are more things appear new to them. Old age is much more liable to fears and despondencies, and long and obstinate sorrow; childhood to sudden changes of grief and joy.

The seasons of the year, the different times of the day, morning, noon and night, the diversity of weather, whether cloudy, rainy, windy or shining, have great power upon these animal bodies of our's to dispose us to different passions. Long dark nights and cloudy days in the winter season, give us a tendency to gloominess of thought, fear and sorrow; rainy weather hangs heavy on the head and

heart : Whereas the returning spring and sun-shine dispose the brutal creation as well as man to all the gayer passions, or at least to an imitation of them.

The different state of the body, as to sickness or health, ease or pain, strength or weakness, and especially disorders of the nervous kind, have great influence on the several affections of the mind. The indispositions of this flesh of our's subject us too often to the fearful, the sorrowful and the peevish passions. Courage, and patience, and benevolence are impaired by long illness ; but the very same persons throw off these evil dispositions, and revive into the more pleasing humours and airs, when health returns.

Different employments, and different conditions of life, beget in us a tendency to our different passions. Those who are exalted above others in their daily stations, and especially if they have to do with many persons under them, and in many affairs, are too often tempted to the haughty, the morose, the surly, and the more unfriendly ruffles and disturbances of nature, unless they watch against them with daily care. The commanders in armies and navies, the governors of work-houses, the masters of public schools, or those who have a great number of servants under them, and a multitude of cares and concerns in human life, should continually set a guard upon themselves, lest they get a habit of affected superiority, pride and vanity of mind, of fretfulness, impatience and criminal anger.

There are many other things which might be mentioned as disposing the soul and body to special passions ; as company or solitude, plenteous circumstances or poverty, hard labour or diversion, and more particularly music of the various strains ; all these have power to raise or depress the various passions of the heart. There is also a contagion in some of the passions, whereby one person infects his neighbour with them : Fear, sorrow, love, joy, anger, jealousy, are often thus propagated.

Different places and habitations, city or country, thicker or finer air, a colder or a warmer climate, hunger or fulness, different diet, &c. dispose the nature of man to different affections. The various nations, the *scots*, the *welsh*, the *english*, the *french*, the *spaniards* and *germans*, have their particular characters and tempers assigned to them by various writers, and are accordingly more or less susceptible of different passions. A man is pleasant and easy when at leisure in the fields, who is perhaps ever fretful in the midst of the businesses and cares of the city. Anger, peevishness, and the surly humour is too often ready to prevail upon some persons, when they are hungry and empty ; but a good dinner allays the displeasing commotions of the heart, and they are all benevolence and joy.

Among these things, it is remarkable, that diseases of the nervous kind will give so strong a disposition to particular passions, in the animal part of our nature, that they have sometimes actually raised them, or at least the various symptoms of them, without any particular object or thought. Persons under the power of these disorders have been sometimes carried, almost mechanically, into a fit of excessive laughter, and sometimes have been drowned in a flood of grief and tears, and both without any apparent occasion.

## SECTION

## S E C T I O N XIV.

*The general design and use of the passions.*

**W**HILE we inhabit this sensible world, and are united to flesh, the passions were given us to assist the feeble influences of our reason in the practice of duty, for our own and our neighbour's good. Reason is too often called away from a due attention to a present necessary idea by many sensible objects: But passion serves to fix the attention. Reason is too slow, and too weak, to excite a sudden and vigorous activity in many cases; but passion is sudden and strong for this purpose.

The general uses of the passions may be comprehended in these five notes or remarks.

Note I. Since the passions are certain principles or powers in human nature, which include in them some commotions of flesh and blood, as well as some operations of the mind, we may reasonably suppose, that the design of our creator in working them into our original constitution, was for the service both of our minds and our bodies: Though, it must be confessed, in our fallen and degenerate state, they often prove our snares and our torments.

1. They were designed for the service of the body, because they awaken not only all the animal powers, but the thoughts and contrivances of the mind, to prevent or escape whatsoever is hurtful to the body, and to procure what is pleasant and useful for it's support or safety, that is, in more compendious language, to obtain good or avoid evil.

While our body is in such a feeble state, surrounded with dangers, and liable to so many troublesome accidents, disorders, and death, God has not only furnished us with the sensations of pleasure and pain, to give us speedy notice of what hurts or relieves the body, and with appetites for the supply of our natural wants, but he has also given us the passions of joy and sorrow, of desire and aversion, &c. to assist in this work, that the body may be better provided, with what is necessary to it's health and life, and may be better guarded against the danger of wounds and bruises, distempers and death. Mere reason would not awaken us to avoid danger so speedily as the passion of fear, nor would it rouse us to self-defence with such sudden and vigorous efforts as anger does. I shall say no more of their use relating to the body.

2. The passions may be made also of considerable service to the mind, while it dwells in this embodied state: For though they do not inform us what is good for the soul, and what is evil; yet when reason has judged what is evil and what is good, the passions are ready to lend their vigorous assistance to avoid or pursue. They have been represented as the wings of the soul to pursue our true happiness, and to escape misery; and it is of vast importance to have these wings directed aright.

The passions keep all the natural spirits and the thoughts of the mind strongly intent upon those objects which excite them, and with a sudden call they awaken and excite all the powers of nature to act agreeably to them.

If the object be uncommon, and has any thing in it rare and wonderful, the passion of admiration fixes the mind to consider it with strong attention, and hereby sometimes we may be let further into the knowledge of it.

If

If the object appear to be good, the passion of love determines the mind to pursue it with vigour; and if it be evil, the passion of hatred excites us to use our utmost skill and force to avoid it; and this it does not only in the things of flesh and sense which relate to this bodily life, but in things of a spiritual nature, and of future and eternal concern.

Note II. The painful passions have their use in human life, as well as the pleasant ones. It is granted indeed, that there are some passions, which taken together with their special objects and degrees, have obtained peculiar names, and may be properly called vicious and immoral\*; and these are of no use, but ought to be abolished and rooted out; such are pride, malice, envy, revenge: These could never belong to a man in a state of innocence. There are other passions, such as fear, shame, sorrow, and anger, which are uneasy and painful: And how far these might be found, among innocent men, I will not now stand to enquire. Yet while we dwell in this fallen and mortal state, beset with so many evils, dangers, enemies, and temptations on every side, these painful affections will be found necessary to our welfare in this life, and to our preparation for a better.

While we live amongst numerous dangers, fear is a very necessary principle to keep us always upon our guard: While we abide in a world where there are so many of our fellow creatures ready to oppress and injure us, the great author of our beings saw it proper to mix up anger and resentment with our constitution, that we might be awakened to defend ourselves against injury, and make oppressors fear to assault us. While we are ready to expose ourselves to many grievances and distresses by our own folly, God has ordained sorrow to attend all those distresses, and shame to attend some of them; partly that we might be awakened to renounce those follies by a shameful and painful sense of the effects of them, and partly that under every affliction we might be excited with more earnestness to seek to God and man for relief.

Sorrow abases our pride and vanity, it tames the wildness of our spirits, brings us to think and reflect a little, it softens the heart, and makes it impressible, and ready to receive instruction.

I add yet further, while we are in a state of probation for eternity, and heaven and hell are set before us, fear is necessary as well as hope, to keep us from sinful practices. While we have the seeds of sin dwelling in us, and are so often guilty of the commission of it, sorrow, shame, and repentance, are very proper and appointed means towards our recovery to divine favour, and to renewed holiness: And it is very reasonable that we should be displeas'd and angry with ourselves, when we have yielded to sin, as well as angry with others who have tempted us to do it; that so our trespasses may be made bitter and grievous to us on all sides, and to those who seduced us; and that thereby we might be better secured from the repetition of sinful practices, and the influence of new temptations.

Note III. Let it be observed also, that as fear, and anger, and sorrow, and other troublesome passions, are designed to secure us from evil; so the more pleasing affections of nature, such as hope, and love, and joy, may be usefully indulg'd; for they

\* There is no passion properly so called, and considered in itself as belonging to man, which is absolutely sinful in the abstracted nature of it; all the works of God are good; but if passion be let loose on an improper object, or in an improper time or degree, or for too long a continuance, then it becomes criminal, and obtains sometimes a distinct name. Esteem placed upon self as the object, and in an unreasonable degree, becomes pride. Anger prolonged into a settled temper, often turns into malice, &c. or if it be mingled with vices of the will, it becomes sinful also.



they do not only make us active and vigorous in the pursuit of what appears good, but they render our life more comfortable, and make the troubles of it more tolerable by their agreeable mixture; they cheer our drooping spirits, and support nature from sinking. This life without them would be a lifeless dulness or a heavy burden. They have also a happy tendency to make many of the duties of the civil life and religion easy and delightful, and thereby allure us to the practice of them. Both the pleasant and the painful passions may be happily engaged in the interests of God and religion, as will appear in "the discourses of the love of God, and the use and abuse of the passions in religion."

Note IV. The passions are designed not only to subserve our own welfare both of soul and body, but the great author of our nature intended them also for the benefit of our fellow creatures. Man must not be considered merely as a single creature fitted with powers to seek his own safety and happiness; but he is designed by his maker for a sociable creature, and must do good to his fellows.

With this view there are some affections wrought in the nature of man, which plainly refer to the welfare of his neighbour, as there are others that refer to his own. These may be called social passions, as the others are called selfish. There is a natural principle of benevolence in man, to man, where it is not overpowered by vicious principles or habits, or obstructed by some present superior influence of self-love: There is such a principle in us as compassion or pity to those that are miserable, or sympathy with those that suffer: There are the natural domestic affections as well as names of a husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, brother and sister, &c. Now the very design of these affections is to do good to our fellow creatures: And most or all these good-natured and social principles in mankind have their proper desires and aversions, hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, and resentments attending them, as well as the selfish passions which seek only our own good.

And indeed as mankind are brought into the world, according to the order of nature, they become social creatures as it were from their very birth. They are born and grow up into numerous unions, relations and bonds of society, both natural, civil and religious, and they have perpetual need of each other's assistance, and naturally seek it. It was therefore wisely ordered by the God of nature that there should be some principles wrought in us of the affectionate kind, in order to make our mutual services to each other easy and delightful, and to awaken us to the vigorous and unwearied practice of those duties towards our fellow creatures, for which perhaps reason and conscience might have too feeble influence in our present state.

Note V. Though the affections have much to do in the active parts of human life, yet they have very little to do in matters of speculation and judgment, as will appear immediately by what follows.

Since it is the very nature of our passions to fix all our natural powers with the strongest attention to the object of them; and particularly to those properties that raised them, they do generally encrease the first apprehension we had of the object, whether it be true or false, and confirm the first judgment we passed upon it, whether we apprehend the object to be good or evil. It is evident, that fear, anger, hatred, sorrow, all tend to impress our minds more powerfully with a sense of the evil contained in the object, and to represent it in it's worst colours: And in the same manner, hope, love, desire, delight, and joy, persuade us more powerfully that the object of them is good, and rather add new excellencies to it. Even the passion of admiration sometimes makes us think the object of it, to be more

strange

strange and more considerable than really it is : And all the passions derived from love or hatred tend to represent the good or evil of the object to be greater and more important than really it is ; I mean chiefly in temporal things.

Hence it follows, with great evidence, that the passions are not fit to be our guides in determining truth and falsehood ; they were never given us to search out the true nature of things, or to judge concerning their qualities, or the degree of them. For in order to judge aright, we must consider, with an impartial view, all the properties and circumstances of any object, and attend to all the reasonings that belong to it, both on one side and on the other ; whereas every passion confines our thoughts only to one side of the question. It is the nature of passion to fix our minds only on those properties, qualities, and circumstances that first raised it, and to make them appear more considerable ; and indeed it suffers us not to attend with impartiality to any thing else. Passion generally tends to make us blind and deaf to all circumstances and reasonings, but those which confirm itself.

Let us ask ourselves, when we have been angry on a sudden, have we not, during the reign of that passion, supposed the offence to be much more heinous, than our calm reason has judged after the fit of passion was over ? When our fears have been raised high, has not the danger appeared more formidable than really it was ? When *Jonab* the prophet was under the power of passion, he said, he did well to be angry, even with God himself : *Jonab* iv. 9. A false and shameful saying ! When *David* was in a continual fright and fear of death, under the persecutions of *Saul*, he said, all men are liars, even *Samuel*, who promised him the kingdom by inspiration : But his faith afterward confuted his fears. *Psal.* cxvi. 11. Fear makes a mole-hill look like a mountain ; but courage and hope turn a mountain into a mole-hill. Joy shortens the time, so that a day seems but a hour or two : Sorrow makes every hour seem tedious as a day. But all these are false ideas, or rather false judgments.

Here we find then how it comes to pass, that those who follow the dictates of their passions, scarce ever judge right, or reason well ; for they put themselves under the bias of these powerful commotions of nature, which lean all to one side, and thereby they fall into perpetual prejudices and mistakes.

Conclusion. Upon the whole survey of things, the passions are of admirable and most important use in the life of a man, and a christian : For though they were not given to tell us what is good, and what is evil, yet when our reason, upon a calm survey, has passed a just judgment concerning things, whether they are good or evil, the passions, as I before mentioned, are those lively, warm, and vigorous principles and powers in our nature, which animate us to pursue the good, and avoid the evil ; and that with vastly greater speed and diligence than the mere calm and indolent dictates of reason would ever do. By this means, when the passions are once set right, they become exceeding serviceable to us, in things that relate to God, and to our neighbour, as well as to ourselves : It is on this account they are so useful to us in affairs of the utmost importance that concern this life, and the life to come.

Hence it follows, that the *stoics* were much in the wrong, to persuade us to root out and destroy all passions in general, and to nullify, if possible, those active and useful powers which the God of nature has planted in us, for excellent purposes, in human life. Stoical apathy is not christian virtue. Reason and religion teach us to regulate and govern our passions wisely, but not to erase and abolish them.

## S E C T I O N XV.

*Of the regulation and government of the passions, wherein it consists.*

**T**HE whole art of regulating the passions, consists in these four things, *viz.*  
 1. A power to prevent and subdue all those, which taken together with their objects, can be called unlawful. 2. To excite those which are innocent and useful to a just degree on proper occasions. 3. To withhold or suppress them, when they go out towards improper objects. And, 4. To moderate them when they rise to an irregular degree, or exceed a proper duration, even when the object is lawful.

But it must be confessed, that with regard to things of this life, and the objects of flesh and sense, our passions, for the most part, want to be suppressed and moderated, rather than to be incited or indulged. Thence it comes pass, that the government of the passions, is much more frequently described by the power to moderate and subdue them, than by the art of raising them.

Since the passions are made up of the ferments of the blood, and the commotions of animal nature, as well as the operations of the mind, they do not lie entirely under the command of the will; we cannot stir up and suppress these ferments of animal nature by a sovereign act of volition when we please. But it may be done by the consideration of truth: For as the passions are raised by perceptions of the mind, so we may by degrees raise or suppress the passions, by applying our minds to the perception of those objects, or those truths, which are suited to these purposes.

If a soldier is assaulted by an enemy, he cannot suppress his fears, nor raise his courage by a mere act of his will; but when he considers what is his character, and his post, how weak the enemy is, and how much nobler it is to defend himself than to fly, and what honour is gained by victory, and what shame attends cowardice and submission, these truths represented to the mind, disperse his fears, raise his courage, and he resolves upon the fight.

But since there are many ways of regulating these active powers of nature, I shall propose some of the chief of them in this order.

I. I will mention a general rule or two for the regulation of the three primitive passions.

II. Propose some particular truths and rules with which the mind should be ever furnished, as preservatives against the rise, the excess, or irregularity of some particular passions.

III. Lay down some universal directions, which relate to the passions, and the regulations of them.

## S E C T I O N XVI.

*General rules about the three primitive passions.*

I. **L**ET me mention a general rule or two for the regulation of the three primitive passions.

We have seen in the foregoing pages, that the most general primitive passions are admiration, love, and hatred; and the objects that raise them must appear to us to be either uncommon, or good, or evil.

The way to guard us against excessive admiration, or a foolish gazing and wondering at every thing, is to get a large acquaintance with things, *viz.* to learn the various works of nature, the appearances of providence, the occurrences of human life, and the affairs of mankind, both by observation and diligent reading, and by free and public conversation. When we have attained such a general knowledge, fewer things will appear new, rare, and uncommon; and we shall not be so ready to stare and wonder at every thing, nor be surprized so often as we were when our knowledge was less.

Yet, since admiration or wonder, when well regulated, is a very pleasing passion, we may always find something sufficient and worthy to raise this agreeable sensation, if we will proceed still, and make further searches into the works of God, and continually dive deeper into the philosophy of nature, into the natural history of things, in the heavens, and on the earth; and especially, if we contemplate the nature and perfections of God, the amazing instances of his providence and grace, which he has manifested in his word. Some of these objects will afford matter of eternal wonder and pleasure to men and angels in a future world.

Love and hatred are the next primitive passions; good or evil are their objects: Now the way to secure us from irregular exercises of love or hatred, and all the infinite train of affections that depend upon them, is to form a right judgment of good and evil: The true reason why the multitudes of mankind become so sinful and so miserable, by fixing their passions on improper objects, or by raising them to an excessive degree, is because they are guilty of such perpetual mistakes in their judgment, of what is evil, and what is good, as well as about the several degrees of good and evil. We are ever deceiving ourselves by vain shadows and appearances of good: And while trifles and vanities, or sin and mischief, and misery appear in the shape and disguise of good, we awaken our warmest passion in the pursuit of it.

If we see one man with his hopes and his fears, his desires, his joys and solitudes all engaged about a gaming-table, a mistress, or a place of honour at court, we may be sure these things stand high in his esteem among the ranks of good: while at the same time, he neglects virtue and religion, his closet and his bible, and all the blessings of the heavenly world. He has none of his passions employed about these things, because among his ideas of good they have but a low rank, or perhaps they are despised, as having no good in them, that is, nothing agreeable to him.

A fluttering beau is ever solicitous about dress and public appearances; an antiquary spends his days among medals and ancient parchments, tombs and inscriptions; a critic wastes his life in correcting letters and syllables, in placing and displacing A's and B's; a virtuoso perhaps, is too much employed among his shells and his fossils, his worms and his butterflies; and an idle tradesman dwells in coffee-houses, feeds upon news-papers, and squanders away his time among the wars, and the treaties of princes, the counsels and the campaigns of *Europe*, and the ceremonies of ambassadors: All of them have their passions engaged on their several chosen objects, which they call good: Most of these, if moderately pursued according to their just value, or real use, in science or in human life, and according to the different stations and conditions of men, have something of good in them, and the pursuit of them would not be culpable: But these men commit a gross mistake when they call them good in so high a degree as to let the affairs of their family run at random in the pursuit of them, or neglect the more important interests of their souls and eternity. You see how strangely some men judge what is good for them,

Again;

Again, among persons that profess religion and mean to be christians, we find some who lay out their thoughts and wishes, their hopes, and fears and joys, who employ their love, their wrath and hatred and every passion about some little rites and forms, feasts and fastings, about the distinguishing phrases and opinions of some narrow sect or party, and make these the rules for their conduct toward their neighbours; while faith and honesty, love to God, and general benevolence to man, the devotion of the heart, and holiness of life, are too much forgotten. You may judge hereby what it is they call good in religion, and in what preposterous order they have ranged their ideas, and their value of things.

If we would cure ourselves of these follies, and wisely employ all our passions upon proper objects, and that in a due degree, let us take the utmost care to gain a just estimate of all the objects we converse with, that we may neither over-rate, nor undervalue them: we must prefer God above creatures, the soul above the body, eternal things above temporal. Let God and religion, *Jesus Christ* and the gospel, truth and virtue, divine grace and heavenly glory, stand uppermost, and hold the highest and best place among all our ideas of good: Let sin and folly, the devil and his temptations, anguish of conscience and hell, be counted the greatest and worst of evils: And let every thing else be ranged in our esteem, according to their relation to, or influence upon these best and worst of objects. Suffer nothing that relates merely to this mortal and perishing life, to come in competition with things infinite and eternal.

Remember also, among the affairs of religion, to set the necessary truths and duties of it in your esteem, above all the unnecessary opinions, the modes, and forms, and appendices of it; and moral laws above positive institutions.

Again, among the things that belong to this world, and our present welfare, make a wise distinction between the necessaries of life, and the conveniencies of it, between the supports of life and the ornaments, between the real blessings of life, and the imaginary ones, between the business of life and the amusements of it, between the duties and the diversions: From your judgment about all these things, at such seasons when you are calm and sedate, and free from the influence of any passion; and according to the rank of worth or goodness, in which your unbiassed reason has placed all these things in your esteem, let your actions of life be conducted, and all your passions be regulated thereby.

## S E C T I O N XVII.

### *Preservatives against the irregular exercise of some particular passions.*

II. **T**HE second thing which I propose in order to regulate the passions, was to exhibit some special truths, and some particular rules, with which the mind should be ever furnished, against the excess or irregularity of particular and dangerous passions. But I shall not set all these truths and the rules in different ranks, since many of the rules are but a consideration of some proper truths.

The particular passions to which our natures are very prone, and which lead us often far astray from virtue, piety and happiness, are chiefly these, *viz.* pride in ourselves, and scorn of others, malice and envy against our neighbour, excessive love and fondness of particular objects, fear and sorrow, anger and revenge. Some of these are to be prevented or suppressed entirely, *viz.* pride, malice, envy, revenge; others

others must be governed by the principles of reason and religion, *viz.* fear, anger, sorrow, &c. If we can regulate all these wisely, it will go a great way toward a pious and happy life. And if we would allow ourselves once a year to read over the following sections of this book, which contain rules for the exercise and due government of our passions, perhaps, we should not complain of lost labour, nor regret the hours spent in such a review of matters which ought to be kept in perpetual practice; and which relate to our peace and happiness through the whole course of this life, and our preparation for a better.

## S E C T I O N XVIII.

### *Rules to subdue pride and scorn.*

1. **T**HINK often what you were, and what you shall be.

Consider what you were. What was your original different from others? Are you not formed of common earth? Made of one flesh and blood with other men? Shall a little finer house or finer clothes, make a worm vain among his fellow-worms, and tempt him to scorn his kindred?

Consider what you shall be. Your flesh returns to corruption and common earth again; nor shall your dust be distinguished from the meanest beggar or slave; no, nor from the dust of brutes and insects, or the most contemptible of creatures. And as for your soul, that must stand before God in the world of spirits, on a level with the rest of mankind, and divested of all your haughty and flattering circumstances. None of your vain distinctions in this life shall attend you to the judgment-seat. Keep this tribunal in view, and pride will wither and hang down its head.

2. If you have any fancied advantages above others, remember whence you derived them. Who is it made you differ from the meanest and vilest of mortals? If you have received all from God, "Why do ye boast, and look big, as though you had not received?" *1 Cor. iv. 7.*

3. Set yourself often in the presence of the great God. Think how mean and contemptible you are in his sight. Learn humility this way as *Job* did, who "abhorred himself in dust and ashes, when he saw God in his majesty and glory." *Job xlii. 5, 6.*

4. Think on the glorious condescension of *Jesus* the Son of God, who was the "express image of his Father, and the brightness of his Father's glory," *Heb. i. 3.* and yet put on our feeble flesh and blood, to dwell with men, and to die for them. The man *Jesus* united to God, is the highest of creatures, and yet the humblest. Fix your thoughts on the amazing instances of his humility, and imitate so fair and divine a pattern.

5. Survey the things that raise your pride, consider how vain they are. Is it silver and gold? The dust of the earth? Perishing treasures! Poor comforters in a hour of inward distress, of sickness or death!

Is it beauty, and youth and strength? What withering flowers are all these! What gay and dying vanities, that are wasting hourly, and may be blasted with an east wind!

Is it honour and fame among men? What an empty thing is the breath of mortals! How subject to change! How unjust and feeble a foundation for pride! It is sometimes given to the worst of men without due merit; and even when it is best merited;

merited, and most justly given, it is but a sound that vanishes into empty air.

Is it high birth that makes you proud and scornful? This is the honour of your ancestors more than your own, and perhaps it was not raised at first upon virtue or true merit; then it is a worthless thing indeed.

Is it your knowledge and wisdom that puffs you up with conceit? It is a sign you want one large branch of it, that is, the knowledge of yourself, for that would make you humble.

6. When the thoughts of pride arise from any excellency you possess, turn your eye immediately upon some of your failings and follies. This would be a proper weight put into the balances, lest while one of them is lifted too high, you imagine the other too weighty.

7. Remember that pride keeps the mind ever uneasy, and fills it with everlasting vexation, while the meek and humble possess abundant peace. The proud man finds many more affronts than his neighbours, partly, because he is more unbeloved, and partly, because he calls almost every thing an affront, which the man of meekness would take no notice of. He is ever fretting, because he never finds so much respect and submission as he desires and expects. Thus he becomes a perpetual torment to himself. "Learn of me, says the blessed *Jesus*, for I am meek and lowly, —and ye shall find rest to your souls." *Matth. xi. 29.*

8. Think what mischiefs have arisen from pride through all ages of the world, and even before this world began. Angels were the first proud beings we hear of: Pride turned them into devils, and sent them to hell. It is only from pride come endless contentions, and resentments, murders, wars, and bloodshed, through the nations of mankind.

9. Remember that God himself abhors the proud, and dwells with the humble. A scorner of the poor, and a scoffer at the weak, are some of the most hateful objects in his sight.

10. Think, in the last place, what will be your end, where will be your dwelling, and who will be your company. If God abhors the proud, and beholds them with contempt afar off, he will appoint them a place far distant from his own dwelling, even the place of torment and shame, and immortal anguish, which he built for the eldest sons of pride. But "blessed are the humble and poor in spirit; for their's is the kingdom of heaven." *Matth. v. 3.*

## S E C T I O N XIX.

### *Rules to prevent or suppress malice and envy.*

1. **B**E not too fond of yourselves, and you will not take up easily an ill-will to others. This excessive selfishness is a great evil, therefore guard against it. It is this narrow and selfish spirit that lessens the general benevolence and good-will which is due to your neighbour, and makes you too soon conceive a dislike to him. Take heed of all little prejudices and unreasonable aversions to any person whatsoever; nor stamp a hateful character on him at once on account of an action or two which are not good.

Too high an esteem of self will tempt you to scorn others without reason, perhaps upon the account of their aspect, their shape, their motion, their dress, their poverty,

verty, their want of breeding, their name, their family, &c. And this, in a little time, will fettle into averfion, or antipathy, and grow up into malice and hatred, efppecially upon the leaft difguft.

While you are too fond of yourfelf, and of your own poffeffions, your own honours, your own family, your own pleasures, you will be ever jealous and fufpicious that others ftand in your way, and you will too eafily indulge malice and envy to rife againft them. Whereas if you abated a little of your felt-love, and increafed and enlarged your generous benevolence and love to mankind, it would have a happy tendency to fuppreff your hatred, and envy of particular perfons.

2. Confider whether the perfons you hate are good or not.

If they are good and pious, your hatred has a double guilt in it, fince you are bound to love them both as men and as chriftians. Will you hate thofe whom God loves? Will you hate thofe who have the image of *Chrift*? And in whom the Spirit of God inhabits? If they have any blameable qualities in them, let your charity cover thofe faults and follies: Let your thoughts dwell rather upon their virtues, and their facred relation to God. This will have a happy influence to turn your hatred into love. Think of them as members of *Chrift*, and you cannot hate them if you are of that bleffed body.

If they are perfons who neglect religion, and have not the fear of God, yet they may have fome good qualities in them, fome moral or focial virtues, or fome natural excellencies, which may merit your efteem, and invite your love: At leaft thefe agreeable qualities may diminifh your averfion, and abate your hatred. I confeff it is the nature of malice and envy, to overlook all that is good and amiable in a perfon, and to remark only what is evil and hateful: But this is not the fpirit and temper of a chriftian, nor of *Jesus Chrift*, our mafter. There was a young man who loved his riches fo well, that he refufed to become a difciple; yet our bleffed Lord faw fome good qualities in him, "he looked upon him and loved him." *Mark x. 21*.

But if the perfons whom you hate, have nothing good in them that you can find, then they ought to be pitied rather than to be hated\*: They are not worthy of your envy, nor do they need the punifhment of your malice in this world, who expofe themfelves to the wrath and vengeance of God in the world to come.

Will you fay, they are fo impious before God, and fo injurious to men, that they deferve to be hated? but confider, if you were but punifhed in every refpect as you deferve, both for your offences againft God and man, what would become of you? Pity them therefore, as you hope for pity. Imitate the goodnefs of "your heavenly Father, who makes his fun to fhine, and his rain to fall on the juft and on the unjuft." *Matth. v. 45*. This is the rule of *Chrift*.

3. Know that a foul filled with envy and malice, is it's own perpetual torment. All the good things that are fpoken of others, and all the bleffings which others enjoy, become a matter of grievance and pain to an envious fpirit. It frets and vexes at the comforts of mankind, it pines away with rage to fee others happy. What a dreadful and undefireable temper is this?

How much more pleafant is it to feel the gentle affections of benevolence and love always warm at the heart! To rejoice in the happinefs of our neighbours, and to derive a degree of fatisfaction and felicity from all the bleffings of mankind which come within the reach of our notice!

4. Remem-

\* Miseries of the foul are worfe than thofe of the body; but both of them fhould excite our compaffionate regard. If we take all proper occafions to exercife pity and compaffion toward the unhappy, it will have a very good influence to cure a malicious and envious temper.



4. Remember that a malicious and envious man is hateful in the eyes of all mankind, for his chief joy arises from the miseries of his fellow-creatures. No body loves such a temper; even those that practise it themselves hate it in others. Are you willing to expose yourself to the ill-will of mankind? Is it not better to get the love of all men? It is the gentle and harmless, the peaceable, the benevolent and compassionate man, who is the object of universal esteem and love.

And let it be well considered, that by indulging malice in your heart against others, you tempt those persons in a special manner to hate and envy you; and do you know how far their malice may fly into violent extravagancies, into wicked, and spiteful, and revengeful practices? Think with yourselves how far you share in the guilt of such madness, by your indulgence of malice and envy against them. Remember that the fire of wrath and the fire of love, kindle their own congenial fires. Kindness and love are the most effectual methods to reduce others to the practice of kindness and love.

5. Malice and envy are the special sins of the devil: They are his peculiar image on the soul of man; he was a murderer from the beginning, and is so to this day. He envied the happiness of our first parents in paradise, and contrived their ruin: He envies us the blessings of the gospel, and our christian hope, and would fain destroy it. Now will you imitate such a hateful character, even the adversary of God and man? Are you fond of bearing his image? Are you willing to become as it were a devil in flesh and blood, rather than imitate the loving and the lovely character of God manifest in the flesh, even the blessed *Jesus*?

6. Consider how near you are to death and judgment, and the eternal state; and dare not venture into eternity with a malicious temper, or with an envious spirit. Spiteful and malignant passions are wretched things to appear before the throne of God.

And let it be awfully remembered too, that there is no cure provided for envy and malice in the other world. God has prepared a remedy for these distempers in the gospel, but they can only be applied in the present life. At the hour of death, "he that is filthy, must be filthy still," *Rev. xxii. 11.* and he that is envious and malicious in a prevailing degree, must be envious and malicious still: And what a dreadful state will it be to lie under the everlasting torment of inward malice and envy, to fret and rage among fretting and raging spirits, without the least hope of change through all the ages of eternity?

## S E C T I O N XX.

### *Rules to moderate excessive love to creatures.*

1. **C**ALL your love often to account at the bar of reason and scripture, to enquire whether the object of it be proper, and the degree of it reasonable; and then you will the sooner spy out its irregularities, and excesses of every kind, and be more powerfully awakened to watch against them.

2. Think of the uncertainty of the highest mortal good, the vanity and insufficiency of any thing, of every thing beneath God to make you happy; and bear not an immortal fondness to perishing comforts.

3. If you are entangled with the excessive love or desire of any thing, whether it be a child or a friend, &c. or if you grow too fond of any particular study, practice, or recreation, any company or enjoyment of any kind, call together and sum

up

up all the inconveniencies, the dangers, the unhappy consequences of this your love. Think much of the faults, follies, defects, imperfections, and blemishes of the creature so excessively beloved; survey all these at large, set them in a clear light, write them down for your frequent review, fix them in your memory, and dwell upon them. Never indulge yourself in thinking of the agreeable or tempting qualities of it, at least without a due guard and balance on the other side. This will help to wean the heart by degrees.

4. Practise voluntary self-denial, and absent yourself both in body and mind, from whatsoever you love to excess, as far as duty permits. Set a guard upon your eyes and ears, upon your senses and your thoughts, and avoid every thing that would bring to your mind the object of your immoderate love. This direction, if well practised, will by degrees introduce an indifference and moderation of affection, when you find that you can live without the tempting object.

5. Watch against too great a relish of delight in the things you love excessively, whether they be meats, drinks, businesses, recreations, company, children, friends or kindred; an abatement of pleasure will abate the excesses of love.

6. Set up the love of God supreme in your heart, and keep it so. This principle of divine love will grow jealous, if any meaner love rise too high, and become it's rival, or make too near approaches to it's seat and throne. A sovereign love to God will limit and moderate all inferior love.

7. Consider that immoderate love to any creature fills the heart with endless anxieties and vexations, with restless jealousies and disquietudes about it, while the soul is perpetually tost, as it were, on an ocean of hopes and fears, rising and sinking with every blast of wind. And then the sorrow of parting with it is like tearing our flesh from the bones, or the rending asunder of the heart-strings. What dreadful preparations hath excessive love made for killing heart-akes, and overwhelming agonies of sorrow?

8. Remember that excessive love to the creatures hath often provoked a jealous God to embitter them to us terribly by remarkable providences, or to cut them off suddenly in his anger. Our God is a jealous God, and he will destroy his rivals. The way to keep our comforts, is to love them with moderation.

9. Consider that the fewer strong affections, and the less engagements of heart you have to mortal creatures, the easier will it be to leave this world, and enter into the world of spirits. Death is far more painful and terrible to such a soul which must not only leave the body behind it, but a multitude of other things, to which it is too fondly attached. We must all endure this parting stroke: Let us endeavour then to make it as easy as possible, by keeping our affections loose to all things beneath God and heaven.

## S E C T I O N XXI.

### *Rules to overcome unreasonable fears.*

**F**E A R is a powerful and useful passion, to guard us from mischief and misery, to hasten our avoidance of every danger, to drive us to our refuge, and to restrain us from every thing which has a tendency to bring the evil or mischief upon us.

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The anger of God is the most proper object of our fear, as we are sinful creatures: Nor can sinners fear the anger of God too much, till they have complied with the appointed methods of his grace. There is also a reverence and holy fear due to the majesty of God, even when we have obtained the most solid hopes of his mercy: We must always fear to sin against God, and keep up a holy jealousy of all temptations to sin. All this is called religious fear.

There are several things also, in the natural life, that we have just reason to fear in some degree; such as lions, bears, and other hurtful animals, men of violence, diseases, and death. And there are many things, in the moral and civil life, which become proper objects for the passion of fear, such as the anger of our parents and superiors, and the practice of those things which expose us to just infamy or punishment among men.

But the fear, which I speak of in this place, is an unjust and unreasonable fear of any creature whatsoever, or of any occurrences of life: It is a timorous spirit, which subjects the whole nature to the power and tyranny of the passion of fear, beyond all reasonable grounds: As for instance, a fear of being alone, or in the dark, a perpetual fear of evil accidents by fire or water, or wicked men; a disquieting fear of ghosts and apparitions; of little inconsiderable animals, such as spiders, frogs, or worms; unreasonable and anxious fears of the loss of estate or friends; fear of poverty or calamity of any kind, whereby we are too often restrained from our present duty, and our lives are made very uncomfortable. All manner of fear becomes irregular, when it rises to an excessive degree, and is superior to the danger. Now to arm ourselves against this tyrant-passion, let us make use of the following directions.

1. Abate your love to your flesh, and this mortal life, and to all things that belong to it; then you will not be so much afraid to lose them. Lay up your treasure and your hopes in heaven, where there is no danger of being deprived of them.

2. Never rest without some comfortable hope of the love of God. If you are his favourite, and under his protection, you need fear nothing. Remember that all creatures in heaven, and earth, and hell, are under his power and supreme government; they can go no further than he permits them, nor can they hurt a hair of your head without his leave. And if he suffers calamities to fall upon you, he can make them turn to your unspeakable advantage. Say with *David*, "At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee; and, I will not fear what flesh can do against me." *Psalms* lvi. 3, 4.

3. Acquaint yourself with *Christ Jesus*, the Son of God, into whose hands all things are delivered. He hath subdued even the powers of hell to his dominion, and they are all kept in his chains. Commit yourself daily to his care, both your soul and body, for time, and for eternity: He makes and maintains our peace with God, and he guards us from enemies, and dangers and devils. We are safe in his hands.

4. Have a care of contracting new guilt, by indulging sin of any kind, or by the neglect of duty. Guilt is the chiefest and the justest cause of fear; for if God be angry with you, then you have no sufficient security or defence from the injuries of the creatures, which are but the instruments of his providence, in a way of punishment or mercy.

If therefore the evil you fear be probably the effect or consequent of your own sinful conduct, humble yourself before God, and repent, and seek pardoning grace; and

walk humbly and watchfully, lest you renew your provocations of heaven. Repentance brings hope with it, and lessens the ground of our fears.

5. Think what a dishonour it is to God, for you to set up creatures as the objects of your unreasonable fears, as though they were not in his hand, or as though God, the creator, were not a sufficient refuge. Read *Isa.* li. 12, 13.

6. Think how exceeding unlikely most of your fears are to come to pass. It is not once in ten thousand times, probably, that such an event will befall you: Or not one person in ten thousand hath ever met with such an accident in the same circumstances: By this means you may reduce your fear to a degree proportionable to the danger, and then most of our fears will give us but small disturbance.

7. Think how many needless fears you have had in time past, and tormented yourself with them; groundless fears where there was no danger, fears of things that never come to pass. And think also out of how many real dangers God hath rescued you, and make him your trust and defence for times to come. *David* remembered that God had delivered him from the lion and the bear, and therefore he was not afraid of the *philistine* giant. 1 *Sam.* xvii. 35—37.

8. Suppose the worst that can come, and be prepared for it by faith in *Christ*, hope in God, a life of virtue and piety, a serene conscience, and a continual readiness for death itself.

Besides all these general directions, I might add many particular rules, according to the particular objects of fear; as for instance,

If it be some present appearances in nature, which may be frightful at first, such as huge impending rocks, seas, cataracts, or water-falls, or some particular animals that cannot easily hurt you, or such like, endeavour to make them familiar to you, by approaching nearer and nearer to them by degrees; and when you find you are safe, you will obtain gradual courage to meet a frog or a spider, or even a toad or a snake, without shuddering or sweating.

If the groundless fear of some absent evil possesses your spirits, get the government of your fancy, and yield not to its dictates in cases which have no reason on their side. Fancy and fear swell every little danger to a mountain, and turn every bush into a bear. There are no bounds set to the wild and unreasonable ideas of terrible things which this passion fills the mind with, if it be indulged. Subdue your imaginations, and let them not rove upon frightful objects. For this end avoid the reading or hearing of frightful stories of witches and devils, or terrible accidents, or cruelties and barbarous murders, especially in younger years, or if you are inclined to timorousness and melancholy; for these things will hang about the imagination, and perplex the mind with foolish terrors.

Or if you have a sickly fancy, and are continually afraid of some distemper seizing you, read not in books of physic, where the symptoms of diseases are described; for fancy will bring almost all these diseases upon you in appearance, and give you the pain, though not always the danger of them.

If you are with-held from the practice of your duty, by the fear or threatenings of men, there are many remedies provided against this evil in the book of God, to inspire you with courage in the ways of virtue and religion, *viz.*

1. Preserve the love of God in your heart in its warmest exercise, and its sovereign power. Love will break through a thousand difficulties, and subdue a thousand terrors.

2. Maintain an awful fear of God and his anger in a high degree, and remember it is infinitely more dangerous to provoke God, than to fall into the hands of feeble men;

men : Men can only kill the body, but God can destroy soul and body in hell  
*Matt. x. 28.*

3. Keep upon your spirit an awful sense of the evil of sin, as a more formidable thing than any present sufferings. Fear, above all things, to offend God your Father, and your best friend.

4. Think of the courage of the ancient heroes of faith, who exposed themselves to all manner of losses, pains and death, for the sake of *Christ* : And above all, take the example of *Jesus*, the Son of God, " who endured the cross, and despised the shame, &c." *Heb. xii. 2.*

5. Think of the advantage and glory of suffering for the sake of God and religion : Think of the awful judgment-seat of *Christ*, the joys of heaven, and the infinite recompences provided there for our poor little services and sufferings. But of these things I have written much more largely in the two first sermons of my third volume, which was published some time ago, and I ask leave to remit the reader to those discourses \*.

S E C T I O N XXII.

*Rules to guard against immoderate sorrow, and to relieve the soul, that is under the power of it.*

**T**HE passion of sorrow is necessary to creatures dwelling in a world which hath so much sin and misery in it. As sorrow is originally the effect of sin, so sin ought to be the chief object of it : Yet we may grieve also for our own miseries, or for the miseries of others. Hereby we learn more sensibly the effects of sin in time past, and are excited to avoid it for time to come : Hereby we testify our love to our friends under trouble, and are awakened to endeavour the removal of those evils that we or our friends sustain. *Jesus* himself, who was all innocence, wept for the sins and sorrows of mankind.

But though sorrow, as well as some other uneasy passions, are ordained for the good of man in the present state, in order to excite him to his proper work ; yet when it rises to such a degree, on the account of any losses or troubles we sustain, as to hinder us in the discharge of present duty, it becomes excessive and immoderate, and ought to be restrained or prevented ; and perhaps some of the following rules may be useful to this purpose.

1. Have a care of excessive love to any creature whatsoever, for this fondness lays the foundation of immoderate grief, when divine providence takes that creature from us. We should love creatures but as uncertain and perishing comforts. The greater sweetness in the enjoyment, the sharper is the sorrow at parting.

And as a part of this direction I may add, let your hopes of any earthly good be very moderate ; for, in a thousand instances, we find the possession or attainment of it depends upon great uncertainties, and the concurrence of many favourable circumstances, whereof, if one be wanting, we are disappointed. And if our hope has been raised very high, our surprize of grief will be proportionable in the disappointment.

2. Meditate on the sovereignty, the wisdom and the goodness of God in his government of the world, and believe that all that he does is wise and good : Learn to submit your own judgment, and your own will, to the wiser determinations of his

\* See volume first, pages 331—354.

his providence. When our Saviour was to drink of the bitterest cup that ever was put into the hand of a creature, or at least of a creature beloved of God, he submitted to the intense and unknown agonies of that hour, under the awful influence of this rule, "Father not my will, but thy will be done." *Luke xxii. 42.*

Remember also that divine grace has promised, and divine wisdom knows how to turn the heaviest crosses into blessings. Perhaps God is now doing you the greatest good; do not counterwork him by obstinate murmuring and impatience.

3. Seek after a comfortable and established hope of the love of God in the way of the gospel, and this, if well improved, will be a sufficient balance for every load of temporal sorrow. If you can cast your burden on the Lord as your God, he will sustain, and he will relieve: He will not contend always.

Remember the revolutions and the changes of the right-hand of God. Reflect upon days past and former sufferings. How often has God relieved you, as he has delivered his people in ancient times, when there appeared to human prudence, no way for escape, no method of relief? If he be your God, let your soul live upon him. He is not an idol, whose ears cannot hear, and whose hands cannot help. Prayer will ease the wounded spirit, and engage omnipotence on your side.

4. Take heed of bringing fresh guilt on your conscience, that so you may not be overwhelmed with sorrows of all kinds at once. A peaceful conscience will help to bear up the spirit under some of the heaviest burdens of life; but how unspeakably heavy and painful will these burdens lie upon a spirit wounded with a sense of sin.

5. Let not your thoughts dwell continually upon your distresses and afflictions. Suffer not the chambers of your soul to be ever hung round with dark and dismal ideas: Chew not always the wormwood and the gall; but remember the many temporal mercies you enjoy, and the rich treasures of grace in the gospel. Survey the immortal blessings of pardon of sin, and eternal life; the love of God, and the hope of heaven. Look sometimes on these brighter scenes; suffer not your sorrow to bury all your past and present comforts in darkness and oblivion. Thankfulness is one way to joy.

6. Remember, if you are a christian indeed, the springs of your grief cannot flow long; the hour of death will dry them all up. The last moment of this mortal life is a certain and final period to sorrow. Converse much among the mansions and joys of the invisible world, and your hope which is laid up there: The very gleamings of that glory, will brighten the darkest providences, and relieve the soul under it's sharpest pains.

7. Compare your miseries with your sins, and then you will think them lighter. You will learn then to bear your burdens with a more serene and peaceful mind, and turn your sorrows into repentance for sin. But, alas! we aggravate our sufferings, and extenuate and excuse our sins: Whereas sufferings would appear lighter, if we did but consider how much heavier evils we have deserved from the hands of a holy and offended God.

8. Compare your own afflictions with the afflictions of many others, in former and latter times. The passion of sorrow so unreasonably magnifies your own sufferings, as though there was never any case like it before: Whereas, perhaps, you suffer nothing but what is the common lot of human nature; and shall this overwhelm you when there are many who have been loaded with uncommon distresses, and yet have sustained them with holy courage and patience.

9. Consider

9. Consider that sorrow is indeed an evil, that is, a natural evil, for it is the pain of the mind, and it is never desirable for itself, but only as it is a thing appointed for sinful creatures in this world, in order to teach us some lessons of righteousness, to wean us from the love of creatures, to embitter to us our sinful follies, and to drive us to some duty towards God or man: And if these ends be attained, sorrow should be dismissed. God doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men: *Lam.* iii. 33. By the sorrow of heart and countenance, the heart itself is to be made better: *Eccles.* vii. 3. If this be done, bless God, and rejoice.

10. Think on the many dreadful effects and consequences of excessive sorrow, where it is indulged beyond all reasonable grounds. 1. It takes away the sweetness and relish of all present mercies, and makes us undervalue them all: It deprives us even of the delightful sense of the love of God: It untunes both the heart and the lips, and with-holds the tongue from thankfulness and praise. 2. It destroys the pleasure, even of those parts of religion which we practise, and banishes comfort from the soul, even in the midst of the most refreshing ordinances: For wheresoever the body is, or whatsoever the man is engaged in, the eye of the mind is still fixed upon it's own distress. 3. It sinks and weakens our trust and hope in the blessed God: It fills the spirit with impatience, the heart with discontent, and the tongue with murmurs against the wisest and the best of beings. Where immoderate grief is indulged, it prevents the soul from learning those very lessons of piety and duty which the affliction was sent to teach us. 4. It raises in the soul a froward and a fretful temper, makes us peevish and displeas'd with every thing round about us. Immoderate sorrow inclines to perpetual resentment; the heart within is uneasy, and there is nothing without can please us: It fills the place where we are with incessant complaints, and makes us a burden to our friends, instead of a blessing. 5. It stupifies the better powers of the soul, it buries the active faculties in a sort of dead sloth; it weakens the heart and the hand to all the duties of life, and renders us almost useles in the world. The mourner sits with folded hands, brooding over his own sorrows, and dark and deadly images ever present themselves to his view; the weight of grief hangs heavy upon his heart, and affects his very senses and limbs; he fancies himself on the confines of the dead, and he knows not how to rise up and act among the living. 6. Such overwhelming sorrow doth great dishonour to religion, and the grace of God: It discourages young persons who are looking towards heaven, when they find christians of such a sour, disconsolate, and gloomy temper, because it tempts them to believe, that melancholy belongs to the ways of godliness, and overspreads all the road to paradise. 7. Excessive grief doubles the real affliction, without giving any relief, and has been often attended with dismal consequences: It hath sometimes taken away the senses, blinded the eyes with weeping, distracted the thoughts, clouded and disturbed the reasoning powers, and driven the mourner into a silent and sullen madness\*: And sometimes it hath worn out the flesh itself, and brought the body to an untimely grave. "The sorrow of this world worketh death," *2 Cor.* vii. 10. 8. There are instances, not a few, wherein immoderate grief hath prevailed so far as to hurry persons into despair of the mercy of God, and armed their

\* It was ingeniously observed by a writer on this subject, that in bodily grievances we take a wiser course, and seek for every thing that can give us ease; but we use quite contrary methods with our minds, we exasperate every scratch till it becomes a wound; and then we rub and fret the wounds, and keep them so long open, till very often they become incurable.

their own hands against themselves, to put an end to their miserable life on earth, by plunging into eternity with a venture of everlasting misery.

11. When your thoughts have meditated on all these dismal attendants of immoderate sorrow, set your will and your hands to work, as well your mind. Endeavour to employ yourself in some business, though your sorrow would plead for sloth, and would let all things run at random. Instead of wasting life in fruitless moans and complaints, do something, if possible, toward the relief of your present affliction, and the removal of that burden which over-presses you. Arise and shake off this heavy clog, break these fetters of the soul, constrain yourself to activity of some kind or other, if it be but in a way of amusement: Divert the mind this way from the dark and mournful ideas that press upon it. Many a person had gone down mourning to their graves, for the loss of some dear friend or relative, if the necessary duties and business of life had not given them a constant and powerful relief.

12. Read over the commands of scripture, to "rejoice in the Lord," *Phil.* iv. 4. and make conscience of fulfilling that duty, as well as any other: True religion gives a sufficient foundation for constant joy, and the joy of the Lord shall be your strength," *Neb.* viii. 10. to discharge many other duties of righteousness.

If a spirit of melancholy seize you, there may be several useful advices found in *Mr. Rogers's* "treatise of trouble of mind," second edition 1706. and *Mr. Baxter's* account of melancholy, and his directions about it, gathered out of his works, by *Mr. Samuel Clifford*, and reduced to order in a little book, 1716.

## S E C T I O N XXIII.

*Rules to govern our anger, and to prevent the sinful effect of it, viz. revenge.*

**A**NGER considered in itself, is not an unlawful passion. If we ourselves were perfect and innocent, and were to converse only with innocent creatures, perhaps, there would be no occasion for the exercise of it. But since we dwell in a world where vice, folly, impiety, oppression, injustice and wickedness abound, there will be frequent and just occasion for anger. We have reason, too often, to be angry with ourselves, when we indulge iniquity and folly: And we may lawfully express our resentment against the crimes and vices of others. Their offences against God, against men, against ourselves, may raise in us a righteous resentment. Bold impiety against our maker, or injustice and cruelty against our fellow-creatures, stir up our just indignation and wrath. Insolence, oppression and mischief, practised or attempted against ourselves, or our friends, awaken the powers of flesh and blood for sudden self-defence, or the relief of the sufferer. These ferments and commotions of nature, were designed to be a strong and sensible rebuke to iniquity of every kind, and a means to prevent the repetition of it. Our blessed Lord himself, who was meek, and holy, and humble in perfection, yet found reason sometimes, here on earth, to give a loose to his sacred resentments: We also are expressly permitted to be angry, if we take heed of sin. *Ephes.* iv. 26.

But, alas! our natures are so perverse and corrupt, that it is very hard for us to give a loose to any angry passion against men, without running into some sentiments of malice or revenge, and thereby sinning against God. Our anger is very apt to kindle about trifles, or upon mere suspicion, without just cause; or sometimes it rises



rises too high where the cause may be just; or it continues too long, and it turns into hatred: And in either of these three cases it becomes sinful.

It is therefore with the utmost caution that this passion should ever be suffered to arise: And unless we quickly suppress it again, we shall be in great danger of bringing guilt upon our souls. The blessed apostle therefore wisely connects the permission, the caution, and the restraint together, *Eph. iv. 26.* "Be angry and sin not: Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

The violent efforts of this passion are so frequent and dangerous, that I shall dwell longer upon the regulation of it. Let me first lay down directions to moderate and restrain our anger, and then propose some considerations, to enforce the practice of them.

Directions to moderate and restrain anger.

1. Be not nice or humorous in the common things of life, *viz.* meats, drinks, clothes, forms of civility, attendance, &c. If we indulge excessive niceness and curiosity in these things, we shall meet with daily and hourly vexations. Be not therefore greatly pleased, or greatly displeased with little things. These are the most frequent occasions of sudden and violent resentments, therefore gain a wise indifference to them all.

Let your desires and your aversions to the common objects and occurrences in this life, be but few and feeble. Make it your daily business to moderate your aversions and desires, and to govern them by reason. This will guard you against many a ruffle of spirit, both of anger and sorrow.

2. Subdue pride. This is the parent and the nurse of wrath and resentment: It is this that makes us suspect injuries and affronts perpetually; this makes us take offences where none is given, and aggravates every real injury beyond all measure of truth or justice. Pride is a most impatient vice, and can bear nothing; but the humble soul is meek and patient, and meets with few affronts, or it believes but few. Let us remember we live in a world, where every person has his own opinions, and his own desires, as well as we; and if we would be easy and calm, we must learn to bear opposition and contradiction, for every body will not yield up their sentiments and will to our's, nor is it fit they should.

Accustom yourselves to candor, and take every thing in the best sense; why should you suppose your neighbour designs to affront you?

3. Suffer not your thoughts to dwell on the injuries you have received, or on the provoking words that have been spoken against you. Not only learn the art of neglecting injuries at the time you receive them, but let them grow less and less every moment, till they die out of your mind. Suffer not your musing imagination, when you are alone, to swell and magnify the provocations that have been given you, nor to blow up the fire of this uneasy passion.

4. Avoid much conversation with men of wrath, and endeavour to keep clear of all disputes with weak minds, with obstinate spirits, and especially, with persons of an angry and peevish temper, as far as you can. If the flint and steel strike against each other in a way of dispute, the sparks of fire will be ready to fly out, and the angry flame will be kindled.

5. Love your neighbour as yourself. You are not immediately kindled into wrath against yourself, nor express it with such violence, though you have often done yourself more injury by your own sins, than all other persons ever could do you. You do not bear malice against yourself, nor hate yourself, though you have, perhaps, some evil qualities belonging to you, and you have often sinned against your own soul:

soul : You forbear yourself long, and you forgive yourself easily : Learn then to forbear and forgive your neighbours.

“ Deal not with others as you would not have others deal with you.” Would you think it reasonable that your neighbour should take your words in the worst sense, and quarrel with you for every trip in conversation? That he should resent every little miscarriage that you are guilty of, that he should fly into a sudden fury of passion against you upon every failure of duty or civility? Have you not some follies that other men must bear with, and will you not bear with others? Do you never provoke your neighbour, and yet will you forgive no provocations? Have you no offences to be pardoned, why then do you not pardon others? It was very justly said, by a writer on this subject, that men’s mistakes, imprudencies, and inadvertencies are so mutual and so numerous, that were not this piece of kindness mutual also, quarrellings and feuds must be infinite.

In short, I must say, a person that would claim a right continually to resent, ought himself to be perfect and free from faults: And then I might add, he would be so wise and good as seldom to indulge his resentments.

6. Observe a person in all his airs and behaviours, when his angry passions are raised high, and exert themselves: Mark the frowns on his countenance, the flame and fierceness of his eyes, his threatening and revengeful looks, the disorder and tumult that appears in his whole nature: What an unpleasing and shameful figure he makes! How much like a person half distracted, and whose reason is under a cloud! How he stamps and stares! What rash vows and desperate wishes! Anger is a short madness; it throws a person off his guard; neither truth nor reason appear to him as reason or truth: The violence of the passion throws off all restraints, the phrensy disdains all law and justice, and drives the man to wild extravagance. Is this the lovely, the desirable pattern that you chuse to imitate? Do you like this figure so well as to put it on yourself?

7. Live always under the eye of God, and suppress rising anger with the reverence of his name and presence. Remember that a holy God and holy angels behold you; and are you not ashamed to appear in their sight, under all the extravagant disorders of this passion? Remember the dignity of your nature as man, and your character as a christian, and a child of God.

8. Keep the sacred example of *Jesus* ever before your eyes: How meek under the vilest affronts! How patient under the rudest injuries and most barbarous treatment! How forgiving even to his bloody murderers! How did he return the highest good for the greatest evil! And paid down his blood and life to redeem his enemies from hell, and to purchase eternal joy and glory for them! “ Let such a mind be in you as was in *Christ* the Son of God,” *Phil.* ii. 5. “ who being reviled, reviled not again, and when he suffered, he threatened not, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.” *1 Pet.* ii. 21. 23.

9. When you find the warm passion arising, suppress the first motion of it. It is much easier to be subdued at first, than if you indulge it a little. A spark is sooner quenched than a flame.

10. Command your tongue to silence, and your hands to peace, if you cannot presently command your spirit. Suffer not the vehement efforts of wrath to break out in reproachful names, and spiteful words, much less into blows of revenge. These outward violences, if once let loose, go generally beyond all the just bounds of resentment, they further enrage the inward flame and fury, and thus become greatly criminal. Give the fire of your passion, when it is just kindled, no public vent, and, perhaps, it will quickly be stifled and die.

11. At

11. At least, suppress all violent discoveries of it so long till you have taken some time to consider whether you have received any real injury or no, whether the injury was accidental or designed, whether the offence be of such a hainous nature and degree as your present passion represents it. Many offences are great and hainous only in the light of a ruffled fancy, and not in themselves.

It is said, concerning *Julius Cæsar*, that upon any provocation, he would repeat the roman alphabet before he suffered himself to speak, that he might be more just and calm in his resentments. The delay of a few moments has let many seeming affronts in a juster and kinder light; it has often lessened, if not annihilated, the supposed injury, and prevented violence and revenge.

12. If you cannot govern your spirit, and suppress the outward appearances and efforts of your passion, take the first opportunity of leaving the place and company: Withdraw from the temptation, and retire to prayer; confess, before God, the ungovernable frame of your own spirit; bewail the pride and passion that dwells in you. Ask forgiveness of heaven, and beg the divine influences of grace to subdue the disorderly ferments of your nature.

13. If you have unhappily indulged your anger to break out to the reproach and injury of your neighbour, as well as to your own shame, do not only repent in secret before God, but take a proper time to confess it to the person whom you have injured, and ask their pardon. This will have a considerable tendency to future watchfulness, and help to guard you from the same folly for time to come.

Among other directions I might have added, avoid rude and quarrelsome company, avoid excessive drinking and gaming, and all lewd and vicious courses: But I hope I have no need to mention these rules to those persons for whom I chiefly write.

I proceed now to lay down some considerations, which may enforce the practice of these rules.

1. Think with yourself, how much injury you do yourself by suffering your angry passions to rise and prevail. The fire of wrath and resentment preys upon your nature, destroys your health and your ease, fills your spirit with tumults and disquietudes, exposes you to shame before men, breaks the peace of your conscience, brings you under guilt before God, and makes a painful preparation for bitter repentance. Why will you punish yourself because another has injured you? Or, if another man be rude and wrathful, ill-natured and ill-bred, why will you imitate him, and expose yourself?

2. Think again, how much more pleasure and glory there is in overcoming the violence of your own spirit, than in yielding to your headstrong passions, and suffering yourselves to be carried away with the torrent of your own resentments. "He that rules his own spirit, is a greater hero than he that conquers a city," *Prov. xvi. 32.*

To be angry about trifles, is mean and childish; to rage and be furious, is brutish; and to maintain perpetual wrath, is a-kin to the practice and temper of devils; but to prevent or suppress rising resentment, is wise and glorious, is manly and divine.

This one piece of conduct will raise our reputation for wisdom among men, more than a hundred fine speeches, or superior airs, and will greatly adorn our character as persons of piety. "The wisdom that is from above is peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated." *James iii. 17.*

3. Consider how unfit you are for every duty of religion and worship, while you are under the power of this uneasy passion. With what face, or courage, or comfort can you draw near to God, while you cherish undue wrath in your heart? The sinful ferment of your nature indisposes you for worship, the guilt thereof makes your service unacceptable; and a defiled conscience makes you unwilling to come near to a God of holiness, *Matth. v. 23*. If there be a quarrel between thee and thy brother, "leave thy gift at the altar, go and be reconciled to thy brother, and then return and offer thy gift."

4. Think of the dreadful effects of ungoverned anger in the world. What tragical scenes has it introduced! What impious mischief! How has it broken all the dearest bonds of friendship and kindred! How has it divided and ruined families, and cities, and nations! It has filled the earth with private and public murders and cruelties. Blood, ruin, and destruction, have attended it from the days of *Cain* and *Abel*, to this day.

It is the wrath of princes that hath made such vast slaughters among men, hath turned beautiful cities into heaps of rubbish, hath unpeopled nations, and sent multitudes of souls into eternity by untimely death. And it must be acknowledged too, with shame, that the wrath of priests and people hath torn churches to pieces, and joined with kings to erect bloody inquisitions, those sacred slaughter-houses, to kindle fires of martyrdom, and murder millions, under pretence of zeal for God.

5. Consider that it is a glorious singularity of the religion of *Christ*, that it commands and teaches us "to forgive our enemies, and to love them that hate us." *Matth. v. 44*. But for a man that pretends to be a christian, to indulge a resenting humour, and to be ever fretful and angry, and meditating revenge, what a shame and dishonour does it cast upon the religion that we profess, and upon the sacred name of *Jesus*, whom we adore? Wrathful christians are a scandal to their master, the prince of peace.

6. Think with yourself how many greater crimes has the blessed God forgiven you, if you are a christian indeed; and will you not forgive your brother his petty offences? Has the maker and Lord of heaven and earth forgiven you ten thousand talents, and will you not forgive your brother a hundred pence? Did the Son of God make himself a sacrifice for your offences, that you might be pardoned, and will you make your brother, who has offended you, a sacrifice to your fury?

7. But consider farther, that if you do not forgive your brother, who has offended you, you cannot expect to be forgiven of God: Nay, it is evident, according to the express sentence of the gospel, you cannot be forgiven without it. "If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you." *Matth. vi. 15*. Do you not pray for pardon of your trespasses, even as you forgive those who trespass against you, and will you sin against your own prayers?

8. Remember that revenge belongs to God, and the magistrate: Now you must not take their work out of their hands. It is granted, that there may be some seasons and occasions, wherein it may be proper and necessary to shew some degrees of resentment, and let your enemy know that you are not a senseless block, or a stone without feeling, in order to guard you from universal insults and continual injuries. To resist the efforts of oppression and violence, and to smite others, so far as is plainly necessary for mere self-defence, has been always judged lawful. The measure of this resentment, and the manner of it in particular instances, must be taught by religion and prudence: But remember, that it is far better to suffer two injuries, than to revenge one. "If a man will strike thee on one cheek, rather turn the other

to him," *Matth.* v. 39. than take the awful work of vengeance into thy own hand.

In case of lesser injuries or affronts, it is best generally to neglect and forget them: In greater injuries, or the frequent repetition of less, you may resent so far as is necessary for the defence of yourself, or for the reformation of the offender: But never let resentment carry revenge in it, that is, merely to repay evil for evil.

9. Think with yourself, when you receive some high provocation, that God places you at that hour under a special trial, and he waits to see what honour you will do to his grace, and his gospel, and whether the flesh or the spirit will come off conqueror: He expects that you should shew how well you are taught by the religion of *Christ*, to "love your enemies, and bless them that curse you." *Matth.* v. 44. It is of infinitely greater importance to you, to keep your own spirit easy and innocent, and adorn the doctrine of *Christ*, than to take the fullest revenge of him that has injured you.

10. Consider this, that by returning good for evil, you will better obtain all the supposed designs and ends of anger, than by practising revenge: For, 1. If your enemy has any thing of humanity in him, any tenderness about his heart, you will melt him down by such a carriage, you will soften his spirit into love, and bring him, as it were, to your foot. However, 2. If this desirable effect be not obtained, you shew your obedience to the gospel, you put your case intirely into the hand of God, who will plead your cause. *Rom.* xii. 20, 21. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good: If thy enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; so shalt thou heap coals of fire on his head;" either to melt him down to friendly submission, or to bring the vengeance of God upon him, if he will not be reconciled.

11. If you are angry with a good man, do you not hope to meet him shortly in heaven, in the regions of peace and love? And will you not be ashamed to meet him in heaven, whom you reviled and persecuted here on earth? If it be a wicked man, against whom you shew your resentment, he will shortly fall under the just wrath of God, unless he repent, and he needs not to have the addition of yours: He will be given up to the rage and insults of devils hereafter, and you need not begin to torment him here with your revenges.

12. Suppose you knew that you were near death, and that your enemy were also dying, would you not desire to be reconciled to him before that awful moment? Consider that you are both dying creatures, borderers on the grave and eternity; "Suffer not the sun to go down upon your wrath," *Ephes.* iv. 26. lest both your souls should be required this night, lest you die before you are reconciled; and I am sure, if you are a christian, an unreconciled spirit will make the hour of death very uneasy, and render your passage out of this world dark and uncomfortable. But I persuade myself better things concerning every one who is a true disciple of *Christ*.

## S E C T I O N XXIV.

*Some universal directions which relate to all the forementioned passions, and the regulation of them.*

**I** SHALL divide these last general directions into two sorts: The first sort may be called moral and philosophical; and the second, religious or divine.

The moral or philosophical directions are these :

1. Let the regulation of your passions be the care of your younger years, and carry on this necessary work through your whole life, without intermission. The grave is the only burying-place of unruly affections. If you are so happy as to have begun this self-government in childhood, and been taught to suppress the irregular motions of the heart betimes, you will make the remaining work much more easy, and the following parts of life more peaceful and honourable; though perhaps there is no complete victory till we are dismissed from flesh and blood.

Root up the foul weeds of pride, malice and envy, as soon as ever you find them springing : Let them be nipt in their very bud and infancy, lest they fix their roots too deep in the heart to be removed, and bear the bitter fruits of mischief, iniquity, and death. A tender plant is sooner rooted up than an old and sturdy tree.

Bend the more lawful and useful passions of love, desire, joy, fear, anger, and sorrow, like young trees, into a beautiful and regular form, and prune off all their luxuriant branches. Begin to bring them to obey the laws of reason betimes. Keep a constant and an early watch against the wanderings and the out-breakings of every affection. Let wisdom put a bridle on them before they are grown headstrong and unruly, that you may guide them usefully, like a managed horse, through the various paths of human life, and they may bear you on to duty and happiness.

And I would earnestly recommend it to parents and teachers, to insinuate the advantage of ruling the passions to all the young people whom nature or providence hath put under their care. Let them be taught these lessons in the very morning of life. Otherwise you may expect, that a young humorist will grow up to an intolerable peevishness, and become a four old wretch : A wrathful child, untaught to bridle his rage, will grow to an incurable fury. Spite and envy, uncurbed between ten and twenty years of age, will be in danger of making a devil at fifty. An *ethiopian* may as well change his skin, or a leopard his spots, as those who have long practised evil can learn to do well. *Jer. xiii. 23.*

2. Suffer not your irregular passions to excuse themselves by taking false names upon them, and screen themselves from censure and mortification by any disguises of virtue.

Vain ambition and affectation of applause, will sometimes squander away money, and appear magnificent and bountiful, far beyond the circumstances of the giver, and contrary to his duty, and the interest of his family. Then this ambitious and profuse humour puts on the name of liberality and generous beneficence, and hopes to excuse itself under this disguise, and to cover itself from just censure : But a wise observer will not be cheated by these false titles.

Pride and wrath would sometimes call themselves a becoming greatness of spirit : But he hath a greater soul, who can treat inferiors with all gentleness ; and hath learned to neglect and forget supposed affronts and injuries, as mean and little things, which deserve no special notice.

When some persons have abandoned themselves to excessive sorrow, they call it a debt of love to the deceased friend ; and under this colour they go on to encourage and swell their grief, which had risen before to a dangerous height.

Others again will vindicate their passionate resentments of injury done to their reputation, or any neglect of duty and respect to themselves under the name of tenderness of spirit : They cannot bear the least slight or censure : You can hardly touch them, but you hurt them : Every admonition is a reproach, and every  
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real affront immediately overwhelms them with a mixture of anger and sorrow. They have too much of the child in them when they are grown to the stature of men. But while we shew some pity to these infirmities of human nature, yet these passions, and this temper, should be called by their proper names, that is, a weakness of soul, which ought to be cured, and an excessive love of self, which ought to be mortified. We must learn to go through the difficulties of life with a becoming courage, and a decent neglect of those little oppositions or injuries which otherwise will ever be breaking in upon our peace.

3. Learn and practise the art of self-denial, with regard to your appetites of every kind, and you will gain an easier government of your passions. Rule the flesh well, in order to rule the spirit. Passion has it's chief seat in animal nature, and if the animal be brought under the yoke betimes, it will be more obedient to reason, and less susceptible of irregular commotions. Temperance is one of the first of virtues; but a pampered appetite supplies new force, vigour and obstinacy to unruly passions.

4. Refrain your needless curiosity, and all solicitous inquiries into things which were better unknown. How many plentiful springs of fear, sorrow, anger and hatred, have been found out and broken up by this laborious digging? Have a care of an over-curious search into such things as might have safely remained for ever secret, and the ignorance of them had prevented many foolish and hurtful passions. A fond solicitude to know all that our friends or our foes say of us, is often recompensed with vexing disquietude and anguish of soul.

5. Get a general benevolence to mankind rooted in your heart. This will keep you from being too selfish. It is for the most part the selfish passions which are immoderate and unruly: There is not so much danger in those which arise from love to our neighbour.

6. Never let your passions determine your esteem or opinion of things or persons: These always bribe or bias the judgment to their own side, and thence it is evident, that they will often lead it astray. Whatsoever passion makes any representations of a thing, you must always make some grains of allowance; for if it happen to be right in the main, yet it generally colours every thing too high and strong.

It is therefore a matter of great importance to form and settle your judgment of things and persons, which you have to do with, in the calmest and sereneest hours of life, and when you are free from the influence of every affection; and let these judgments be reserved as rules for your constant conduct in human life, that whenever temptations appear, or when passion solicites your nature, and makes efforts to rise and reign, you may ever have some settled truths and rules of conduct ready at hand to govern it.

7. Observe what are the passions to which you are most liable; or to which you are most disposed by your age, or any other circumstances of time, place, &c. Consider what passions have the deepest root in your natural constitution, and watch against them: Enquire into yourself which are those affections to which your temper is most inclined, or to which you are most exposed by your station and circumstances in the world, and set a special guard upon them. Fear and jealousy are needful to defend you against the sin that easily besets you, the vice that dwells in your flesh and blood.

8. Watch against all those seasons and temptations, those dangerous hours, those occurrences, or that company which in time past have been most provoking to any of your evil passions, and whereby you have been tempted to give them too great

a loose. Let the burnt child dread the fire. An ox or an ass will not easily be led to those places where they have received wounds or bruises: Shall a man, a christian, have less sense than brute creatures?

9. Have a care of indulging the dangerous passions too far, or too often, such as fear, sorrow, anger, &c. lest by too frequent repetition, by too intense a degree, or too long a continuance, they should grow into a settled habit and temper; then it will cost much more labour and pains to subdue them.

10. Whensoever you feel some of the better and more kindly sort of passions, especially those which flow from the love of God or your neighbour, working in you, encourage and promote them in a due degree, that they may fix in your heart more firmly the principles of goodness, and form your very nature and temper to virtue and religion.

11. Where the power of truth and reason has not been sufficient to subdue an irregular passion, it has often been found useful to abate the violence of a passion, if we call the thoughts away from that subject, by diverting the mind to another employment.

12. Sometimes also one unruly passion is suppressed by raising another which is more harmless or useful. So when a stupid inactivity arises from excessive sorrow, it may be corrected and removed by some frightful representation, awakening the passion of fear, or perhaps, by some artful and innocent method of teasing the mourner, gently to kindle him a little into anger. *Joab*, seems to have used both these methods to rouse *David* to his duty, in the midst of his excessive sorrow for *Abshalom*, *2 Sam.* xix. 1—8, where, in a free and bold speech, he made the king afraid, lest the people should forsake him, if he gave way further to that unactive passion.

Or if any particular passion prevail too much over us, sometimes we may change the object of the same passion, and thereby prevent its irregularity and excess. If a timorous christian avoid his duty, for fear of the reproach of the world, or the wrath of the magistrate; set the wrath of God and hell fire before him, that the fear of divine vengeance may cure him of the fear of man. This was the practice of our blessed Lord to give courage to his disciples, *Luke* xii. 4, 5. "Fear not them who kill the body, and can do no more; but fear him who can cast into hell."

But I proceed now more particularly to the religious directions, which are these that follow.

1. Never think yourself sufficiently guarded against the power and danger of any of your vicious passions, till your nature be renewed by divine grace, till there be a thorough and universal change wrought in you, till you have obtained firm inward principles of universal holiness. If you would have the fruit good, it is in vain to labour in breaking off every irregular bud, or lopping the branches? but the tree itself must be made good, in order to bear good fruit." This is the direction of our blessed saviour. *Matt.* xii. 33.

2. Give yourself no rest till you can find the love of God has gained the supreme place in your heart. Love is the ruling passion, and if that be fixed upon the highest and best of objects, it will keep all the other powers and passions of nature in order and subjection; as I have shewn at large in the "second discourse of the love of God."

3. Keep your conscience always tender: Maintain a holy jealousy of yourselves, and a constant fear of offending God: By this means your spirit will be perpetually awak-



awakened and alarmed, when an evil passion begins to stir, or when you are near the place or moment of danger, or within the reach of temptation.

4. Set God always before you in his majesty and in his mercy. Let an awful and comfortable sense of his immediate presence at all times, and in all places, be a sovereign and divine guard upon all the dangerous efforts of your nature, or unruly motions of your spirit. This will suppress rising pride and envy, anger and malice: This will be a sovereign and sure defence against the tyranny of foolish or sinful fear, as well as a sweet support under heavy sorrows, and an effectual means to restrain them from excess.

5. Commit your soul, with all its powers and passions, to the keeping of *Christ*, in this state of infirmity and union to flesh and blood. He knows what it is to wear a body of flesh, with its various ferments and emotions, though in him these were all pure and innocent. He is a compassionate and sympathizing "high-priest, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having himself been tempted in all things like us, *Heb. iv. 15.* as far as innocence would permit; and he is exalted and ordained of God to take care of feeble man, wrestling with strong temptations.

6. Whenever you feel a passion arise, and are doubtful whether it be fit to be indulged or no, make a trial of it in prayer, by appealing to God concerning it; see whether it will bear that test, even the test of a tender conscience near the throne of God.

7. Make every irregular passion a matter of humble mourning and complaint before the mercy-seat: Pray earnestly for supplies of daily strength against the irregular efforts of nature and passion: Cry out for help from above, whenever you are combating with your unruly affections; God has promised sufficient aid in the gospel. His grace can enable you both to conquer, and to bear vastly beyond the feeble powers of your own nature. Reason and resolution will do much, but religion is a diviner spring of strength and victory.

8. Call yourself continually to account for every irregular fit of passion. Let it never break out and defile your soul, without some effectual mortification of it by holy repentance. Think how it discomposed your spirit, disturbed your quiet, ruffled your temper, broke your peace; think how it drew your heart away from God, indisposed you for acts of worship, and unfitted you for death. Think of this, and be ashamed of your foolish indulgence of any faulty and violent affection of the soul: Condemn yourself without spreading abroad your excuses and apologies; and print this shame and self-condemnation deep upon your spirit: Let it live there in plain and painful characters, and review it especially in the hour of new temptation. Thus every immoderate effort of passion, and every victory that it has obtained over you, shall become an occasion of its own ruin.

9. Treasure up in your mind and memory, such words of scripture as are happily suited to subdue the various unruly passions of nature. The word of God is given us for this end. "I have laid up thy word in my heart, saith *David*, that I might not sin against thee: And wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way, a young man, whose spirits are warm, and whose passions are violent, but by taking heed thereto, according to thy word?" *Psal. cxix. 9, 11.* When these enemies of peace and holiness arise within you, take "the sword of the spirit to hew them down; the sword of the spirit is the word of God." *Ephes. vi. 17* Many a vicious passion faints, and languishes, and dies at the appearance of divine truth. Shall I mention a few sentences of holy writ, which are proper to allay these criminal efforts of nature?

Against

Against pride and scorn, read *Prov.* xi. 2. "When pride cometh, then cometh shame, but with the lowly is wisdom." *Prov.* xvi. 18. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." *Prov.* vi. 16, 17. "The Lord hateth a proud look." *Eccles.* vii. 8. "He that is poor in spirit, is better than he that is proud in spirit." *Jam.* iv. 6. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth more grace to the humble." *Psal.* i. 1. "Blessed is the man sitteth not in the seat of the scornful." *Prov.* xxiv. 9. "The scorner is an abomination to men." *Prov.* xix. 29. "Judgments are prepared for scorers." *Prov.* xvii. 5. "Whoso mocketh the poor, reproacheth his maker.

Against malice and envy. *Rom.* xiii. 9. "Love your neighbour as yourself." *Eph.* iv. 31. "Let all bitterness, and wrath,—and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice." *1 Cor.* xiv. 20. "In understanding be ye men, but in malice be ye children." *1 Pet.* i. 22. "Love one another with a pure heart fervently." *1 John* iv. 20. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." *Job* v. 2. "Envy slayeth the silly one." *Prov.* xiv. 30. Envy is the rottenness of the bones." *Gal.* v. 26. "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another; for hatred, wrath, strife, variance, envyings, &c. are all works of the flesh," verses 20, 21.

Against excessive love of creatures. *Matt.* x. 37. "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me." *1 Cor.* vii. 29, 30. "The time is short: It remaineth therefore, that they that have wives, be as though they had none;—and they that buy, as though they possessed not." *Col.* iii. 2. "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth." *1 John* ii. 15. "Love not the world, neither the things which are in the world: If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Against immoderate and sinful fear. There is scarce any prohibition in all the bible, more frequently repeated than "fear not." *Isaiab's* prophecy abounds with this caution. Chapter xli. 10. "Fear not, I am with thee: Be not dismayed, I am thy God." *Isai.* li. 12, 13.—I am he that comforteth you; who art thou that thou art afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man, that shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy maker?"—*Psal.* xxvii. 1. "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" *Luke* xii. 4. "Fear not them which kill the body, but after that can do no more." *Psal.* xxvii. 14. "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart." *Rev.* xxi. 8. "The fearful and unbelieving—shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.

Against excessive sorrow. *1 Cor.* vii. 30. "Let those that weep, be as though they wept not." *2 Cor.* vii. 10. "Worldly sorrow worketh death." *1 Thess.* iv. 13. "Sorrow not for the dead, as others which have no hope." *Prov.* xv. 13. "By sorrow of heart the spirit is broken." *Phil.* iv. 4. "Rejoice always in the Lord, and again I say, rejoice." The book of *Psalms*, is so rich a treasure of divine supports and reliefs under those two disquieting passions of fear and sorrow, that there are few psalms without some of these consolations. And in the new testament, *Rom.* viii. and *Heb.* xii. are chapters written for the comfort of suffering and afflicted christians.

Against immoderate anger and revenge. *Prov.* xv. 1. "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger." *Prov.* xix. 11. "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression." *Prov.* xxi. 24. "Haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath." *Prov.* xii. 16. "A fool's wrath is presently kindled, but a prudent man covereth shame."

*Prov.*

*Prov.* xiv. 29. "He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding, but he that is hasty of spirit, exalteth folly." *Eccles.* vii. 9. "Anger resteth in the bosom of fools." *Matt.* xi. 29.—"Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." *Rom.* xii. 18, 19. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not your selves.—Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." *Eph.* iv. 26. "Be angry and sin not: Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil." *Coloss.* iii. 12, 13. "Put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another,—as *Christ* forgave you, so also do ye." And particularly treasure up in your memory the divine characters of charity. *1 Cor.* xiii. 4—7. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth, or as it should be rendered, covereth all things, that is, all faults, believeth all things, and hopeth all things, that is, all good, and endureth all things, that is, all injuries and hardships for the sake of others.

The tenth and last direction to regulate our passions about the things of earth, is to live much in the expectation of death, and in the view and hope of eternal things. Death and judgment, heaven and hell, are such grand and awful ideas, that where they are duly considered, they will make the things of this life appear so very little and inconsiderable, as to be scarce worthy of our hopes and fears, our desires and aversions, our wrath and resentments, our sorrows and joys. Such a steady prospect and expectation of things infinite and everlasting, will, by degrees, dissolve the force of visible and temporal things, and make them unable to raise any wild and unruly passions within us. Happy the soul that has a strong and lively faith of unseen worlds, of future terrors and glories: This will cure the vicious disorders of flesh and sense, appetite and passion: This will raise the spirit on the wings of devout affection, to the borders of paradise, and attemper the soul to the business and the joys of the blessed.



# DISCOURSES

OF THE

LOVE of GOD,

And it's INFLUENCE on all the

PASSIONS:

With a DISCOVERY of the

Right USE and ABUSE of them in  
MATTERS of RELIGION.

A devout MEDITATION is annexed to each  
DISCOURSE.



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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**I**N the first edition of these discourses “the doctrine of the passions” stood as an introduction to them, wherein, their general nature was explained, their various kinds reduced to some regular order, the uses of them in human life represented, and moral and divine rules were proposed for the government of these natural and active powers. This little treatise has been much enlarged, and printed by itself, under a distinct title, *viz.* “The doctrine of the passions explained and improved.” These “discourses of the love of God, and the use and abuse of the passions in religion” now follow; and since there are readers of a different taste, who have desired each of them alone, they may now chuse for themselves, or they may order the bookseller to join them together if they please.

Many years are now passed since the general design of both these treatises was formed, and some brief sketches of them were drawn, which had lain by me in long silence among other papers.

That which inclined me, at last, to draw up these discourses, of the “use of the passions in religion,” into a more regular form, was the growing deadness and degeneracy of our age in vital religion, though it grew bright in rational and polite learning. There are too many persons who have imbibed, and propagate this notion, that it is almost the only business of a preacher to teach the necessary doctrines and duties of our holy religion, by a mere explication of the word of God, without enforcing these things on the conscience, by a pathetic address to the heart; and that the business of a christian, in his attendance on sermons, is to learn what these doctrines and duties are, without taking any pains to awaken the devout sensations of hope and fear, and love and joy, though the God of nature hath ordained them to be the most effectual allurements or spurs to duty in this present animal state. We are often told, that this warm and affectionate religion belongs only to the weaker parts of mankind, and is not strong and manly enough for persons of sense and good reasoning. But where the religious use of the passions is renounced and abandoned, we do not find this cold and dry reasoning sufficient to raise virtue and piety to any great and honourable degree, even in their men of sense, without the assistance of pious affections.

On the other hand, it must be acknowledged also, there have been many persons who have made their religion to consist too much in the working of their passions, without a due exercise of reason in the things of God. They have contented themselves with some devout raptures without seeking after clear conceptions of divine things, or building their faith and hope, and practice, upon a just and solid foundation

dation of sacred knowledge. Whatsoever is vehement, if it hath but the name of God annexed to it, they are ready to think and call sacred and divine. This sort of religion lies very much exposed to all the wild temptations of fancy and enthusiasm: A great deal of the bigotry of the world, and the madness of persecution may be ascribed to this unhappy spring. I thought it necessary therefore, to speak of the abuse of the passions, as well as the use of them, and to guard against mistakes on both sides.

As a foundation for these discourses, I chose to treat of the love of God, which in a sovereign manner rules and manages, awakens or suppresses all the other passions of the soul. The whole train of affections, both the painful and the pleasant ones, are under the power and regulation of love.

In my pursuit of this subject, I have endeavoured to avoid all extremes; that is, neither to turn religion into a matter of speculation or cold reasoning, nor to give up the devout christian to all wandering fooleries of warm and ungoverned passion. I hope I have maintained the middle way, which, as it is most agreeable to the holy scripture, and to the genius of christianity, so it has produced the noblest fruits of righteousness in every age. On this account I may presume, that the track, which I have pursued, will give no just offence to the wisest and the best of christians.

In order to make this work more serviceable to the purposes of practical godliness, I have endeavoured to form a pathetic meditation upon the argument of each discourse, that I might, as far as possible, exemplify the practice of those things which I recommend to the world, and assist the devout reader to make a present use of them toward his advancement in the christian life.



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D I S C O U R S E S  
O F T H E  
L O V E of G O D,  
A N D T H E  
U S E and A B U S E of t h e P A S S I O N S.

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D I S C O U R S E I.  
The affectionate and supreme love of G O D.

M A R K xii. 30.

—*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.*—

**A**MONG all the teachers of religion that have been sent from God to men, the two most eminent and illustrious are *Moses* and *Christ*; *Moses* the servant of the living God, and *Christ* his only begotten Son. Both of them lay the foundation of all true religion in the unity of God, and both of them make our religion to consist in love. Thus saith *Moses* in the sixth of *Deuteronomy*, whence my text is cited, and thus saith the blessed *Jesus* in the place where my text lies, “Hear, O *Israel*, the Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love him with all thy heart.”

It is no wonder that all the powers of our natures, with all the utmost extent of our capacities, must be devoted to the love and service of this God, since there is but one, since he “is God alone, and there is none besides him,” *Isai.* xlv. 6. He must reign over the heart and the soul, over all our intellectual and our bodily powers, supreme, and without a rival.

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Though the love of our neighbour is required both by *Moses* and *Christ*, as a necessary part of our religion, yet it must never stand in competition with the love of our God.

Some suppose the supreme and intense degree of this love, to be the whole design of *Christ*, in recommending the love of God to us in all these four expressions, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," viz. to intimate in general that all the faculties of nature should be employed in the love and service of God, with the greatest intenseness and full vigour of exercise.

But if we should distinguish these sentences, according to the different powers of nature, into so many different significations, I think they may be most naturally thus explained: God must be loved with all the mind, that is, he must stand highest in the esteem of the judgment: He must be loved with all the soul, that is, with the strongest attachment of the will to him: He must be loved with all the heart, that is, with the warmest and sincerest affection: And he must be loved with all the strength, that is, this love must be manifested by the utmost exercise and activity of all the inferior powers.

The heart in the language of scripture, and in the common sense of men, is the seat of the passions, that is, of fear, hope, love, hatred, joy, sorrow, shame, desire, and such like, which are usually called the passions or affections of the heart, I shall not stand in this place to give a more exact or philosophical account of them, having done that in another treatise.\*

If it be enquired, why the heart is said to be the seat of the passions, there is this good reason for it, viz. It is by sensible effects on the heart, that several of the affections do chiefly exert and manifest themselves; and it was chiefly for this reason that *jewish* philosophy gave the soul of man it's chief residence in the heart, and made it to be the seat of the passions.

The heart also in scripture, and in almost all nations and languages, is used to express or imply sincerity; what is done from the heart is done sincerely, perhaps, because the passions are naturally sincere, and are not so easy to be disguised as the outward actions of men.

Now, since it is my design to treat of the exercises of the passions, or affections of the heart in the affairs of religion, I have chosen this sentence as the foundation of my discourses. The plain and obvious proposition contained in the words is this, viz.

"The Lord our God is the proper object of our most sincere affection, and our supreme love."

It is not enough for the eye to be lifted up to him, or the knee to bow before him; it is not enough for the tongue to speak of him, or the hand to act for his interest in the world; all this may be done by painted hypocrites, whose religion is all disguise and vanity: But the heart with all the inward powers and passions must be devoted to him in the first place: This is religion indeed. The great God values not the service of men, if the heart be not in it: The Lord sees and judges the heart; he has no regard to outward forms of worship, if there be no inward adoration, if no devout affection be employed therein. It is therefore a matter of infinite importance, to have the whole heart engaged stedfastly for God. If this be done we shall have a sufficient

\* See pages 583—602 of this volume.

sufficient evidence in our selves, that we are truly religious, and are beloved of God.

In treating this subject, I shall consider these seven things.

- I. What is presupposed and implied in the affectionate and supreme love of God.
  - II. What will be the effects of this supreme love to God on all the other passions, or how this divine passion will engage all the rest of the affectionate powers in the interests of religion.
  - III. Of what use and importance the passions are in religion, and what advantage is to be derived from them.
  - IV. How far the passions may be abused, even in religious concerns, or what is the irregular use of them, and how their efforts should be limited and restrained.
- Under each of these heads I shall propose some useful reflexions.
- V. We shall shew how the affectionate christian may be vindicated, against the cavils and reproaches of men, in his warmest exercises of devotion.
  - VI. What relief or comfort may be given to humble and sincere christians, who complain that they feel but very low degrees of this affectionate love to God, or of the exercise of pious passions, either in public worship, or in their devout retirements.
  - VII. What are the most proper and effectual methods of exciting and engaging the affections in religion. Of each of these in their order.

First, "What is presupposed and implied in the supreme and affectionate love of God?"

I answer, these five things\*.

I. Some good degrees of the knowledge of God, and such an acquaintance with him, as may raise the highest esteem of him in our mind. It is impossible that we should love any thing that we know not: And it is not to be expected that we should love God supremely, or with all our heart, if we have not known him to be more excellent, and more desirable than all other things we are acquainted with. We must have the highest opinion of his transcendent worth, or we cannot love him above all things.

It is granted, we may love or delight in some objects of an inferior nature, as they are instruments of our health or ease, or comfort; so we are said to love our habitation and our food, because they minister to our conveniency or support in the present life. We may love some poor worthless wretches with good-will and compassion, because we design to bestow some benefits upon them. We love our country and our kindred with a sort of natural attachment of the heart, because they belong to our selves, and we are, as it were, of a piece with them. We love our friends because we esteem them possessed of some valuable properties, and able to confer benefits on us, or to relieve our wants: But unless we see the great and blessed God, as a being possessed of the highest excellencies, and capable of bestowing on us the richest benefits; unless we see him as an all-

VOL. II.

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sufficient

\* I might have described the affectionate love of God here by the love of esteem, the love of benevolence, and the love of complacency, according to the distributions of love in the "treatise of the passions," mentioned in the preface; but I chuse rather in this place to shew, what acts or operations of the understanding and will, are presupposed and included in the love of God: The more affectionate operations of it are reserved to the next discourse.

sufficient good, we shall never love him with our whole heart: The affection to so unseen and spiritual a being as God is, can never rise high where the esteem is but low: Where the love ought to be superior to all other loves, the esteem must be transcendent.

II. The affectionate and supreme love of God, presupposes some hope of an interest to be obtained in his favour, and the highest advantages to be derived from him. If I lie down in despair of his mercy, I cannot look on God, even in all his supreme excellencies, with an eye of love. The devil, the worst of creatures, knows more of the transcendent glory and worth of the great God, than the wisest and the best of mortals here on earth: But he knows there is no hope for him to obtain an interest in his favour, and therefore he continues in his old enmity. His rebellion has cut him off from all expectation of divine mercy, and therefore he cannot love this God of infinite excellency. A dreadful state indeed for an intelligent being, that he cannot love what he knows to be infinitely amiable!

Hope is the most alluring spring of love. Terror and slavish fear stand opposite to this holy affection; Such "fear has torment in it, and so far as we fear God as an enemy, we are not made perfect in his love," 1 *John* iv. 18. We love him, because we hope that he has, or he will love us: It is the assurance, or at least the expectation of some interest in God that engages the most affectionate love: And, perhaps, the words of my text may have some reference hereto, when it is said, "thou shalt love the Lord thy God." When we believe or hope that the Lord is our God, we cannot but love him.

III. This love of the heart implies a strong inclination of the will toward God, a steady bent of soul toward this blessed author of our being and happiness: It implies a choice of him above and beyond all things else, as our most desirable portion and our eternal good. If any thing in this world be the chosen portion of our souls, if any thing beneath and besides God be made our chief hope, our support, and our life, our hearts will run out in strongest affections toward it, for it is our chief happiness; and then we can never love God as it becomes a creature to love his creator.

The holy *Psalmist* was a most affectionate lover of his God, and how often does he call him the "portion of his inheritance, his refuge, and his hope?" *Psal.* xvi. 5. *Psal.* cxlii. 5. and in *Psal.* lxxiii. 26. "Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Blessed saint! He had chosen God for his eternal all.

Under this head I should add also, that where the will is thus attached to God, the soul will exert itself in continual wishes for the honour of God in the world: It is the nature of love to wish well, and to do good to the beloved object; and since God can receive no other good from us, but the manifestation of his excellencies and honours among men, we shall earnestly seek and wish this glory of God, if we are sincere lovers of him.

IV. This affectionate and supreme love of God includes in it an out-going of the heart after him, with most intense longings, and most pleasing sensations: This is what we are wont to call more eminently the love of desire, and the love of delight, which I shall speak of more at large in the following discourse. The heart of a sincere good man is resistless till it find God, that is, till it obtain a solid hope and persuasion of his love, a growing conformity to him, and constant delight in him. The heart is not easy without God: It acquiesces and rests in him alone. If I have God for my friend, and my everlasting portion, I have all: If he be absent, O that  
I knew

I knew where I might find him!" *Job. xxiii. 3.* And if he manifest his presence with his divine influences, "Come back, O my soul, from amongst the creatures; come back, and return to God thy rest." *Psal. cxvi. 7.*

V. Where the love of God reigns in the affections it will command all the other powers of nature, and all the rest of the passions to act suitably to this sovereign and ruling affection of love: The eye will often look up to God in a way of faith and humble dependence: The ear will be attentive to his holy word: The hand will be lifted up to heaven in daily requests: The knees will be bended in humble worship: All the outward powers will be busy in doing the will of God, and promoting his glory: He that loves God will keep his commandments, and fulfil every present duty with delight: He will endeavour to please God in all his actions, and watch against and avoid whatsoever may offend him. And while the several outward powers are thus engaged, all the inward affections of nature will be employed in correspondent exercises. Supreme love will govern all the active train of human passions, and lead them captive to cheerful obedience.

This brings me to the next thing I proposed: But before I enter upon it I would make these four reflexions, which will conclude the present discourse.

[This discourse may be divided here.]

Reflexion I. How vain are all their pretences to love God who know little or nothing of him, who are neither acquainted with the glorious perfections of his nature, nor with the wondrous discoveries of his grace! Love must be founded in knowledge. How vain are their pretences to love God with all their heart, and in a supreme degree, who never saw him to be a being of transcendent worth, of surpassing excellency, and capable of making them for ever happy; who value their corn, and their wine, and their oil, their business, their riches, or their diversions more than God and his love!

How senseless and absurd is the pretence to love God above all things, if we do not resolve to live upon him as our hope and happiness; if we do not chuse him to be our God and our all, our chief and all-sufficient portion in this world, and that to come! Where the idea of God as a being of supreme excellence doth not reign in the mind, where the will is not determined and fixed on God, as our supreme good, men are strangers to this sacred and divine affection of love. Till this be done, we cannot be said to love God with all the heart.

Reflexion II. How necessary and useful a practice it is for a christian to meditate often on the transcendent perfection and worth of the blessed God, to survey his attributes, and his grace in *Christ Jesus*, to keep up in the mind a constant idea of his supreme excellence, and frequently to repeat and confirm the choice of him, as our highest hope, our portion, and our everlasting good! This, will keep the love of God warm at the heart, and maintain the divine affection in it's primitive life and vigor.

But if our idea of the adorable and supreme excellence of God grow faint and feeble, and sink lower in the mind; if we lose the sight of his amiable glories, the sense of his amazing love in the gospel, his rich promises and his alluring grace, if our will cleave not to him as our chief good, and live not on him daily as our spring of happiness, we shall abate the fervency of this sacred passion, our love to God will grow cold by degrees, and suffer great and guilty decays.

Reflexion III. How greatly and eternally are we indebted to *Jesus* the Son of God, who has revealed the Father to us in all his most amiable characters and glories, and brought him, as it were, within the reach of our love!

The three great springs of love to God are these: A clear discovery of what God is in himself; a lively sense of what he has done for us; and a well-grounded hope of what he will bestow upon us. All these are owing chiefly to our blessed *Jesus*. Let us consider them distinctly.

1. It is he, even the beloved Son of God, who lay in the bosom of the Father, who has made a fuller and brighter discovery to us what God is, what an admirable and transcendent being, a spirit glorious in all perfections. It is true, the light of nature dictates some of these things to us, and the antient prophets have given further manifestations. "But none knows the Father so as the Son does, and those to whom the Son will reveal him," *Matt. xi. 27.* That blessed person, who is one with the Father, must know him best. That illustrious man, who is so intimately united to God, and "in whom dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily;" *Col. ii. 9.* "He whose name is *Emanuel*, God with us," *Matt. i. 23.* "or God manifest in the flesh;" *1 Tim. iii. 16.* he must know the Father with such an exquisite knowledge, as far transcends the reach of all our ideas.

Let it be noted also that the blessed *Jesus* came down from heaven not only to shew God all-glorious to men, but to make him appear all-lovely and desirable in the eyes of sinners, by representing him in all the wonders of his compassion, and forgiving mercy. Even a great, a just, and a holy God, is lovely and amiable in the sight of guilty creatures, when he is willing to "reconcile the world to himself in and by his Son *Jesus Christ*, not imputing to them their iniquities." *2 Cor. v. 19.* Such a sight of God, is the first attractive of our love.

2. It is the Son of God who came to inform us what God has done for us, and thereby to engage our love. The reason of man, and our daily experience, teach us that he is the author of our being and our blessings: He "causes the sun to shine, and his rain to descend on the earth;" *Matt. v. 45.* "he gives us fruitful seasons, and fills our hearts with food and gladness." *Acts xiv. 17.* But it is *Jesus*, who has told us the eternal counsels of his Father's love, and what kind designs he formed for our recovery from sin and hell, when, in his own fore-knowledge, he beheld us fallen and miserable: He has told us, what eternal and unfailing provision God has made for us, by giving us into the hands of his Son, even into those hands, where he has entrusted the infinite concerns of his own honour; and that he appointed his Son to redeem our lives, by his own bloody death.

This is love glorious indeed, and fit to allure and kindle our warmest affections to God.

It is the blessed Son of God himself, who, by his Father's appointment, has suffered agonies and sorrows of unknown kinds, unknown degrees, for us. He poured out his own soul to death to secure us from the deserved wrath and vengeance of God: he sustained many a painful stroke, to make a way for us to partake of his Father's mercy, and to render the offended majesty of heaven a proper and more engaging object of our love.

3. Again, it is this same glorious person, the Son of God, who has informed us at large, not only what God has already done, but what he will do for us; and has given us the hope of everlasting blessings. He has confirmed all the words of grace that God spake to men by angels and prophets in former ages; and he has added many a rich and most express promise of a glorious resurrection, and a future state,  
and

and set them before us in a divine light, beyond what the prophets or the angels ever knew in antient times: He has assured returning sinners of the pardon of highest crimes, and the most aggravated iniquities; and he hath secured the everlasting favour and presence of God to all his followers; for by the Father's appointment he is gone to prepare mansions of glory for them, that where he is they may be also; that they may dwell with him, and with his Father for ever.

Thus it appears that our everlasting thanks and praises are due to the blessed *Jesus*, who has laid the foundation of love between an offended God and his guilty creature, man. He has revealed the great God to us, has told us what he is, and has set him before us, in his most amiable glories: He has taught us what wonders of mercy God hath wrought for us already, and what blessings he will bestow on us, through the future ages of eternity: And thus he hath opened all the springs of love to allure our hearts to God. What christian can withhold his love and praise from so worthy, so divine a benefactor?

Reflexion IV. I may therefore well add, in the last place, that no person in heaven or earth was so proper to recommend to us this divine virtue, the love of God, as *Christ Jesus*, our Saviour, who speaks the words of my text: He who was himself the beloved Son of God, the first favourite of heaven, the highest object of his Father's love, and the best and most perfect lover of his Father: He who was the great peace-maker between God and sinners, the chief minister and messenger of his Father's love to men. If he had not undertook to make peace, we had still continued children of wrath, and in the same state with fallen angels, who are never invited to return to the love of God. There is no prophet, no messenger sent to require or charge them to love God, for there is no priest or peace-maker appointed for them.

Who is so fit a person to urge upon our consciences this blessed command of love to God, as he who came to redeem us from our state of rebellion and enmity, to deliver us from the anger of God, and the curse of the law, and everlasting death? Who can give us such pathetic motives, and so powerful a charge to love the Lord our God with our whole heart, as he who came to write his Father's love to us in lines of blood, even his own blood? He whose heart was pierced for the sake of sinful men; he who came to seal the covenant of love between God and man with the anguish of his soul, and the blood of his heart? How all-glorious and well-chosen is this messenger of the love and precepts of God! This blessed prophet, who is sent from God to recommend to us the eternal duty of divine love; who is also our great high-priest to reconcile us to God! Yet how little success has the message had on the hearts of men! What a sad and just occasion of shame and holy mourning! Forbid it, O God, that such a messenger and such a message should be sent from heaven in vain!

## M E D I T A T I O N.

“**W**HAT shall I do to become a true lover of God? Since I know there is but one God, I would give up my whole heart to him alone; I would fain have him reign in my affections supreme and without a rival. But let me recollect myself a little, and let me not deny what God and his grace have wrought in my soul. Do I not love him sincerely, and above all things? Am I not possessed of those qualifica-  
tions

tions which are contained and implied in the affectionate and supreme love of God? Let me run over them in meditation and self-enquiry.

“Have I not beheld him as the first and the best of beings? Have I not seen him most glorious in himself, and worthy of the highest esteem and love? Am I not deeply convinced and firmly persuaded that he is the only all-sufficient good? That he is the overflowing spring of grace and blessedness? Have I not been taught to see the vanity and emptiness of all things beneath and besides God, and that without him I can never arrive at true happiness? Has he not the most transcendent place in my esteem? Yes, O Lord, through thy grace I can say, the creatures are nothing in comparison of thee; nor can any thing appear in my eyes more lovely and more desirable than God and his love.

“Again: Have I not been invited and raised by thy grace to some humble hope of thy favour? Hast thou not revealed thyself, in thy word, as a God condescending to be reconciled to sinners, willing to be reconciled to me? As a God willing to make creatures happy, even every creature that desires to center itself in God, and take up its rest in him: O that sublime, that most excellent, that supreme being, the holy and blessed God! How merciful! How compassionate! Have I not seen him in his word descending within the reach of my hope? And have I not rejoiced to think that he gives me leave to hope in him, as an eternal portion for my soul, and that he holds out the arm of his love to receive me?

“May I not proceed yet further, O my God? Has not my will been drawn powerfully toward thee, and made choice of thee as my everlasting good? Have I not turned my back upon creatures at thy call, and divided my self from every thing, that I might be more nearly united to thee? Have I not renounced them all, that I, might be intirely the Lord’s? Does not my soul with firm purpose cleave to thee, as my immortal portion, and my ever-during inheritance?

“Yet again, O my Lord, does not my heart sometimes go out after thee, with most pleasing sensations? O that I could say it never wandered? But I humbly hope it will never, never be at rest while absent from God. Sometimes like the needle that is feebly touched with the sovereign influence of the load-stone, it may be drawn aside by other influences, and it is too ready to wander from the beloved point: But may I not appeal to thee, O my God, that like the needle, it is ever restless till it point to thee again, to thee, the object of my strongest desire, and my supreme love?

“Are not my flesh and spirit, with all their active powers, under the command of this divine principle, this holy fire of love? Does not this heavenly affection reign in my soul over all my faculties, all my senses, and all my passions? Are not all my little affairs in this world, and all my more important concerns, regulated and governed by this holy love? Canst thou bear the thought, O my soul, of acting contrary to this inward vital and reigning principle? Are not all my mortal interests subdued and devoted to divine love, and all my immortal interests united and summed up in it? “Whom have I in heaven, O Lord, but thee, and what is there on earth that I desire in comparison of thee?” *Psal. lxxiii. 25.*

“These eyes of mine, whither shall they look but toward thee? These feet, whither shall they go but on thy messages? What shall these hands do, but the work which thou appointest them? What is there that my tongue is employed in, with so much delight, as in speaking of thee, and to thee, my Lord, and my God? All that I am, and all that I have, is thine for ever and ever: Am I not then a sincere lover?

Blessed



“ Blessed be the name of *Jesus*, the Son of God, and my Saviour, that has descended from heaven to dwell with dust and ashes, that he might bring such worthless wretches as we are, within the attractive force of divine love : Our sins stood between God and man like a wall of dreadful separation ; but by his glorious atonement he has removed the bar, and made the way of access to God free and open, that God and man might be united in the bond of perpetual love : He called sinners by his own voice, and he calls them still by the word of his gospel, to partake of this privilege. O blessed messenger of divine love ! And he sends down his own Spirit from heaven, where he dwells, to make us willing to partake of this felicity, and to draw our hearts near to God. Come, O divine Spirit, come, dwell in this heart of mine, as an unchanging principle of holy love ! Guard my heart from all meaner allurements and influences, while I am travelling through the dangerous region of this world, till I am arrived beyond the reach of danger, till I rest for ever in the bosom of God, my supreme love, and my everlasting all.”

D I S-

## DISCOURSE II.

## Divine love is the commanding passion.

**H**AVING declared at large, in the former sermon, what is implied in the supreme love of God; the second general head of discourse requires me to shew, how this one passion of divine love will influence all the other affections of the heart. The whole world are witnesses to this effect of love in the common affairs of mankind; and this powerful passion still retains it's own nature and sovereignty over the rest, when God is the object of it, which will appear in the following instances.

I. If the soul be warmed with divine love, "the various discoveries that God makes of himself to us, will not only be matter of frequent contemplation, but of pleasing wonder." Admiration or wonder is a noble passion, arising from the view of something that is new and strange, or upon the notice of some rare and uncommon object: Now when so glorious and transcendent a being, as the great and blessed God, becomes the object of our notice and our love, with what pleasure do we survey his glories, which are so rare, so uncommon, that there are none to compare with them? We shall meditate on the surprizing discoveries that he has made of himself, till we find new matter of holy admiration in all of them. Sincere and fervent love is ever finding some new beauties and wonders in the person so much beloved.

The lover of God traces the footsteps of infinite wisdom and all-sufficient power, in the works of nature and providence: "When he beholds the heavens, the work of the fingers of God, and the moon and stars which he has created," *Psal.* viii. 3. he first observes their immense vastness, their order and beauty, and wonders at the skill and divine contrivance of him that made them: "O Lord, how great, how manifold are thy works? In wisdom hast thou made them all," *Psal.* civ. 24. And then he wonders again at the condescending goodness of God to his little creature, man: "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou shouldst visit him?" *Psal.* viii. 4. The loving-kindness of God has many admirable circumstances in it, as well as his wisdom and power; and therefore the royal *Psalmist* calls it marvellous, *Psal.* xxxi. 21. and spends many a psalm in the devout admiration of it.

Many of the providences of God are surprizing: "He alone doth great wonders," *Psal.* cxxxvi. 4. In the heavens and in the earth he doth "things unsearchable, marvellous things without number," *Job* v. 9. The soul that loves God will recall his ancient wonders with sweet delight, *Psal.* lxxvii. 11. and will take notice of all his marvellous ways in his present conduct of the world and the church.

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There is sufficient matter in God, for the pleasurable and everlasting entertainment of this holy passion : He is an immense ocean of glories and wonders. There is nothing in God but what would be marvellous and astonishing to us, if we had our eyes divinely enlightened, and our hearts fired with divine love. Every creature has something in it that surpasses our knowledge, and commands our admiration : But what are all these in comparison of God, the all-wise and almighty artificer, who made them all by his wisdom, and the breath of his mouth? The soul that loves God is ready to see and take notice of God in every thing : He walks through the fields, he observes the wonders of divine workmanship in every different tree on his right hand and on his left, in the herbs and flowers that he treads with his feet, in the rich diversity of shapes and colours and ornaments of nature : He beholds and admires his God in them all. He sees the birds in their airy flight, or perched upon the branches, and sending forth their various melody : He observes the grazing flocks, and the larger cattle in their different forms and manners of life ; he looks down upon little insects, and takes notice of their vigorous and busy life and motions, their shining bodies, and their golden or painted wings, he beholds and he admires his God in them all : In the least things of nature, he can read the greatness of God, and it is what of God he finds in the creature that renders creatures more delightful to him. Creatures are but his steps to help him to rise toward God.

If it were possible for our admiration, to run through and finish all the marvellous things of nature and providence, there would remain still a vast field of wonders in his word, in his law, in his gospel, in his transactions of grace with the children of men. *David*, that intense lover of God, was ever meditating on his statutes, his word, his testimonies ; he searched “wonderous things out of his law,” *Psal.* cxix. 18. and ever found something in them worthy of his high esteem, and his holy joy. “O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day. I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandments are exceeding broad,” *Psal.* cxix. 96, 97. But above all, the riches of mercy manifested in the gospel, awaken and raise the holy soul to a sublime degree of astonishment. This is the Lord’s doing indeed, and it is marvellous in our eyes, *Psal.* cxviii. 23. This was “the mystery that was hid in God, and kept secret since the world began, it was concealed from ages and generations, and is now made manifest, to the intent that now unto principalities and powers of heaven, as well as men on earth, might be made known by the church, the manifold, the amazing wisdom of God,” *Rom.* xvi. 25. *Ephes.* iii. 9. There is enough in this gospel to raise the wonder even of the sinners that refuse it : “Hear, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish,” *Acts* xiii. 41. Much more will it seize and employ the admiring powers of every holy soul, that has tasted of the love of God, and been partaker of this salvation. There is a divine and ten-fold pleasure attends this exercise of sacred admiration, while the soul, in the language of faith and love, can say, “Thou art the God who alone dost wonders, and thou art my God for ever and ever.”

I might add after all, there is yet still another world of wonders to employ the lover of God, and that is, the person of his Son *Jesus Christ*, our Saviour. There God discovers himself in his fullest grace and wisdom, in his highest power and perfection. The attributes of the Father shine transcendently glorious in his Son, and become the object of love and wonder to men and angels. He is the fairest “image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature :

creature: *Col.* i. 16. He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, *Heb.* i. 3. All the marvellous things that God the Father ever wrought, it was in and by his Son. Did he create all things out of nothing? It was by *Jesus Christ*, *Eph.* iii. 9. Does he govern the world with amazing wisdom? It is by making his Son, *Jesus*, the governour and Lord of all things. Does he redeem and save guilty sinners from everlasting misery? These wonders of mercy are transacted by the cradle and the cross of *Jesus*, by the death and the life of *Christ*, by the sorrows, the sufferings, and the victories of the Son of God. His name is called wonderful, *Isai.* ix. 6. For he who is the child born, is also the mighty God: The infant of days is the everlasting Father, the first and the last, the beginning and the end of all things. What sublime and sacred raptures of love and wonder join together, when a devout christian contemplates his God in his nature, in his providences, in all his works, in the pages of his holy book, and in the face of his Son the blessed *Jesus*? But I have dwelt too long amidst these divine wonders, the following particulars must be more briefly handled.

II. Divine love will command the affection of holy desire. A sense of the favour of God, and the influences of his grace will be the matter of our most intense wishes and importunate requests. We shall long for the presence of God above all things, both here and hereafter. This was the fixed desire, this the passionate aspiration of the holy *Psalmist*, *Psal.* cxix. 58. "I entreated thy favour with my whole heart." What warm and pathetic language breaks from the lips of this great saint, this sublime lover of God, in the xlii, lxiii, and lxxxiv. *Psalms*? "My soul longeth, yea, fainteth for the courts of the Lord, my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God: As the hart panteth after water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. Early, O God, will I seek thee, for thy loving kindness is better than life." When he dwells in his own palace he longs for the divine presence, *Psal.* ci. 2. "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart; O when wilt thou come unto me?" But his eminent desire is to dwell for ever in the sanctuary; "one thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may ever abide in his house, there to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire and converse with him in his holy temple," *Psal.* xxvii. 4. O happy soul, where all these active springs of passion are touched and influenced by divine grace! Hunger and thirst, and all the longing powers and appetites of animal nature, are too few and too feeble to express the holy desires of a soul breathing after the presence of its God.

III. When the love of God reigns in the heart, all the joys and pleasures of the man will unite and center in God. It will be our sweetest satisfaction, and most exalted delight, to have God ever near us, and to be ever near to God. As absence from God is a pain at the heart of a lively christian, fired with divine love, so his glorious presence is his chief joy. With what affectionate language does the holy soul of *David* rejoice in God, as his God, and how does he employ the charming arts of poetry and music to express his own joys and the praises of his almighty friend? One must run through a multitude of his *Psalms* to copy out the bright expressions of holy delight, which he found in the love of God; even the prospect and hope of waiting on him in his temple, fills his spirit with sacred pleasure, *Psal.* xliii. 4. "I will go to the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy, yea, upon the harp will I praise thee,

thee, O God my God." *Pfal.* lxxiii. 5, 6. "When I remember thee on my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches, my soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips."

This joy which is derived from the love of God, is supreme over all other joys, and independent of other comforts: When all the nether springs of delight among creatures are dried up, this is a fountain of eternal pleasure, a spring of ever-flowing delight. *Hab.* iii. 17—19. "Though the fig-tree shall not blossom, and there shall no fruit be in the vine, though the field shall yield no meat, and the flock shall be cut off from the fold, yet the Lord God is my strength, I will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation."

IV. Where the love of God prevails in the heart, every thing that belongs to God, his word, his institutions, his church and people, will in some proportion be the objects of our choice and love, of our holy desire and delight.

Has God condescended to give us his word, to write a book of knowledge and grace for the use of men? How much delight will the holy soul take in reading and hearing the blessed words of this book! A flame of heavenly love kindled in the heart, will engage us to converse often with those divine notices of himself, which God has sent us from heaven. Our "delight will be placed in the law, and gospel of our God, and therein shall we meditate day and night," *Pfal.* i. 2. "O how I love thy law, says *David*, it is my meditation all the day;" and in the night he remembers the name of God, *Pfal.* cxix. 55, 97.

Has the great God built a temple for himself on earth, even the assemblies of the saints? Has he appointed methods of worship in which men shall address his majesty, and whereby he will make them partakers of his love? How desirous is the lively christian to attend on all these methods of divine appointment, to abide in the sanctuary, to frequent the house of prayer, and wait for the manifestations of the power and glory of God? "I have loved the habitation of thy house, says *David*, and the place where thy honour dwelleth: *Pfal.* xxvi. 8. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" lxxxiv. 1.

Has God raised up children for himself, out of the sons and daughters of fallen *Adam*? Then "every one that loves God, will love his offspring too, 1 *John* v. 1. This is one of the chief evidences of a sincere love to God, when we love his people, and those who bear his image, without the narrow view of a sect or party, or particular tribe of such a name. The saint loves all the saints, and the christian loves all christians; those who are most like to God "are the excellent of the earth, in whom is all his delight." *Pfal.* xvi. 2. And therefore he pities them under all their sorrows, and he relieves their wants according to his power, because they stand in so near a relation to the God whom he loves, and bear his lovely image, 1 *John* iii. 16, 17.

Has the great and glorious God one peculiar Son, his first-born, his only begotten, who bears his perfect image, and whom he loves above all the rest? this also is the chief object of a christian's love. Not father nor mother, son nor daughter, nor the wife of the bosom, lie so near the heart of a christian, as the Son of God doth. He not only bears the nearest resemblance to God, but he is one with God; in him dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily: *Col.* ii. 9. He is *Emmanuel*, God with us; *Matth.* i. 21.

God manifested in the flesh." 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. There is more of the power and wisdom; there is more of the majesty and mercy of God shines through the human nature of his Son *Jesus*, than in all the millions of men and angels, and all the worlds of unknown creatures that God ever made: And therefore the sanctified affections of the soul go forth in the strongest manner towards *Jesus*, the Son of God: He is in their eyes the chiefest of ten thousand, altogether lovely.

V. Where the passion of divine love reigns gloriously in the heart, every creature separated from God will fall under a holy neglect and contempt. Nothing will serve or satisfy the good man, in the room and place of his God: All things, when laid in the balance, are lighter than vanity; they are in his esteem, "like a small dust of the earth before a mountain, or the drop of a bucket, when compared with the ocean." *Isai.* xl. 15. The language of such a soul is, "whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee," *Psal.* lxxiii. 25. Creatures, with all their attractives and allurements, have no power to charm his heart away from God: The divine lover is crucified to the world; it is like a dead thing to him, tasteless, disrelishing, worthless and vain: There is a vast emptiness, and wide and universal desolation in the world, if the soul see not God in it.

Business and diversions, cities and palaces, with their various ornaments, fields and groves, spring, summer and autumn, with all their flowery beauties, and their tasteful blessings, are some of the delights of the sons of men: Books and learning, and polite company, and refined science, are the more elegant joys of ingenious spirits: These things are the enticing gratifications of the senses of the mind of man: They are all innocent in themselves, they may be sanctified to divine purposes, and afford double satisfaction, if God be amongst them: But if God be absent, if he hide his face, or frown upon the soul, not palaces, nor groves nor fields, not business nor diversions, not all the flowery or tasteful blessings of spring or summer, not the more refined joys of books and learning, and elegant company, not all the rich provisions of nature or art, can entertain or refresh, can satisfy or please the soul of a christian, who is smitten with the love of his God.

I add further, if the affectionate christian find not God even in his church and ordinances; if his mind be not raised to heavenly objects in the house of God, and in his sacred institutions, they are all empty and unsatisfying; there is no life nor pleasure in them: A hypocrite is content with outward forms, and is well pleased with having paid his devoirs, and made his appearances in the church; but the heart that loves God sincerely cannot be satisfied with mere bodily devotion, nor with any pictures, shadows, or emblems of divine things, unless God who is the life, the spirit, and the substance be there, and manifest himself in a way of mercy; unless God fill his own institution with his own presence, that is, with the influences of his grace, with the enlightening, the sanctifying, and the comforting operations of his own Spirit.

VI. The love of God prevailing in the heart, will awaken zeal and activity, and holy delight, not only in the duties of worship, but in all manner of services for God in the world. Can I do any thing for God whom I love? saith the christian, That shall be my joyful work. There is no labour or fatigue too much to sustain, no suffering too hard to endure, for the sake of God, who is so supremely beloved. What shall I do to honour the king of heaven, and to render him honourable in the earth? How shall I spread his glory before the eyes of men, who in himself is so transcendently glorious? and what shall I render to the Lord my God, for the multitude

titude of mercies which he has conferred upon me? *Psal.* cxvi. 13. Divine love will make the law of God delightful in the practice of it, and none of his precepts will be a burden to the affectionate and lively christian, 1 *John* v. 3. "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous."

The soul that loves God will be always aspiring after greater degrees of holiness, because it renders the man more like God: It is commonly said of friendship or sincere love, that it either finds or makes persons like to each other. Love to God is an assimilating principle, it works more and more, till we are transformed by degrees into his image: And if we are affectionate lovers of God, we shall never be perfectly pleased with ourselves, till we are delivered from the bondage of this sinful flesh, till we awake out of this dull and stupid state, into the world of spirits made perfect, and are there satisfied with the likeness of God. This heavenly delight shall be yet more exalted, when our bodies shall be raised in the likeness of our glorified redeemer, and our flesh and soul together shall be made to resemble the holy *Jesus* in greater perfection, who is the first, and the nearest image of God. With what a gust of sacred pleasure does the beloved disciple express himself, 1 *John* iii. 1, 2. "We shall be like him, when we shall see him as he is;" and when with *David* we awake out of the dust of death, we shall see the face of God in righteousness, and be satisfied with his complete likeness," *Psal.* xvii. 15.

VII. Every thing that offends or dishonours the blessed God, will be a matter of hatred and aversion to the divine lover: And every thing whereby God has been offended in time past, will be the occasion of shame and grief. "I hate vain thoughts, saith holy *David*, but thy law do I love," *Psal.* cxix. 113. Sin is the object of constant hatred in all it's views, because it is contrary to the nature, the will, and the law of God, who is the supreme object of love: The good man is exceeding fearful of doing any thing that may offend or displease his God. When his soul looks back upon his own sins, he finds abundant matter for sorrow and holy shame, for self-remorse and pious indignation. "O how hateful have all my sinful thoughts been! My proud, my angry, and my revengeful thoughts! That covetousness, that malice and envy, which have been working in my heart! Those wandering imaginations which have called me away from the blessed God, even from the midst of his worship! How vile and guilty is my tongue, because of the foolish and passionate, and sinful words that I have spoken! What a multitude of evil actions have been scattered up and down throughout my life, and intermixed with my behaviour towards God and man!" All these create bitter uneasiness and pain in the remembrance, because they are offences against a God who is supremely beloved. What holy confusion, what meltings of heart in secret sorrow, do the true lovers of God feel, after they have indulged temptation, fallen under some more grievous sin, defiled their consciences, and dishonoured their God? What pangs of inward remorse, and what sincere indignation against themselves? And as an evidence of their love to God, they sometimes see reason to confess and bewail their folly, even in the sight of men. Holy *David* was not backward upon such occasions, to confess his grief for having offended his God: We may read the mournings of his love, in his penitential *Psalms* particularly *Psal.* li. 3, 4, 17. and he offers a broken and a contrite heart in sacrifice, to that God whom he had offended.

A true and affectionate lover of God is pained at the heart, and feels a sensible inward sorrow to see how iniquity abounds in the land, to behold the laws of God broken

broken by his fellow-creatures, and his holy name blasphemed. "I beheld the transgressors, and I was grieved, because they kept not thy word: Rivers of tears run down my eyes, because men break thy holy law," *Psal.* cxix. 136, 158.

VIII. Every thing that has a tendency to divide the soul from God is matter of religious jealousy and holy fear. Divine love hath it's jealousies: If we love God with intense affection we shall feel an inward anxiousness and solicitude, lest our hearts depart from the living God, and lest God should hide himself in his displeasure from our souls. This is what holy *David* is ever afraid of, and begs that God would not hide himself in anger. The apostle *Jude*, verse 21. bids us "keep ourselves in the love of God:" The holy soul will watch against every thing that may begin a separation or break the divine friendship, and it grows jealous of every thing that comes too near the heart.

When the true lover of God is deeply engaged in the businesses of the present world, he manages them with a pious caution, lest his soul should be immersed and drowned with overwhelming cares, or overladen with encreasing riches; he is watchful, and afraid lest the dust and rubbish of this world should bury the holy seed in the heart, should obstruct the growth of religion, should carry off the thoughts from God to idols of gold and silver, and thus defile the soul.

If he has any share amongst the honours and equipages, the gay diversions and pleasures of life, he is afraid lest they should fill his heart with vanity, lest they should tincture his spirit with sensuality and intemperance, and thus take away the taste and relish of divine love.

If providence call him sometimes into vain and wicked company, he is afraid of tarrying too many hours in the midst of them, lest "evil communication should corrupt good manners, 1 *Cor.* xv. 33. and therefore "he will not stand among the counsels of the ungodly, nor walk in the way where sinners dwell," *Psal.* i. 1. He shuns them as a pestilence, because their ways are contrary to the pure and holy nature of that God whom he loves.

Those studies, those employments, those recreations and amusements, which make the heart forget God, or withhold it too long from him, are uneasy and painful to a soul inflamed with divine love.

As it is the language of the sinner who is weary of God, "When will the new moon be over, and the sabbath be done," that I may return to my trade and my labour, to my buying and selling, and the daily business of this dying life? So the sincere lover of God is ready to say, What, nothing but business and labour for the bread that perisheth? Nothing but buying and selling, and seeking gold and silver, food and raiment? Alas, how unhappily am I detained all the day from my God by these embarrassments! When will the evening come, and the season of pious retirement? When will the sabbath appear, that I may spend my hours with God, and begin to try what heaven is!

IX. Where the divine principle of the love of God reigns in the heart, all sinful passions toward God and men will be subdued by it.

1. Toward God. One would think indeed, that man should not dare to indulge any sinful passion towards his maker; but so corrupt are our hearts, that we dislike the holy nature of God, we are displeas'd with his will, and his holy commandments are grievous to us, till the love of God subdue this inward aversion of the heart to holiness, and reconcile us to the law of God by the constraining influence of divine love.

Again, we are ready to repine at the hand of the Lord, to murmur against heaven, and to quarrel with our maker, when we meet with disappointments in our affairs:



affairs : We are inclined to grow peevish and fretful against providence, when we lose some desirable comfort, or sustain some heavy sorrow, or long and tiresome sickness : but holy love silences every murmur, and quashes every repining thought. Where the love of God prevails, afflictive scenes of life will never awaken resentment against heaven, but always meet with patient submission. The sacred lover is not angry with his God when he smites him, for he ever supposes there is a just reason for every stroke of his Father's rod : "Either, says he, my sins have deserved his correcting hand, or these sorrows are sent to examine what grace there is in my heart, and to make trial of my faith : Still I am persuaded there is love at the bottom of all these troubles, and it is the hand of love that smites me ; for my Saviour hath said it, *Rev.* iii. 19. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten ;" and the holy apostle assures us, *Heb.* xii. 6. that "God corrects every son whom he receives."

2. Divine love mortifies and subdues our disorderly and sinful passions toward our fellow-creatures : Wrath, revenge, malice, envy, are all subdued and kept under by this sovereign principle of divine love. That soul in whom this sacred passion keeps a constant flame, is not easily roused to a wrathful or resenting temper, by the affronts and injuries we sustain from men. The lover of God is meek and gentle under many insults and reproaches : He can forbear and forgive, for he knows that his God hath born long with him, and forgiven him ten thousand provocations. Thus the sovereignty of divine love appears, in that it can suppress as well as raise the other passions.

X. Where divine love reigns in eminent degrees, there will be a humble holy desire to pass even through death itself to meet with God, the supreme object of love, and to dwell for ever in his presence. If faith be not too feeble, or the frailties of animal nature too prevalent, the divine lover will encounter death with courage, and with sacred joy, because it will bring him to the enjoyment of his God. When the dust returns to earth, the soul of every man returns to God as a judge, and the soul of a good man to God as a friend, and Father, and rewarder, *Ecc.* xii. 7. If "we are absent from the body, we shall be present with the Lord," *2 Cor.* v. 8. In this view of things, the holy lover is ready to say, What is there in death so terrible that the presence of *Christ*, and the enjoyment of my God, has not something infinitely more delightful to overbalance it ? Love is stronger than death.

The love of God has been found stronger in a holy soul than all the pangs and terrors of death, even a death of violence and martyrdom : The one influences and impels toward heaven more powerfully than the other can terrify or discourage : United faith and love have passed through fires of torment, and seas of blood, in order to see God, and dwell with him in his heavenly habitation. This leads to the next particular.

In the last place, I add, that as hell will be matter of utmost aversion and holy fear to a sincere lover of God, because it is an everlasting separation from God, so heaven will be the object of desire and joyful hope, because, there God manifests himself to all that love him in his highest glory and his richest grace.

The soul that loves God with warm affection, cannot bear those dreadful words, *2 Thess.* i. 9. of "being punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." "To be without God in the world," during the short space of our continuance here, is a very formidable and grievous thing to the good man ; but to be cursed and condemned to depart from God for ever, this is the very hell of hell, if I may so express it, in the esteem of the soul that loves God : To be divided for ever from God, the spring of life and love, and all happiness ; to be separated for ever

ever from God, the infinite and the all-sufficient good ; to be thrust out for ever from the presence of God, the most lovely and the best of beings ; to see him no more, to love him no more, and to be for ever banished from his love ; the very thought of it gives the holy soul more anguish than it is able to bear.

On the other hand, heaven, which is the dwelling-place of the most high, is the mark which the good man ever aims at, that he may see God face to face. When his love rises high, he is ever breathing passionately after this blessedness, and lives with delight upon the promises which give him this joyful hope. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," *Matth. v. 8*. "The good man's affections are set on the things above, where *Christ* is at the right hand of God," *Col. iii. 1, 2*. "His treasure is on high, and his heart is there also." *Matth. vi. 21*.

If we love God with all the heart, we shall keep heaven always in our eye. The foretaste of it will be our present comfort and support ; the thoughts of being for ever with God, will sweeten all the sorrows of life, will take away the bitterness of affliction, and ease the pains of death. As *Jacob* cheerfully sustained a hard servitude of seven years in *Chaldea*, through heat and cold, through frosts and wind, and sunbeams, for the love of *Rachel*, so the christian endures all the labours and conflicts, all the fatigues and distresses of life in this lower world with patience, and with holy pleasure, in hope to dwell for ever with God, whom his soul loves supremely above all creatures.

Thus I have finished the second general head, which I proposed ; and produced a variety of instances, wherein this sacred and sovereign affection of divine love commands and influences, excites or subdues the other passions of nature, and makes them all subservient to it's own great designs, that is, to the honour and to the enjoyment of God, the object of this divine affection.

[ Here this discourse may be divided. ]

Before I proceed to the third general head, I shall endeavour to improve this discourse by these three useful reflexions.

Reflexion I. "How happy and easy a rule is here given us to examine how stands our love to God, and whether we love him with all our heart !" Are the other passions of nature influenced by this love ? Surely it is impossible for us in this present state of flesh and blood, to love God with our whole hearts, and yet to feel no sensible workings of fear or hope, desire or anger, in correspondence with this holy passion : To have no pleasures nor sorrows, no holy longings, nor holy joys, acting in concert with this principle of divine love.

Believe me, sirs, there are no outward actions, no visible attendances on public worship, no bodily services, no costly sacrifices can so happily evidence our sincere love to God, as the steady and constant workings of the other inward powers of nature in a conformity to this holy principle. A hundred outward plausible actions may be the cloke of vice, the disguise of hypocrisy. Vain pharisees may make broad their phylacteries, may tithe their herds and their flocks, as well as mint and cummin, may give much alms, or build hospitals and churches ; but the various inward affections of nature, can never be kept in any regular and steady exercise of piety, by all the toil and skill of a hypocrite. And on the other hand, if the heart be thoroughly devoted to the love of God, this love will reign sovereign among the other passions. The other passions will obey love, and we may judge by their obedience, how far the love of God prevails.

Reflexion II. "If mankind be examined by this rule, how few sincere lovers of God will be found among them !" It is a vain thing for a man to say, "I love God with

with all my heart," when his strongest desires and his most relishing joys center in meaner objects; when his highest hopes and his most painful fears, his deepest anxieties and disquietudes of mind, are always raised and sunk again by the things of this world only, and the changing scenes of this mortal state.

Alas! How few are there whose love to God does not fall under some just suspicion, when brought to this test! Let us survey the world round about us, and observe what it is that influences the various passions of men, even those who are called christians, and would be thought the disciples of *Christ*.

Some have their hearts so filled with the business of this life, and the love of money, as their chief idol, that all their desires, their fears, and their hopes, and the perpetual course and labour of all their powers, keep this point ever in view and in warm pursuit: The disappointment of a small sum, the loss of a few pounds will hang upon their spirits with a constant heaviness, and create them more pain than twenty sins against God their maker. What shall we think of these people, who love riches so well, that if their hands and their heads would hold out, and daylight would last, they would never be weary of this chace, nor require cessation or respite. Does the love of God appear as the supreme and reigning passion in such earthy souls as these? There have been some in all ages, and there are the successors of them in our day, who have loved gold and silver with so warm a passion, even to the very end of life, that if they could but have contrived how to carry it away with them to the other world, there would have been but little silver; and scarce any gold left in our world long ere this time. This has employed their morning thoughts and evening affections, their earnest wishes, and their busy fingers day and night, so as to leave little room for the love of God and religion.

Others there are who make honour and esteem, or perhaps the grandeur and pomp, and equipage of life, the chief object of their love. Their hopes and cares, their desires and enquiries are, how shall I shine among men, and make a figure in the world? Every gay gilded thing they see raises their wishes: Ambition, honour and applause, engage their whole souls: A fancied contempt or neglect of them stirs their jealousy, and awakens all their uneasy passions. They mourn more, and are more inwardly and deeply vexed for one reproachful word from men, than for all their own affronts to the great and blessed God. Can the love of God reign in a heart so puffed up and filled with self and vanity?

There are others again, whose idol is pleasure and vain delight. A round of pleasing amusements, a succession of sensualities, is their chief good: This employs their constant contrivances, this engages their hopes and fears, and every passion. They spend their anxious enquiries upon the gratification of appetite, humour, and fancy: "What shall I eat, and what shall I drink? How shall I dine elegantly, and regale my self at the table? What are the most luxurious dishes in season, and where shall I find gay or merry company in the evening?" The tavern, or the meaner drinking-house, the comedy, or the ball, and every place of pastime, whether lawful or unlawful, detain their souls as well as their bodies, and engage their thoughts long before-hand. Does the sincere love of God reign in such sort of spirits?

These are the things that busy and engross the daily passions of men, and scarce a small corner of their hearts is left for God and religion. But let us remember God is an all-glorious and sovereign being, his holy jealousy forbids him to accept of a corner of the heart. He refuses and disdains every lover that does not give up his whole self to him with all his powers. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul:" Every affection must and will be employed in a pious manner, where divine love is, as it always ought to be, the supreme passion.

But, alas! how few souls are thus moulded and refined, how few are regulated and governed by so divine a principle? Man is the creature of God, and owes his all to him; but the creature man does not love his creator.

Reflexion III. If divine love be so sovereign and ruling an affection, then "the best and noblest method for governing all the passions, is to get the love of God rooted in the heart, and to see that it maintain it's supreme dominion there." What uneasy creatures are we made by our various passions! How often do they disquiet and torment the soul? How head-strong is their violence, like a horse unbroken and untamed! How sudden are their starts? Their motions how wild and various? And how unruly are their efforts? Now if one had but one sovereign bridle, that could reach and manage them all; one golden rein, that would hold in all their unruly motions, and would also excite and guide them at pleasure; what an invaluable instrument would this be to mortals! Surely such an instrument is the love of God, such an invaluable regulator of all the passionate powers; and it will have this effect, where it is strong and supreme, as it ought to be.

You that are daily disturbed and led astray by rising passions of various kinds, come to the lectures of the gospel, come to the doctrine of the blessed *Jesus*: Come see the love of God displayed in it's most surprizing and powerful colours; come learn to love your maker, dressed in the riches of his grace: And may your souls be fired with divine love, till all your carnal fetters are melted off; till you exult in a divine liberty: till you lead captivity captive, and reign and triumph over all your vicious affections, which had so often before disquieted and enslaved you.

And here again we may take up a melancholy complaint, how few are there who are taught to regulate their passions by divine love! What wild work do these unruly powers make among mankind! How dreadfully do they carry away multitudes into mischief and ruin for want of this holy government! How very few have attained this heavenly gift, this sacred principle, this golden rein of universal influence, that would hold in, and guide and manage all the passions to glorious advantage!

## M E D I T A T I O N.

**B**UT it is time now, O my soul, to call thy thoughts away from the multitudes of mankind, and to look carefully into thyself. There is reason enough for grief and lamentation indeed, if we survey the thousands round about us, who are mere slaves to their earthly passions, who let them loose among creatures, and shew very few tokens and evidences of a supreme love to their creator: But would it not be matter of far more painful, more penetrating and inward sorrow, if thou shouldst carry this evidence, this test of divine love, into thy own retirements, and shouldst hardly be able to prove thyself a lover of God? Awake, awake to the work, O my heart! Enquire, examine, and take a strict account how are thy passionate powers employed. Go over thy various affections, and enquire of all of them, how stands thy love to God?

"Admiration is described as the first of the passions: It arises on the notice of something new, or rare and uncommon: But it never ceases nor is lost in the contemplation of God, whose glories are infinite, and in whom the holy soul always finds something new and wonderful. He is a rare and uncommon object indeed, for there is but one such being in heaven and earth: there never was but one from all eternal ages past, nor ever will be but one to all future eternal ages.

Haft

“Hast thou seen him, my soul, so as to love him? then thy work of pleasing contemplation and wonder will be still renewed: Among creatures we go on to admire what we love, but the love of the creator will lead us to everlasting admiration. And if thou lovest him, thou wilt ever find something new and wonderful in him, as thy knowledge of him increases. Ask thyself then, hast thou seen the glories and the graces of thy God, so as to wonder at the infinite variety of his wisdom, the greatness of his majesty, and the condescensions of his mercy? Are his displays of glory in nature and providence, in the bible and in the church, and especially in his beloved son *Jesus*, the matter of thy joyful meditation and high esteem? Does a sense of his transcendent grandeur and goodness strike thee, as it becomes a creature to be stricken with the ideas of a God, that is, with a holy veneration, and with an awful delight? The love of so sublime and infinite a being is naturally turned to pleasing adoration, and becomes an act of noble worship: But when earthly lovers adore their meaner objects, to express the strength of their love, they turn idolaters, and affront God their maker. Remember, O my soul, God alone must be adored.

“But proceed now, and ask, how stand thy desires and wishes? Is the favour, the presence, and the enjoyment of God the object of thy strongest desires, and of thy constant pursuit? Dost thou long after a sense of the pardon of sin, the love of God, and a preparation to dwell for ever with him, above all things besides?

“Yet further enquire, what is thy heart’s chief delight? Are those the sweetest seasons of life when thou art brought nearest to God in the temper of thy spirit, in the lively hope of his love, and in humble converse with him? Are the secret hours of retirement dear and delightful to thee, above all human society? Are the workings of thy heart, in warm and affectionate devotion, thy sweetest pleasures? Can it be that ever I should love God supremely, and yet not find my converse with him to be my supreme joy?

“Again: Are the things that relate to God and eternity the objects of my choice and love, above and beyond the things that relate to men and this life? What value hast thou, O my soul, for the bible, the book of God? His words will be treasured up in the heart, and will become the sweet entertainment of thy solitary hours, if God himself has the highest room in thy affections. Let me enquire again, how stand my desires toward the sanctuary, toward the places and seasons of divine worship? “Am I glad when they say unto me, come, let us go up to the house of God?” *Psal. cxxii. 1.* Are the courts of *Zion* my delight, because the blessed God manifests his power and glory there? Do I love the saints of God? Is the company of lively christians refreshing and entertaining to me, above all the idle discourse of the world, or the vain merriments or more polite amusements of the age? Do I look upon the children of God with a peculiar respect, with an eye of distinguishing love, and that for this reason, because they stand related to God, and bear his image? Do I feel a sympathy with them in their sorrows? Do I pity and relieve from my very heart the poor in this world, who are the sons and daughters of the most high God? And is *Jesus* the supreme Son of God the highest in my esteem, and the dearest to my heart?

“Ask yet again, O my soul; is every thing little and contemptible in thy eyes, in comparison of the things of God? Can any thing fill up the room and place of God? Or canst thou say all things are emptiness and vanity where God is not? When *St. Austin*, who was exceeding fond of the writings of *Cicero*, the roman orator, came to taste the pleasures of religion, by the knowledge of *Christ*, the writings even of *Cicero* lost their relish with him, because he found not *Christ* there. How stands it

now with thee, in respect of some of thy dearest delights of nature? Are they all placed, as they ought to be, in thy esteem, infinitely below God? Are thy best earthly joys empty and unsatisfying without God? Canst thou say, in the language of the apostle, and assume his triumph, "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of *Christ Jesus*, by whom we are brought near to God the Father?" *Phil.* iii. 8.

"Enquire yet again, does thy love to God awaken and employ thy zeal and holy activity for his honour? Art thou solicitous to keep all his commandments, and hereby manifest thy love? There is no evidence of the love of God can be sufficient or sincere, if this be wanting. Dost thou seek to grow more and more like to God? Dost thou breathe earnestly after greater conformity to *Jesus*, the first and the brightest image of the Father? Is it a pain to thee to find thyself so unlike him, whom thou lovest supremely? Love will create likenesses.

"Let us examine thee now, my heart, how stand thy uneasy and painful affections? Hast thou a rooted hatred of every sin? Hast thou an inward aversion to every thing that displeases God? Dost thou look back on thy own former transgressions, with holy shame and sincere sorrow? Art thou covered with an inward blush at the recollection of thy past follies? Are thy sins thy heaviest burden, and the most uneasy load? Has thy sincere and unfeigned repentance been manifested by all the proper passions that attend a penitent, by self-abasement and inward confusion, by mourning in secret, and a holy displicency and resentment against thy self and thy folly? And is it a grief and pain to thee, to see and hear others transgress against thy God, and affront his law and his love?

"Seek yet further: Hast thou a watchful jealousy over thy self, lest thou wander from God? A constant solicitude of mind, lest thou offend and displease him whom thou lovest supremely? Dost thou stand afar off from every temptation, as one afraid to be defiled with sin, and dishonour thy God? Art thou cautious of that company, of that business, of that diversion or delight which has before ensnared thee, and broke thy holy intercourse with God?

"Ask again, O my heart, hast thou subdued thy uneasy passions of anger, forwardness and resentment, against God and against man, by the overcoming influence of divine love? Hast thou a submissive and humble carriage under hard providences and sore disappointments from the hand of God? Dost thou love him so well, as not to murmur at his holy conduct, nor quarrel with his government? And hast thou acquired the sacred power and skill of suppressing thy wrath and revenge against men, by the constraining influence of the love of God? Dost thou forbear and forgive those who offend thee, from a sweet sense of the forbearing and forgiving love of God towards thee? If thy love to God has yet done little of this service, if it has not begun to make thee meek and mild, and dispassionate under afflictions from the hand of God, or the affronts of men, it has not acquired any great prevalence in thee, and there is too much reason to suspect the sincerity of it.

"Come yet further, O my soul, take a step forward, and look towards death and eternity. Art thou willing to cross the dark valley, in order to dwell with thy beloved? I grant nature has it's frailties and fears; I grant also, that the want of assurance of salvation damps the wings of the soul, which would be stretched forward to the enjoyment of God in the heavenly country: I would put the question therefore, in a gentle and favourable manner. Hast thou any desire to leave this sinful world, to quit all thy dearest hopes and interests here, for the sake of dwelling with God on high? Suppose thou hadst a steady hope of his love, and the pains of death were mitigated,

mitigated, hast thou an inward breathing and tendency towards the happiness that arises from the presence of God? O blessed souls, whose love is risen to so transcendent a degree, that they are not afraid even of the sharpest pangs, and the terrors of death! They can venture with pleasure to cross the swellings of *Jordan*, that they may enter into the promised land, and dwell in the city of their God.

“What is it, O my heart, what is it in the word *HELL* that strikes thee with so much horror? Is it the thought of an endless separation from thy God? What is it that makes the name of *HEAVEN* carry so pleasing a sound? Is it because thy God dwells there in his fairest glory, and in his richest grace? The mere dread of hell as a place of sorrow and pain, and the desire of heaven as a mere state of rest from trouble, and of some sort of unknown happiness, are no manner of evidences of any love to God, much less of a supreme love, such as God requires. The passions of nature may be awakened by natural self-love at the views of heaven and hell, when set merely in this light: But it is the hope of being for ever with the Lord, that is the chief allurement of heaven in the eye of the sacred lover; and it is the eternal absence of God gives hell its blackest colours, and its most formidable appearances.

“Hast thou, O my soul, run over all thy passions in this enquiry? And what is the result of thy labour? Canst thou stand this test? Art thou a lover of God with all thy heart? If thou find this divine principle, this sovereign and holy affection reigning within thee, bless the distinguishing grace of God, who has kindled this heavenly flame, and cherish it with perpetual care. Set a guard upon every affection, lest it wander from its duty. O may divine love maintain its rightful dominion, and universal sovereignty in my soul. Let me keep God always near me, and watch against the seducing influence of tempting creatures, that I may ever preserve the love of God in its supreme fervency, and its unrivalled influence: Then my whole nature, with all its powers, shall be thine, O my God, for ever and ever.” Amen.

# DISCOURSE III.

## The use of the passions in religion.

**W**E have seen already what is included in “loving God with the heart, and how this divine love will influence all the other affections into a suitable and correspondent exercise.” We proceed now to

The third general head of discourse, and that is to shew the use of the passions in religion, or what advantage may be obtained by them, or expected from them in the christian life: And here we shall find the advantages of them so great and numerous, as will render it necessary for every one who professes serious religion to have the affections of his soul engaged in it.

Advantage I. “The passions being duly awakened, will set the powers of the understanding at work, in the search of divine truth and religious duty, and render the knowledge of God exceeding desirable to sinful men.” We are by nature thoughtless of God and divine things: A little, a very little general knowledge of religion satisfies our desires, because we imagine it is sufficient for our necessities. The bulk of mankind have their passions touched with earthly things, and they are ever enquiring who will shew us where corn and wine, the pleasures of sense, the possessions of this world, honours or preferments, are to be gotten? Too many are ready to join with the profane wretches, who are described in *Job* xxi. 14. “They say unto God, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways;” we do not want to know much of God, nor what is our duty to him.

But when the arrows of conviction strike through the soul, when the heart is awakened to a pathetic sense of sin, and the fear of divine vengeance possesses and torments the spirit, then it is the most importunate enquiry of the heart and the lips; “What shall we do to be saved?” *Acts* xvi. 30. How shall we escape the wrath to come? How is the governing justice of the great God to be satisfied for our offences? What is the way to be made partakers of his pardoning mercy? “Wherewith shall I appear before the Lord, and in what manner shall I bow myself, and worship the most high God?” *Mic.* vi. 6. This was the language of the awakened jaylor, who had just before scourged the saints of the Lord, the holy apostles, *Acts* xvi. 30. This was the earnest cry of the crucifiers of *Christ* himself, at *St. Peter’s* sermon, “when they were pricked to their hearts,” *Acts* ii. 37. This is the language of nature convinced of sin, and the danger of divine indignation, *St. Paul* learned all the terrors of the Lord, and felt all his painful passions in an uproar, when he was struck down to the dust, with the dreadful and overwhelming glory in his way to *Damascus*, *Acts* ix. 3. And with what intense and hasty zeal did he make this enquiry, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” verse 6. And when he had learned the knowledge of *Christ*, as the only way to the favour of God and salvation,

how



how highly doth he value it! *Phil.* iii. 8. "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of *Christ Jesus*, my Lord."

If I am awakened to a sense of sin, and fear the anger of God, I shall long to know the awful extent of his power, and the terrible effects of his anger, as well as the methods of obtaining his grace. If I love him, I shall spend many pleasant hours of enquiry into his amiable excellencies. Each pious passion will promote it's peculiar enquiries. Fear and love will wander with holy awe and delight among his glories, and be ever pursuing further knowledge of his perfections: If I love God with warm and devout affection, I shall rejoice daily to find new discoveries of his unsearchable wisdom, his all-sufficient power, his immense goodness, and the unbounded riches of his grace: I shall trace his wonderful footsteps through this beautiful creation, and endeavour to find his way in the tract of daily providences: I shall survey him and his attributes in his book of grace, and dwell upon his divine features in "*Jesus* the image, and the brightness of his glory;" *Heb.* i. 3. and I shall search further continually into the knowledge of *Christ*, who is God manifest in the flesh: I shall dig in the mines of scripture for treasures of divine knowledge, and never grow weary of the work. I shall be always enquiring, "What I shall do to please and serve him," who is the object of my highest love; and how I shall obtain stronger sensations and assurances of his favour, and dwell for ever in his presence, who is the life and the joy of my soul. We long still to know more of this transcendent being whom we love: It is this divine passion that animates these enquiries after the knowledge of God; and this shall render them infinite and everlasting, because God the object of them is everlasting and infinite.

Advantage II. "The affections being once engaged, will keep the soul fixed to divine things. The sense of them is impressed deeper on the mind, by the exercise of devout passions, and it will abide there much longer." Even where reason is bright, and the judgment clear, yet it will be ineffectual for any valuable purposes, if religion reach no farther than the head, and proceed not to the heart: It will have but little influence, if there are none of the affections engaged. Notions of religion in the understanding, without any touch upon the passions, have been compared to the stars in a winter midnight, bright and shining, but very cold; or rather to the meteor, which is called a shooting star, which vanishes quickly, and is lost in darkness.

Suppose we are convinced by calm reasoning of the being of a God, of the duties which we owe our creator, of his government of the world, and of his final judgment; suppose we are led into a demonstration or evident proof, that we are guilty creatures, having broken the laws of God, and that there is no salvation for us, but in and by a mediator; suppose we are really convinced in our judgment, that there is a heaven or a hell, that awaits our departure from this world; that we must die shortly, and that we are for ever miserable without pardoning mercy, and sanctifying grace; all this is valuable in it's kind, and is necessary in order to salvation: But if all this knowledge make no impression on the affections, it is not likely to abide with us, nor to do us much good: Knowledge wears off the mind, if never used. Cold, unaffecting notions, will have no powerful influence to reform our lives. Every new scene of business or pleasure brushes off these thoughts of religion from our souls, where they have not been let into the heart, nor possessed the passions: They "vanish like the morning dew, or like an early cloud that passes away." *Hosea* vi. 4.

It is one great end and design of the passions, to fix the attention strongly upon the objects of them, to settle the thoughts with such intenseness and continuance on that

that which raises them, that they are not easily taken off. What we fear or desire, what we love and hope for, what we lament or rejoice in, will seize and busy our minds; and take them up perpetually, notwithstanding the importunities of other businesses or cares: The passions are supremely importunate, and will be heard. Now if the passions are strongly engaged for God, the world will have but little power to call off the heart from religion.

Suppose two preachers were desired to minister to the same auditory, on a day of fasting or praise, and on the same subject too. One of them has all the beauty, force and skill of clear and calm reasoning; the other not only instructs well, but powerfully moves the affections with sacred oratory: Which of these two will best secure the attention of the people, and guard them from drowsiness or wandering? Surely he that touches the heart will fix the eyes and the ears, and all the powers; while he that merely endeavours to inform the head, will find many wandering eyes, and some sleepers.

Suppose two persons have heard the same discourse from the pulpit, which was both rational and pathetic. One of them is pleased with the fine reasoning of the preacher, and hath his judgment convinced of the necessity and importance of the duty which he is exhorted to practise, and goes no further; the other hath also felt the very same conviction of his understanding by force of argument, and at the same time finds his soul touched inwardly with an emotion of the lively passions; he is awakened and surprized with an awful concern about his past neglects, and a holy fear of divine anger; he is struck to the heart with sentiments of piety, he is grieved and ashamed at his folly, he is filled with zeal and holy purposes: Pray which of these two will have the discourse dwell most upon their hearts; which is like to remember this sermon longest, and which is most likely to put it in practice?

This leads me to the third particular.

Advantage III. "All the duties of holiness are rendered much easier, and temptations to sin much weaker, when religion hath taken hold of the heart, and the passions of the soul are engaged in it." Passion animates all the inferior powers of nature, and strengthens them all in their operation. It is a sort of life and fire within the hearts of men, which God the creator hath ordained to be ever ready there, to give force and spirit for present action. He knew our nature wanted this spur, this inward spring of activity.

Suppose we had been left merely to the exercise of our reason and judgment, to inform us when it was proper to eat and drink, without having any such appetites as thirst and hunger: It is possible indeed that life might have been maintained, but we should have been often ready to neglect the proper seasons of food, and nature would have been supported but in a feeble and languishing manner, without such regular and constant nourishment as we want, and that too without any sensible delight. But the keen appetites of hunger and thirst are implanted in our very natures, to awaken us to take our solid and liquid food, and that with constancy and natural pleasure. It is for the same end, that all the passions were wrought into our constitution, by our great creator, that we might have some more vigorous principles than the mere power of reasoning, to animate us to activity on all just and proper occasions.

Suppose I were told that my house was a-fire at midnight, and my cold reason informed me, that in a little time I and my goods might be consumed, it is probable I should think of using some method to save my self: But the passion of surprize and fear exerts it self in a moment, and hurries me out to make an immediate escape.

Fear

Fear was wrought into human nature for such purposes as these. In such a fright we can almost move mountains, and perform wonders, to the utmost limits of the strength of man, in order to save our selves or our dear relatives from the flames. Cold reasoning without passion, would have no such sovereign and powerful effects.

Thus it is in things of religion. A cold information that misery will be the consequent of sin, or even a rational conviction of the distant danger of hell, without the passion of fear, would never animate the man to cry out, with such importunate enquiries, "What shall I do to escape everlasting burnings?" It is this passion of fear that constrains him to fly for his life to the hope that is set before him in the gospel, and to make his escape as *Lot* did from *Sodom*, without looking back on the allurements of sin.

I might give instances of the like kind in the affection of divine love. I may learn by reason that God is to be honoured and obeyed, because he is my creator and my Lord: I may be convinced of the beauty of virtue, and the excellency of religion, and that all the precepts of it are reasonable; yet these precepts will carry but a feeble sway with them, and have a very imperfect influence on my practice, in opposition to all my carnal interests and corrupt inclinations, if I have nothing to move me but the mere use of my reason, telling me it is a proper thing to obey the great God. This will not do the work, if I have no affectionate love to God as a Father and a saviour.

It is a knowledge and belief of the truth of the gospel, joined with love to *Christ* my redeemer, that makes me zealous to fulfil every duty. Christianity it self is thus excellently described by the apostle, it is "faith working by love," *Gal. v. 6*. A mere knowledge of any person will not make us grow like him, but love hath an assimilating and transforming power: The divine affection of love will work perpetually within us, and never cease till it has made us like our beloved object, till it has made us holy as God is holy, and formed heaven within us.

And when this warm love to God our maker, and to *Jesus* our Saviour, is joined to a lively hope of everlasting happiness, how do these united passions invigorate the soul in duty, and bear down all temptations before them? Great is the constraining power of these divine affections, hope and love: They break through all obstacles that stand in the way of salvation: When they are united together they arise to holy joy; and among the saints of the old testament, as well as the new, the joy of the Lord was their strength to fulfil all the duties of religion and righteousness," *Nebem. viii. 10*. This sacred temper of mind carried out the patriarchs of old, and the heroes of the ancient church, to obey the call of God with courage, to leave their own native country, and their friends, to wander through the earth as strangers and pilgrims, and to live upon a naked promise: This taught *Moses* to esteem the reproach of *Christ*, and the hope of the *Messiah*, greater riches than all the treasures of *Egypt*: This enabled the pious *Jews* to work wonders of righteousness, to venture into the dens of lions, to dare the edge of the sword, and combat the violence of fire; to endure the trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, to pass through showers of stones, and engines of torture, despising death in it's most frightful forms, and not accepting deliverance. These are the wonders which are ascribed to faith in the xi. chapter to the *Hebrews*: But it was faith animated by divine love; it was faith rising high in the hope of a better resurrection. A naked and simple belief of things unseen, would scarce have wrought these amazing effects in human nature, without some warm and joyful efforts of the affections of hope and love.

Behold the hero of the gospel St. *Paul*, that little contemptible figure of a man, bearing down all opposition before him in his sacred course of zeal and duty. Under this influence he can triumph over all the formidable things of nature, and the terrors of this world, *Rom.* viii. 35. "Who shall separate us from the love of *Christ*? Who shall divide our hearts from him?" Who shall make us weary of his service, or tempt us away from the faith and obedience of his gospel? "Shall tribulation, shall distress, shall persecution, shall famine or nakedness, or peril or sword? As it was written" of the saints in former ages, so shall it be fulfilled again in our age, "for thy sake we can bear killing all the day long:" The sheep of *Christ* can stand the ax, or the knife of slaughter: In all these things we are more than conquerors, through the grace of *Christ* that hath loved us. Every holy martyr hath made it appear, that love is stronger than prisons, or death: It hath its flames that are superior to common fire, and can overcome all the terrors of men.

When this divine love and hope have possessed the spirit, what poor and poultry things are all the allurements of flesh and sense? How feeble and insufficient are all the gay and glittering appearances of nature in this world, all the flatteries of pride and sensuality, to draw the heart away from God? The holy soul can boldly withstand all the enticements of sin, when divine grace hath seized the affections, and got possession of those sprightly and active powers.

What the nerves and spirits are to animal nature, the same thing are the passions to the soul: They are its very nerves and spirits, its most vigorous and unwearied springs of action, both in the zealous discharge of every duty, and the firm resistance of every temptation to sin. These active springs set all nature at work in the affairs of grace.

The sanctified affections are so great a part of the new creature, that the very graces of the holy Spirit are called by their names. What is divine love, religious fear, and heavenly hope? What is a sacred contempt and disdain of sensual vanities, and an immortal aversion to sin, and utter abhorrence of it? What are holy desires, penitent sorrows, and spiritual joys? What is all this blessed catalogue of the fruits of the Spirit, but the passions of nature refined and renewed by grace.

It is the influence of religion on the passions, that doth in a great measure make the difference between the true christian and the mere outward professor: The mere professor may know as much of the doctrines of religion, and of the duties of it, as the most religious man; but he doth not fear and love, and desire and hope, and mourn and rejoice, as the true christian doth. If a bare rational knowledge of divine things were sufficient to make a true disciple of *Christ*, the greatest student in divinity, and especially the sharpest critic in scripture, would be the best christian: But it is not always found so; critics and students, rich in knowledge, may have cold hearts, and lie dead in a state of sin.

Advantage IV. "The practices of religion are not rendered easy, by having the affections employed in it, but they become pleasant and delightful, and every sin is more painful to the soul where the passions are engaged for God."

If the christian be employed in holy meditation, how does the soul that loves God travel with delight over the various scenes of his glory, in the lower and the upper worlds! How does he dwell upon the majesty and the mercy of his heavenly Father; upon the excellencies of *Christ* the Saviour, upon his offices and his dignities from day to day! How pleasurable doth the mind diffuse itself in contemplation upon his pre-existent state when he dwelt in the Father's bosom; his condescending

ending incarnation and coming into flesh and blood, the labours and sorrows of his life, the anguish and amazing love of his death, the glory of his resurrection, the honours paid him at his ascent to the throne of God in heaven, the efficacy of his intercession, and the joyful and dreadful appearance of the great judge, when he shall come in the clouds of heaven to be admired of his saints, and to give vengeance and destruction to those who have ridiculed and rejected the gospel of his grace? How are the thoughts fixed on the sacred theme, without an inclination to rove and go astray? How are the powers of imagination devoutly employed, when the holy passions are roused into activity, when our fear, our hope, our love, our joy, are all in happy exercise? But if these are absent, and we are left merely to rational enforcements of duty on the mind, without love or affection in the heart, with what a cold indifference do we set about the work! How fluttering are our thoughts! How wandering are our hearts! And every flying fancy calls us away, and scatters our powers among a thousand vanities.

I might instance in the duty of prayer or praise, when the love of the heart flames out into holy desires, how ready and eager is the soul to seek the Lord! Not the shadows and silence of the midnight, not the early business and cares of the morning, can withhold the good man from calling upon his God. "With my soul have I desired thee in the night, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early, *Isai.* xxvi. 9. and I prevented the dawning of the morning and cried to the Lord." *Psal.* cxix. 147. Or if the heart be warmed with a sense of divine mercy, and kindled into religious joy, how gloriously does the tongue break forth into praises! "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:" *Psal.* ciii. 1, 2. "Seven times a-day will I praise thee: My heart is fixed, O God my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise: Awake, my tongue, my glory, awake to the joyful work." *Psal.* lvii. 7, 8.

While the pious affections are duly engaged in prayer, even a common christian is enabled to make divine work of it: Our minds never want matter, nor our tongues expression. Sense and language are very much at the call of the devout passions, where the mind is tolerably furnished with the principles of religion; and then the soul converses with it's maker with unknown delight. But when we are impelled by a mere precept commanding us to our knees, and conscience goads us on as it were to the task and drudgery of prayer, without any devout affection, how cold is the heart! How languid the worship! How dry the mind! How scanty the language! The invention and the lips strive and labour, and all to little purpose. In such a case, I cannot but think that well-composed forms of devotion may be useful helps to awaken the drowsy powers, and to call up sleeping religion. But where these powers are awake and lively, such helps are less needful in our praying seasons.

The same experiment may be repeated in reading the word of God. How full of sweetness and holy pleasure are the discoveries and the promises of the bible, when devout affections are at work! How sweet are the histories of *Abraham* and *David*, the prophecies of *Isaiab*, and the predictions that point to *Christ*! How glorious the epistles of *Peter* and *Paul*! How divinely pleasing is the gospel of *John*, and the dying discourses and prayer of our Saviour in the xiv. xv. xvi. and xvii. chapters of this evangelist! How full of rapture and holy transport are the *psalms* of *David*! We enter into his spirit, and we feel his divine sentiments and joys. But what a deadness, what a dryness overspreads even the most delicious and heavenly parts of

those divine writings; what an insipid and tasteless thing is the gospel itself, when the holy passions are all asleep!

So it is in hearing sermons: When our sacred affections are awake, we dwell on the lips of the minister, as on the lips of an angel of God: Every sentence seems to come from heaven; and even a feeble teacher, with all his infirmities at such a season, seems like a divine messenger, and raises your attention and delight. But the cause is within yourselves, the activity of your devout affections under the influence of divine grace.

Is not benevolence and kindness to our fellow-creatures, liberality to the poor, and especially to our fellow-christians, another part of our religion? "Pure religion and undefiled—is this, to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction,—*James* i. 27. He that loves God must love his brother also," 1 *John* iv. 21. But how can we fulfil the several duties of help and relief, defence and consolation to our brethren, if we do not indulge the warm and tender affections of pity, and sympathy and love? The bounty of the hands, even to the most distressed object, will be but scanty and small, if there be no compassion in the heart: But when we love our brethren for God's sake, and excite in our hearts all the friendly and compassionate affections towards the poor and the miserable, then covetousness and self-love lie down vanquished, and have no power to withhold the hand from a liberal distribution of blessings to those that are in need. Compassion melts the heart, and makes the hands flow with bounty and relief.

I might give other instances also of the same happy effect of holy passion, in the more difficult duties of religion, in mortification of most beloved sins, as well as in denying our most darling interests for the sake of *Christ*. "How sweet is it, saith *St. Austin*, under the power of divine love, how sweet is it to abstain from all the old, sweet and sinful delights of the flesh?" "Herein is our love to God manifested, that we keep his commandments; and none of his commands are grievous." 1 *John* v. 3.

And as the duties of religion are fulfilled with unusual delight, so every sin becomes more painful to the heart, when the passions are divinely tintured. The very dwelling of sinful principles in the heart, the working of unruly appetites and unholy inclinations, and the first motions of pride, and wantonness, and malice, and envy, and love of the world, are all very very grievous to a soul whose affections are renewed and sanctified. Every compliance with temptation breaks in upon the sweet serenity and peace of the spirit, and gives it great disquietude. Read the case of the holy *Psalmist* and of *St. Peter*, after their folly. Thus it is in some measure with every sincere and lively christian; nor is the spirit ever at rest after any remarkable sin, till that sin hath been made bitter to the soul, and till the soul has made fresh and warm application to the throne of grace, by humble repentance and faith in the blood of sprinkling.

It is a known doctrine, both in the *jewish* and christian church, that not only the pleasant, but the painful and uneasy passions of the heart are consecrated to divine purposes. Sorrow for sin, and deep mourning, teach us powerfully that it is an evil and bitter thing to forsake the Lord our God; and in this manner our wickedness is appointed to correct us, and our backslidings to reprove us." *Jer.* ii. 19. By grief of the soul, and by the sadness of the countenance arising from it, *Solomon* tells us, "the heart is made better," *Eccles.* vii. 3. When holy *David* began to be "sorry for his sin, when he watered his couch with his tears, when his eye was consumed with grief, and he roared by reason of the disquietness of his heart," *Psal.*

vi. 3, 6, 7. he was then under the workings of recovering grace. When St. *Paul's* first epistle to the *Corinthians* made them sorry for their connivance at the incestuous iniquity of one of their members, he tells them, in his second letter, how necessary this sorrow was, this godly sorrow, which worketh repentance unto salvation: What a train of holy passions attended it! What indignation against sin, and the sinner! What holy fear of defilement by communion with such a crime, or the indulgence of it! What vehement desire after cleansing and forgiving grace! What revenge against such foul iniquity! What zeal to approve themselves clear before God and man! 2 *Cor.* vii. 9, 10, 11.

The blessed "God does not willingly afflict and grieve the children of men;" *Lam.* iii. 33. and he would not have made the sorrows and the bitter groans of repentance so necessary a part of the christian life, had he not known the painful passions of nature to have so happy an influence in the kingdom of his grace. By this anguish of the conscience, by these afflictions of the spirit, God carries on his own designs of mercy, and "makes the soul partaker of his holiness." *Heb.* xii. 10.

Advantage V. "To employ the passions for God, is to take a most powerful engine of mischief out of the hand of sin and Satan, and to reduce it to the obedience of *Christ.*" It is the recovery of a considerable part of human nature out of dismal captivity and bondage. The passions are the warmest and strongest powers of the soul: They are the artillery whereby man wages war either for or against heaven. The passions by nature are devoted to the service of sin, and engaged on the devil's side in his wars against the almighty, and they are charged with the seeds of impious fire and thunder: But when divine grace hath taken hold of them, and employed them on the side of God and religion, it is like seizing the cannon of the enemy from their old batteries, and planting them in new bulwarks, to make war upon the devil and all his army.

Fearful and impious work do the passions make when they are engaged on the side of the flesh, the world and the devil. What bold contempt of God, and all that is holy! What unruly violence of love to vanity and sensual pleasure! What mad delight in sin! What impetuous desires of forbidden objects! What malice boils in the heart against our neighbour, upon every supposed injury! What wicked envy frets and rages in the soul at the welfare of others! What wrath, and indignation, and revenge, are continually ready to be in arms! And how do these hellish passions employ the tongue in slander and lies, and sometimes embrue the hands in mischief and blood! Now what a glorious victory is it to have the vicious affections entirely subdued, and the other powers of nature, which had been usurped by hell, seized and restrained, and consecrated to the God of heaven, and become instruments of holiness and peace! To have these engines of iniquity become happy mediums of adoration and service to God, and of hourly benefits to men! O blessed and divine change! O the sovereign power of converting grace!

Advantage VI. "I might add, in the next place, that when the passions are sanctified and formed to a divine temper, it gives the gospel of *Christ* credit and honour in the world, in that it can triumph over the strongest powers of corrupt nature, and subdue them to the service of God and religion." With what wicked violence were the passions of *Paul* engaged against the cause of christianity, when to use his own expressions, "he was exceedingly mad against the saints, compelled them to blaspheme, and persecuted them to strange cities?" *Acts* xxvi. 11. "When he breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord?" *Acts* ix. 1. Now to have this man changed from a lion to a lamb, from a persecutor to a preacher of the gospel; to hear this man propagating that gospel with zeal, which

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he so lately endeavoured to destroy with fury, what divine honours this event gave to the religion of *Christ* when it was but young in the world? And as there were multitudes of such instances in those primitive days, so I hope they are not utterly wanting now.

There are, I hope, in our age, in this city, and even in this assembly, some christians that can bear sacred witness to the divine power of the gospel in this respect. One can say, "how fond was I of vanity and sensual pleasure? Regardless of God, and thoughtless of religion, with an aversion to all that was virtuous and holy? But, through the grace of God, the object of my love is changed: I delight now in the things of God; I love his word, his people, himself, and his *Christ*, above all things in the world."

Another can say, "I was greedy of money, and ambitious of vain-glory." Another confesses, "I was fretful and quarrelsome; I was malicious and envious; I was wrathful and resenting; and my ungodly passions were ever ready to rise and ferment against my fellow-creatures: But, now, through the influence of grace, I find my chief ambition is to be a child of God, and to exceed others in holiness: I covet the riches of grace, and the benefits of the gospel, above all other treasures: Now I am angry at my self because of sin, and angry at sinners when they dishonour God and my Saviour: I love my Lord *Jesus*, who hath procured forgiveness for me; and I would love all men, and forgive them for *Jesus* sake."

It is a public glory brought to the gospel of *Christ*, when our devout and pious passions surmount all the carnal affections of the heart; when the fear of God rises so high, and grows so strong in the soul, as to subdue and overcome all other fears: And if we fear God sincerely, we need fear nothing else. It is very honourable to *Christ* and his religion, when the love of God and of *Jesus Christ*, the Saviour, flames high above all other loves, and makes us forego and forget every thing which might be dear and valuable to us before, if it stands in competition with God, the supreme object of our love. When the christian can rejoice and say, "I love my father and my mother, my wife and children with as true and tender an affection as ever I did; but I love God, and my redeemer, with a more sublime passion. Neither father nor mother, nor dear young children, nor the wife of the bosom, shall withhold me from my duty to God; and, through the aids of divine grace, I would be ready to offer my self, with all my interest in them, as a sacrifice to the love of *Christ*."

It is glorious indeed to see the devout passions so much transcend all other passions and appetites, all other fears, loves, and desires, as that they all melt away and vanish before the power of divine fear and divine love. To see all our fondest desires, and our warmest passions for creatures languish and sink, and die under the present influences of devout affection, as the light of a candle vanishes and is lost in the midst of sun-beams, or as the noise of a shaking leaf dies and is unheard in the midst of thunder: O happy souls, who have arrived at this sublime degree of christianity! Thither let our hearts aspire daily, and never cease our holy labours and prayers till we love, till we fear, till we desire God, in this glorious and intense degree.

Advantage VII. In the last place I add, "the sanctified passions render us so much the more conformable to the blessed *Jesus*, and fitter for his presence and enjoyment in heaven." As the Son of God put on our flesh and blood, so he assumed the various powers and properties of human nature, the appetites and passions of mankind: He endured hunger and thirst, he had fear and love, hope and joy; nor were the more troublesome affections of anger and sorrow left out of his constitution, but they were all innocent and holy; they were never tainted with sin as our's are; they had



had no corrupt mixtures to defile his soul. Our passions are like water with mud at the bottom; when they are moved, they too frequently raise the mud, and betray their impurity: But the passions of *Christ* were ever pure; like water from the clearest fountain in a glass of crystal, which, though it be never so much agitated, is still unpolluted.

These pathetic powers of his holy soul were ever engaged in the interest of religion, and employed for pious purposes. He loved God his Father with the most perfect and intense affection; and he let "the world know, that he loved the Father," *John* xiv. 31. "He rejoiced in spirit, when he gave thanks to God," *Luke* x. 21, and when God hid his face from him, and forsook him, "his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," *Matth.* xxvi. 38. He was grieved and angry with the hypocrites and the blasphemers of his day, and "looked round upon them with wrath and holy indignation," *Mark* iii. 5. How pathetic and vehement was his zeal for his Father's honour, when "he scourged out the buyers and sellers from the temple? The zeal of the house of God consumed and wasted his spirits, as it is said," *John* ii. 17. "He loved his church with most astonishing fervour, for his love was stronger than death," *Eph.* v. 25. "And greater love hath no man than this, that one should lay down his life for another," *John* xv. 13. How passionately did he mourn at his own foresight of the dismal distress of his enemies at *Jerusalem*? "He looked upon the bloody city with tender compassion, and wept over it, with the tears of grief and love," *Luke* xix. 41. And what divine passions were exercised in his devout retirements, what holy fervours in the wilderness and upon midnight-mountains, is only known to God, and to ministering angels.

Thus it appears, that the more our affections are tinged with piety and goodness, and the warmer is their engagement in the things of God, the more nearly shall we imitate our glorious redeemer. O divine pattern, beyond all our imitation! But blessed are those who are the nearest copiers of it.

But you will enquire, "How will this exercise of devout passion fit us the more for the heavenly world?" Angels are not clothed with flesh and blood as we are, and the spirits of the departed saints have left this part of their nature behind them in the grave: What efforts of passion therefore can there be among the inhabitants of heaven?

To this I answer, that though spirits departed, and angels, can have no such fermentations of animal nature, as go to make up those principles and powers, which we call the passions in this mortal state, yet there is something a-kin to them, which may be called affections in the very nature of every intelligent creature: Spirits which have no relation to flesh can fear and hope, can love and desire, can rejoice and grieve, and that in strong and intense degrees; otherwise there would be no hell for the separate souls of the wicked, and for the punishment of devils; nor would there be a heaven for the reward of the spirits of just men, made perfect: There cannot be a heaven without pleasure, nor a hell without grief and anguish: Since therefore there is, and must be something of pure affection in separate spirits that bears a correspondence with our passions in this mortal state, we may be well assured that the more these passions are refined and sanctified, and the more they are engaged about divine objects, in a proper manner, according to the will of God, we shall thereby acquire a greater meetness for the business and blessedness of heaven, and be better prepared for the exercise of those more spiritual affections which belong to the saints departed, and to the happy inhabitants of the intellectual world.

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The holy apostle teaches us this doctrine in that sweet period of scripture, *1 Pet.* 3, 6, 8. When we are “begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of *Jesus Christ* from the dead, therein we greatly rejoice;” and the joy surmounts all our present heaviness, and bears us in conquest and triumph “through our manifold temptations:” It gives us a transporting view of praise, honour, and glory at the appearance of our Lord *Jesus*; whom having not seen we love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; or as it is the original, “with unspeakable and glorified joy.” You see here that the three blessed affections of hope, love and joy, bring the soul to the confines of the heavenly world, set him as it were at the gates of paradise, fill the heart with those divine sensations which are near a-kin to the joys of glorified spirits. Thus, by the exercise of the holy passions in a sublime degree, “we are come to the spirits of the just made perfect, and almost admitted into the glorious presence of *Jesus*, our adored mediator.” *Heb.* xii. 23, 24. Let us awake, let us arise, let us shake our selves out of the dust of this earth, and dress our souls in these beautiful garments: Let us long and breathe after these sacred sensations of refined pleasure, to which the church it self is too much a stranger, in our degenerate times. These are fair emblems and sweet foretastes of those unknown “pleasures which flow from the right hand of God without ceasing, and run, like rivers, an everlasting course, through all the ages of eternity.” *Psal.* xvi. 13.

## M E D I T A T I O N.

“**H**OW glad am I to find that not only my understanding and my will, but that all my passions may be made serviceable to God and religion, to my noblest designs, and my eternal interest! I am sure some of them have had an unhappy influence to lead me astray from my God, and my duty, and I am greatly pleased to hear that they are capable of being reduced to the service of my maker, and become instruments of holiness and peace. Descend, O divine Spirit, descend into my heart! Take hold of these active and sprightly powers of my nature, and bind them to thy eternal service. Awaken my fear of the majesty and the justice of God, that I may seek earnestly what I shall do to please him, and how I may obtain his favour: And let my fear be constant and restless till my feet are led into the paths of salvation, and I feel the constraining power of divine love.

“Let my devout passions be ever awake and lively when I hear the things of God spoken, or when I read of the momentous concerns of religion, and a life to come. Then the sacred truths and duties of christianity shall be impressed deep on my memory, and written there as with a pen of diamond, never to be blotted out. O may the warm passions melt my soul to tenderness, and make me susceptible of every holy impression! May this heart of mine, this table of stone, be softened by devout affection, till all the necessary and important parts of religion are written there in lasting characters! May my heart, O Lord, receive the stamp of thy gospel with all it's sacred lineaments, till I am become a new creature, transformed into the image of the Son of God!

“How easy will all the duties of holiness become, and all my temptations to sin how weak and ineffectual, if the passionate powers of my nature are warmly engaged for God?

How

“How delightful and pleasant shall I then find even the difficult practices of religion! How hateful will every sin be in my eyes, and how painful to my heart, when divine love as a sovereign has taken possession of it, and set all the train of affections at work there in it's own service! No more shall I complain of weariness, or be tired of religious worship: I shall say in my heart no more, “when will the sabbath be over?” Nor cut short my prayers and meditations, to gratify the flesh and obey it's corrupt influence. If I am winged with holy passion I shall climb over mountains of difficulty in my way to heaven, or remove hills of temptation that obstruct my-course: Divine love, as well as faith, can remove mountains.

“O how happy shall I be when all my passions are sanctified! They have been, and I mourn to speak it, they have been wretched engines of mischief in the hand of sin and *Satan*: They have defiled my soul shamefully; they have broken the law of my God; they have abused his grace and his gospel, dishonoured my Saviour, and grieved his holy Spirit. When shall these powers of my nature be rescued from their sinful slavery, and be devoted to purposes divine and heavenly? O that my fear and my love, my anger and my desire, my grief and my joy, were all pointed to their proper objects, that they might never more break out in an unruly manner to dishonour God, or to awaken sharp anguish in my own conscience! I would watch, I would pray, I would labour, and wrestle day and night against the body of sin that dwells in me. O for the sovereign influence of almighty grace, to correct all the disorders of my soul, and to turn every passion of my nature into a principle of holiness!

“Let the blessed gospel of *Christ* obtain this triumph over me: Let the gospel subdue these rebellious powers to the obedience of my Lord and Saviour: May the gospel have the glory of so divine a change!

“Come, blessed Saviour, set thy holy example before me, in a more illustrious and transforming light: Let all the devout passions of zeal and love, which reigned in thy heart, reign also in mine: O that I might copy out the wonders of thy zeal for the honour of God, and thy love, to the race of man! With what a divine vehemence were thy holy affections engaged in worship! But alas, how cold are all my attempts of devotion! Kindle, O *Jesus*, the sacred fire within me: Let it melt down my heart, and mould me into thy likeness. Let my soul be made up of divine love, as a happy preparative for the joys of heaven, and the everlasting presence of God, and my Saviour.” Amen.

# DISCOURSE IV.

## Inferences from the usefulness of the passions.

**T**HE last discourse has informed us, that the passions are not useless things, even in the important affairs of religion and godliness. We have seen how many and glorious are the advantages that we may derive from the right use of the affections in the christian life. Let us not suffer so momentous a theme to pass away, without drawing some inferences or remarks from it.

Remark I. May the passions of our nature be made so serviceable to the interests of our religion, then “surely the doctrine of the *stoics* is a very unreasonable opinion, for it teaches us to suppress all our passions intirely, and, if possible, to root them out of our natures.” It is evident from what we have heard, that our pursuit of the important things of religion, in this present state, would be very faint and cold, and feeble, if it were not animated by some of these vigorous principles, these affectionate powers and sensations; And shall we abandon and destroy all these assistants to piety and goodness, which are wrought into the very frame of our beings?

It is granted, that our passions in this fallen state have their unhappy share of the general corruption of our nature: It is granted they are sometimes made the mischievous incentives to vice, and lead us astray from the path of holiness; and, if they could never be reformed, they ought to be rooted out. But when they are once sanctified by a touch of the finger of God, and tinged with a favour of piety, they become very pleasant and powerful springs of duty, both to God and man.

A holy fear of the great God our creator, and a solicitous concern what shall become of us when we die, is the first and most general spring of religion: This wakens us to enquire “what we must do to please the God that made us.” When we arrive at some comfortable hope of our acceptance with God, then divine love promotes our piety and virtue: Then religion works within us by nobler principles, and it is advanced to higher degrees, than a mere principle of fear could raise it: All the passions of the man are subject to the government of holy love, and are employed by it for heavenly purposes. When we love God supremely, we shall love men, also who are made after the image of God: From a due benevolence to men, spring a thousand words and deeds of charity and pity, and godlike goodness. When our refined affections work in this manner toward God and men, we come by degrees to delight in all that is holy; we arrive at the true taste of religious pleasures, and make near approaches to the joys of the upper world, where holiness and pleasure are perfect and everlasting.

Thus it may be said, that after some general foundations laid in the knowledge of God and ourselves, “Religion begins in fear, it is carried on by love, and it ends in joy.” Erroneous and unhappy is that philosophy that would banish these affections from

from human nature, which have so powerful an influence on the religious life, and assist our preparation for death and heaven.

Remark II. "How happily has the blessed God suited his various revelations in scripture to the powers of our nature?" How well are they fitted to work upon our affections, and to engage those active powers of the soul in the interests of religion and godliness! God himself, by his own methods of address to men, from one end of scripture to the other, proves the truth of this discourse, and the advantage of the passions in things of religion.

If God speaks of himself, how bright are the displays of his majesty and grandeur, to awaken our reverence and religious fear? He is the holy one that inhabits eternity, who created all things by his word, the Lord of lords, and the king of kings: "He speaks, and the earth trembles, and the pillars of heaven are astonished at his reproof." *Job ix. 6. xxvi. 11.* "He is a God fearful, or tremendous even in his praises." *Exod. xv. 11.*

How surprizing are the discoveries of his power and knowledge, to raise our wonder! "He ranks the stars in their order, and calls them all by their names, and not one fails to appear at his call:" *Psal. cxlvii. 4.* "His eye surveys all the creation, and knows the thoughts of the heart afar off:" *Psal. cxxxix. 2.* "He takes up the isles as a little thing;" *Isai. xl. 15.* "He touches the mountains, and they smoke:" *Psal. civ. 32.* Who can stand before him, or lift up the hand against him and prosper?

If he manifest the riches of his mercy and goodness, how is the divine language suited to strike upon all the springs of our hope and love, and to allure our hearts to him? "How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God?" *Psal. xxxvi. 7.* "In his favour is life, and his love is better than life." *Psal. lxxiii. 3.* He has magnified his love towards us, and the exceeding riches of his grace, that while we were enemies and rebels, he sent his Son to die, in order to redeem us from death.

If he reveal to us *Christ Jesus*, his beloved Son, in what a glorious light does he place him before our eyes, to command our veneration and honour, our faith and our fervent affection? "He is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person:" *Heb. i. 3.* "He was with God before the foundation of the world, for by him the worlds were created:" *John i. 3.* "He is the man in whom dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily:" *Col. ii. 9.* "He is God manifest in the flesh:" *Tim. iii. 16.* He came down from the Father's bosom, not to condemn the world, but to expose his own life and blood for our sakes, to make his soul an offering for our sins, and to sustain unknown anguish and sorrows, in the room and stead of such rebels as we are.

If he opens heaven in the gospel, and brings life and immortality to light, what thrones of glory, what crowns of righteousness does he set before us? What mansions of paradise, what rivers of pleasure flowing from the throne of God, what rich fruits of the tree of life, what blissful visions in the presence of God and *Christ*, what blessed society of angels and holy souls are described, as the enjoyments of this heaven, on purpose to draw out our strongest desires towards it, and raise our joyful hope, and our warmest zeal in the pursuit of it!

When he gives us a view of hell, how dreadfully are the executions of divine wrath described there? What a gnawing worm in the conscience that never dies, what a fire that is never quenched? What burning lakes of fire and brimstone, kindled by the breath of an angry God? What troops of devils and damned spirits must be our companions there, "and the smoke of their torment ascending for ever and ever?" *Rev. xiv. 11.* How happily are these divine descriptions suited to awaken us out of

security, and to excite us to passion of fear in the highest degree, that knowing the terrors of the Lord, we may stir up all our powers to flee from the wrath to come, and seek reconciliation to God by the blood of *Christ*.

If sin be mentioned in scripture, in what odious colours is it set before us! It was sin that ruined our first parents, and drove them out of paradise, and spread death and misery through all this lower world: It is the unrighteousness of men that has awakened and revealed the wrath of God, in all the terrible instances of it, from the ancient apostasy and fall of angels in heaven, to the final destruction of this world by fire, and the punishment of men and devils in hell for ever: And all this that sin might appear exceeding sinful, and raise in us the highest hatred, and utmost aversion.

The great and blessed God, who formed us at first, perfectly knows our frame; he is well acquainted with all the powers and passions of human nature, and the design and use of them all: And therefore when he wrote these holy messages to us by his apostles and his prophets, he does not only reveal things to our understandings, which reason could not find out, and then leaves us to make the best of them; but he warmly and powerfully addresses himself to the affectionate principles within us, in order to make the discoveries of his grace pierce deeper into our souls, that he might recover us from our guilt and misery, and persuade us to partake of his salvation.

Remark III. We may learn from this discourse, "how much it is the business of a minister of the gospel, to engage the affections of his hearers, and to bring them over to the service of God and religion." It is granted that the first work is to inform the understanding, to teach mankind what they are to believe concerning the great God, and what duties they owe to him. To this end the preacher must not only draw his doctrines from the light of nature, but from the word of God, and bring them down to the capacities of his hearers. It is his constant business to explain the word of God to men, to propose the naked truth with the strongest reasons to support it: He must endeavour to strike light into the mind, and convince the reason and judgment of men; he must make it appear that they are guilty before God, and that there is no way of relief or hope, but in and by *Jesus*, the great mediator, and thus lead sinful and perishing men into the knowledge and faith of *Christ*, as an all-sufficient Saviour: All this is a necessary and indispensable part of his work; but it is not the whole of it. When the understanding is enlightened, the passions must also be addressed; for God has wrought these powers into human nature, that they might be the vital and vigorous springs of actions and duties.

If the judgment be never so much convinced, yet while the affections remain unmoved, the work of religion will be begun with difficulty, and will drive on but very heavily. This the prophets and the apostles well knew; and the great God, who employed them, knew it too, and therefore he sent them armed with the powers of natural and divine oratory, to reach the inmost affections, to penetrate the heart, and to raise holy commotions in the very center of the soul. What mean all the promises of the gospel, but to work upon our hope, and to raise our highest expectations? What means the dreadful language of so many severe threatenings, but to shake us out of our security, and to rouse our fears? If there had been no such principles as hope and fear in man, I am persuaded there would scarce have been any such things as promises and threatenings in the book of God. The word of the Lord is compared to a fire and a hammer, *Jer. xxiii. 29.* "Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" And it ought to be delivered and pronounced by the preachers of it, in such a manner, as may break the rocky

rocky hearts of stubborn sinners, as may fright them from their beloved iniquities, by the terror of everlasting burnings.

The holy scripture is a cabinet of divine curiosities, full of admirable allurements to invite and entertain awakened minds: It should be so happily unfolded and displayed by the preachers of it, as to represent, in a noble manner, the amazing grace and love of God, and the blessings of the gospel; and that with such a holy fervour, as to light up a divine flame of desire, hope and love, in the souls of all that hear it.

To what purpose were the fancies of the holy writers enriched, from heaven, with so bright and various a treasure of sacred images, but to raise the devout passions of their readers, by flashing upon their imagination with divine light? Their words are sun-beams, that not only diffuse a sacred illumination around the eye of the soul, but kindle the heart into life and zeal. To what end doth all the pomp of oratory display itself in their writings? To what end do they use all the arts of trope and figure, all the beauteous, the alluring and the terrible colours that nature can afford, and that metaphor can borrow? Is it not all with a design to strike the soul of man in it's most passionate powers, and spread vital religion through the inmost recesses of the heart?

Let the ministers of the word, who are zealous for the honour of God, for the glory of *Christ*, and for the success of their labours, read the writings of the holy prophets, night and day, and make them their pattern, transferring the beauties of the law to the ministry of the gospel. The prophets do not merely tell us in a dry and cold manner, that sin is an evil thing, but they terribly denounce the thunder of the wrath of God against it, and pour down his vengeance on the heads of guilty rebels, to work upon our fear, to affright us from sin, and hasten us to fly to the arms of divine mercy. Nor do they merely say to us, that God is merciful; but in a most delightful and inviting manner, they display the boundless mercies of God, and the workings of his bowels of compassion, in all the pathetic language of tenderness, as though he were made of flesh and blood as we are.

When our blessed Lord himself came down on earth, to become a preacher of his Father's wrath and mercy, what eternal woes does he denounce against hypocrites and impenitent wretches? How gently does he invite the weary and heavy-laden sinners to come to him, that they may find rest? *Matth. xi. 28.* How widely does he unfold the gates of his Father's mercy, and that even to murderers, and adulterers, and thieves and blasphemers, that sinners of the largest size may enter in and be partakers of divine salvation. How happily does *St. Paul* imitate his blessed master! "Knowing the terrors of the Lord he persuaded men, and he beseeches them, in the most endearing language, in *Christ's* stead, to be reconciled to God," *2 Cor. v. 11, 18—20.* In what pathetic language doth he set before us the glorious love of God, in contriving the recovery of fallen men, and providing grace for them in *Christ Jesus*, before the world began; and in saving them by such a surprizing method of mingled severity and mercy, as the death and agonies of his most beloved Son! And all this on purpose to melt or soften our affections into repentance, love, and gratitude! How wonderfully do the sacred writers attack the passions on all sides, if by any means they may save a soul from hell? Happy preachers, who approach this divine pattern!

Can any of us now content ourselves to bring cold and languid discourses into the pulpit, with this bible under our hands? Will not all the sacred fervours of these inspired preachers reproach us to our faces, while we read and explain their sermons? Shall we go on to affect a calm and stupid politeness of phrase, in the very face of these

these warm and heavenly orators? Can we be content any longer to be the cold and lifeless rehearsers of the great and glorious things of our religion? Can we go on to speak to perishing sinners, who lie drowsy and slumbering on the brink of hell, in so soft, so calm and gentle a manner, as though we were afraid to awaken them? What shall we say to these things? Does divine love send dreaming preachers to call dead sinners to life? Preachers that are content to leave their hearers asleep on the precipice of eternal destruction? Have they no such thing as passion belongs to them? Have they no pity? Have they no fear? Have they no sense of the worth of souls? Have they no springs of affection within them? Or do they think their hearers have none? Or is passion so vile a power, that it must be all devoted to things of flesh and sense, and must never be applied to objects divine and heavenly? Who taught any of us this lazy and drowsy practice? Did God or his prophets, did *Christ* or his apostles, instruct us in this modish art of still life, this lethargy of preaching, as it has been called by a late writer? Did the great God ever appoint statutes for his ambassadors, to invite sinners to his mercy? Words of grace, written upon brass or marble, would do the work almost as well. Where the preachers become stone, no wonder if the hearers are moveless: But let the ministers of the living word, who address men upon matters of infinite concernment, shew, if possible, that they are infinitely concerned about them.

This leads my thoughts to the next remark.

Remark IV. "How kindly has the grace and wisdom of God dealt with us, in appointing men of like passions with ourselves, to become his ministers and our teachers in the things of religion!" Men, who have the same natural affections, who can feel within themselves all the train of devout passions, and express it in their holy ministrations! Men, who are subject to the same sins and follies, and are capable of the same religious fear, and penitent sorrow! Men, who stand in need of the same salvation, and must be trained up to heaven, by the exercise of the same faith, and love, and hope.

If angels had been made the only messengers of the gospel, angels, who have no flesh and blood, no communion in the same animal nature, no share of our fears and sorrows, no interest in the same redeeming mercy and pardon, they could not have expressed all the same passions, nor given us such an example of them in themselves. But a minister of the word, taken from among men, has been in a sinful state, and is now become a sincere christian, or he should be so. He is supposed to have his own soul filled with love to God; he has felt his own fears awakened by the terrors of the Lord, and the threatenings of eternal misery; he has found his trembling soul encouraged to hope by the rich promises of grace; he has felt his own hatred rising against sin, his delight raised by the views and expectations of the favour of God, and eternal happiness in his presence. How well is such a teacher suited to set the terrors of hell, the evil of sin, and the riches of divine grace, in *Christ Jesus*, before the eyes of sinful men, who have the same natural passions with himself; and to turn these affectionate powers of his hearers into a religious channel, by representing these awful objects in a pathetic manner?

The preacher should be an example to the hearers, and then he preaches with most power and success. It is a well-known saying, "If you would draw out my tears, you must first weep yourself." How cold and dull, and unaffected with divine things, is mankind by nature! How careless and indolent is a whole assembly, when the preacher appears like a lifeless engine, pronouncing words of law or grace! When he speaks of divine things, in such a dry, in such a cold and formal manner, as though



though they had no influence on his own heart! When the words freeze upon his lips, the hearts of hearers are freezing also: But where we find devout affection mingled with solid argument in the discourse, there the lips of the preacher seem to speak light and life at once, and he helps to communicate the holy passion all around him, by feeling it first himself.

And here I am sure, we, who are honoured with this sacred employment, have reason to examine our hearts, to reflect on our indolence, our lifeless conduct, and our cold labours in the pulpit; and mourn to think how imperfectly, and how ineffectually we perform the awful work of the ministry. And shall our own affections still be so unraised and unmoved, while we speak of the great and momentous things of God, and *Christ* and religion, of death and judgment, of heaven and hell? Shall we always preach with such a deadness of spirit, such a shameful absence of divine fervour? May the blessed God forgive your preacher, and may you forgive him; and may sovereign grace raise a warm flame of vital religion in his heart, and communicate it to all your souls!

Remark V. If the passions are so useful in the solemn affairs of religion, "there is yet further occasion to admire the wisdom and grace of God, that he has appointed several such institutions or parts of worship to belong to our holy religion, as are suited to work upon our senses, and thereby to awaken pious passions within us?"

Besides the voice of public prayer, and the affectionate speech and language of preaching the gospel, we are also taught and exhorted to sing the praises of God with holy melody. What a multitude of exhortations are found in the book of *Psalms*, to make a joyful noise unto the Lord, and to sing new songs before him in the kingdom of the *Messiah*. The advice of *St. Paul* in the new testament, echoes to the harp of *David*, and calls upon us to "speak to one another, as well as to our selves, in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, and to sing and make melody with grace in our hearts to the Lord," *Eph. v. 19.* and *Col. iii. 16.* *St. James* gives the same encouragement: "if any be merry, or cheerful, let this passion of joy express it self in a devout manner, by singing psalms," *James v. 13.* How happily suited is this ordinance to give a loofe to the devout soul in it's pious and cheerful affections? What a variety of sanctified desires, and hopes and joys, may exert themselves in this religious practice, may kindle the souls of christians into holy fervour, may raise them near to the gates of heaven, and the harmony of the blessed inhabitants there? Nor are pious sorrows utterly excluded from this ordinance: There are tunes and songs of mournful melody to solace the humble penitent, and to give a sweetness to his tears.

And besides all this, there are the two glorious and sacred ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, wherein divine things are exhibited to us in a sensible manner by figures and emblems, which are designed to impress animal nature, and by the eyes to awaken the passions of the heart.

How proper an emblem is baptism to represent our being washed in the blood of *Christ*? and the pouring out of water on the face or head, how well is it suited to represent the pouring out of the Spirit of God on men, and by this means to awaken the holy affections of hope and joy?

How happily is the Lord's supper contrived by divine wisdom, to represent the death and love of our blessed Saviour, and the benefits that we derive from his sufferings? "*Jesus Christ* crucified is evidently set forth before our eyes:" *Gal. iii. 1.* He is represented even in his bleeding and dying love, while the bread is broken, and the wine poured out before us. O how should we loofe the springs of pious passion at such a season!

How

How should our love to our redeemer kindle and rise high at the sight of the sufferings of the Son of God, who took our flesh and blood, that he might be capable of dying! that his flesh might be torn, and cut and bruised, that his blood might be spilled for our sakes, that he might bear such agonies as belonged to sinful creatures, with a gracious design to deliver us from misery and everlasting death. For ever blessed be the name of *Jesus*, who has suffered such pangs and sorrows in our stead; and blessed be his wisdom and grace, who has appointed the continual repetition of such an ordinance, such a lively memorial of his dying love, to touch all the springs of religious affection within us.

Remark VI. Since the passions of human nature have so considerable an influence in matters of religion, then we justly infer that youth is the proper time to set about the important work of religion, when the passions are warm and lively, and active. After we have been well instructed in the principles of christianity, if we can but engage these sprightly powers of our natures, betimes, on the side of God and godliness, we lay a happy foundation for the practice of piety all our lives. It is of admirable and unknown advantage, to have all the passions of the heart tinged deep with heaven and religion in our early days. By this means virtue and piety will be fixed and rooted in the soul; it will stand the blasts of violent temptation, and bring forth the divine fruits of holiness through the following years. We shall be better prepared to combat every opposition; we shall be better secured against the snares that beset our youth; we shall resist the gay allurements of the world, and the flattering vanities that attack our senses and our souls in this dangerous season of life. It is the great cunning and the design of the devil and the world to work upon the warm passions of youth, to engage them in the service of sin and folly: Happy are those who are possessed of a divine antidote against this poison! who have their passions all watchful and armed, ready to resist the assaults of hell, and to disappoint every attack that is made on virtue and religion!

Remark VII. Is there so much advantage to be expected from the passions in the practice of religion? Then "how much do we lose both of the profit and the pleasure of religion, for want of the engagement of our passions therein!" Therefore it is that virtue and godliness seem to carry with them so dull and heavy an aspect in the world; therefore they appear so little inviting, because there are so few christians, in this degenerate age, that have these affectionate powers of the soul deeply tinged with the things of God. We live at a poor, low, cold rate, when we only talk of christianity as a matter of dispute, and practise the outward devours and ceremonies of it, as a matter of custom and form, while the heart and the passions of it have little share in our christianity. If our love and desire, our hope and our joy, are all laid out on the things of sense and time, and we leave only a few cold reasonings to be employed in the most awful and sublime things of God, and heaven and eternity, it is no wonder we find so little of the pleasure of godliness, and that religion gains so little reputation, and so few followers. O what blessed lives did the primitive disciples of *Christ* enjoy! What divine satisfaction, what heavenly glory, what convincing power attended their practice, when their whole souls, with all their affections, were devoted to God and *Christ*, and engaged in the affairs of the upper world! They lived on earth like the children of heaven, and brought a foretaste of the pleasures of the upper world, into these lower regions. O when shall these holy seasons return again? When shall the noble principles of the christian faith animate all the powers of nature, and make us live as becomes the followers and the worshippers of the holy *Jesus*?

M E D I.

## M E D I T A T I O N.

“MANY and useful are the lessons, which I have now learned from the happy influence of the passions, in the important affairs of my salvation. Blessed be God that I was not born in heathenism, and left merely to the teachings of the philosophers. Even the *stoics*, who were some of the best of them, deprive us of all the advantage of pious affections, and all the pleasurable sensations that may be derived from religion; while they teach us to root the passions, if possible, out of our natures. My soul shall mourn in secret for my sins, and be ashamed of my follies: My heart shall fear and love the Lord my God, and rejoice and hope in *Jesus* my saviour: My spirit with all it's warmest affections are thine, O my God, for ever and ever!

“Let all the sects of philosophy hide their heads, and lie silent; give me the bible, where God himself speaks to me by his prophets and apostles: How divinely excellent are their writings! With what sovereign influence do they address my fear and my hope, by the discoveries of a hell and a heaven! How powerfully do they awaken my repentance for past sins, and melt my soul into holy sorrow! In what an illustrious light do they set the majesty of the blessed God, and command my humble adoration! How do they display the wonders of his wisdom, and the riches of his grace in *Christ Jesus*, to attract all my powers of desire and love! What a blessed foundation have the scriptures laid for an infinite variety of devout inferences and pathetic meditations, suited to my own case? There I find the divine truths that can relieve my soul under every distress; and there I learn the affectionate and devout method of applying them. In every needful hour I will go to the book of God: God and his holy book are my life, and my exceeding joy: Let my soul abide and live upon the divine variety of awful and transporting objects, which are set before me in those sacred pages. Let me be taught with sacred skill to spread abroad my thoughts on the right hand and on the left, and to expatiate on these holy and heavenly themes: They are fountains of life, and every stream flows with holiness and consolation. O may all my affections be under the command and influence of these sacred writings; and while they give me intense delight, let them animate me to uncommon zeal in the practice of every duty!

“And why should not our ministers in all their labours of the sanctuary, imitate their inspired predecessors, the apostles and the prophets, in raising the pious passions of all that hear them? Why should they not talk to men in such warm and pathetic language as God himself uses? Doth not the great God, the author of our nature, know what methods are most effectual to fill our hearts with divine sentiments, to draw us near to himself, and prepare us for heaven? Has he condescended to give us so many glorious patterns of preaching in his word, and shall not all that are employed in the divine work copy out the spirit and fervour, the life and power of these inspired examples? O may this dull and heavy heart of mine ever enjoy the happiness of a fervent and lively ministry, that may not only enlighten my understanding, but warm my heart!

“And since God has ordained that I should be instructed in divine things by men of like passions with my self, may those whom providence has appointed to instruct me, be also examples of pious affection; that while I see their hearts filled with religious fear and holy love, and joy in the Lord, I may also be smitten with the same

religious passions, may catch the holy fire, and find all the train of sprightly and devout sensations conveyed to the very center of my soul!

“Blessed be the wisdom and grace of my God, that has added sensible signs and emblems to the articles of the christian faith. Let me remember, that I was washed with water in the name of the Father, and Son, and holy Spirit; and let me be ever jealous, lest I defile myself again: And when I attend the sacred institution of the supper, let all the springs of pious passion be let loose, while I view the Son of God suffering for my sins: Let me feel the meltings of holy sorrow, and the highest and strongest efforts of gratitude and love to that glorious and divine person who gave himself to death for me.

“Have I heard that youth is a proper season for lively religion, because the passions of nature are then vigorous; Lord, seize all my affectionate powers in this season of youth, and sanctify them to thyself. Prevent the influence of the wicked world by the early impressions of thy grace, that I may resist the vain allurements of flesh and sense, by having those sprightly powers of nature engaged first on the side of religion.

“Or if my years of youth have enjoyed this rich and divine favour, I would remember the early loving-kindness of my God, and praise his name in my advanced years with joy and thankfulness.

“Grant, O Lord, that I may never lose the pleasure of religion, by suffering my affections to grow cold and languid. Quicken this lifeless spirit of mine by daily influences from above: Shine upon my soul, O sun of righteousness; awaken my drowsy powers to active piety and zeal, and let all my passions conspire with my reasoning faculties to promote the interests of religion in my own heart and life, and to diffuse the favour of godliness all around me. Amen.

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## DISCOURSE V.

## The abuse of the passions in religion.

**I**N the two last discourses, we learned the use of the passions in matters of religion, and what advantages may be expected from them, in the christian life: We proceed now to the fourth general; and that is, to enquire into the abuse of the passions in religious concerns, or when the exercise of our affections, in the things of God, may be pronounced irregular, and in what manner they should be limited and restrained, and put under better conduct.

Abuse I. Then are the passions irregularly exercised, “when we suffer them to influence our opinions in religion, and to determine our judgment in any points of faith or practice.” The passions were made to be servants to reason, to be governed by the judgment, and to be influenced by truth; but they were never given us to decide controversies, and to determine what is truth, and what is error. Even the best affections, and those that seem to have a strong tendency toward piety, are not always safe guides in this respect; yet they are too often indulged to sway the mind in its search after truth or duty, as I shall make it appear in several instances.

1. Suppose a person should be exceedingly affected with the unlimited goodness and abounding grace of God; if, by this pious affection towards God and his goodness, he is persuaded to think that God has no such severe vengeance for sinful and rebel-creatures, and that he will not destroy such multitudes of mankind in hell as the scripture asserts, or that their punishment shall not be so long and so terrible as God has expressly declared; here the passion of love and esteem for the divine goodness, acts in an irregular manner, for it takes off the eyes of the soul from his awful holiness and his strict justice, and the unknown evil that is in sin. It prevents the mind from giving due attention to God’s express word, and to those perfections of the divine nature, and his wise and righteous government, which may demand such dreadful and eternal punishment, for the rebellion of a creature against the infinite dignity of its creator and governor.

2. Suppose a christian has most powerful impressions made on the passion of fear by the tremendous ideas of God’s majesty, and his punishing justice, and thence he concludes that the great God will pardon no wilful sins, that he will forgive no repeated iniquities, no sins after baptism and the Lord’s supper, or after vows or solemn engagements, that he will have no mercy upon apostates, even though they turn to him by repentance; this is yielding up truth to the passion of fear, and an abuse of our religious dread of the majesty of God; for such an opinion runs counter to the great design of the gospel, which assures us that “*Christ* came to save the chief of sinners,” 1 *Tim.* i. 15. to remove the guilt of wilful and repeated sins, and to provide forgiveness for some of the most profligate rebels, even for all that renounce their rebellion.

3. Some pious persons have had such an affectionate zeal to honour God, that they have been led by this passion to contrive various forms of service and ceremony, gay and costly rites, with long and painful exercises of devotion, which God never appointed, and have introduced a number of them into his worship. A childish fondness to please the great God with bodily services, has tempted them to forget his own divine prerogative, to prescribe how men should worship him. They have been blinded with this sort of fondness for ceremony, in such a degree, as to lead them far astray from the divine simplicity of worship, which the new testament has appointed.

4. Some persons out of a passionate desire to honour *Christ*, and ascribeth the whole train of their blessings and salvation to him, have been tempted to think that they are to do nothing toward their own salvation, but to lie still and be saved without any labour or care of their own; so that they have sought no more after sanctification and holiness in themselves, than they have sought to make atonement for their own sins. But this zeal has much darkness in it, and betrays them into a gross mistake, as though they could not ascribe their salvation sufficiently to *Christ*, unless they fancied that he came to save them in their sins, rather than to save them from sin.

5. It is possible that a person may have so high an esteem and so excessive a love for some near relation, some christian friend, some wise and pious minister of the gospel, that he sees no fault in them: He imitates all their practice, as though they were perfect patterns; he receives all their opinions for certain and divine truths, and believes every thing which they teach, as though they were infallible, without comparing it with the bible, which is the only test of truth in matters of revealed religion. This affection of love to ministers or christians is certainly irregular, when it tempts us to set up their judgments, their practices and their dictates, in the room of the word of God.

6. Again, it is the same culpable indulgence of our passions to sway our judgment, and bias our understanding, when our souls are warmed with the holy fire of love and devotion under a particular sermon, and we cry out, "This is the best sermon that ever was preached, or the finest that ever was composed." Or, perhaps, your devout affections flag and languish under a sermon; you sit indolent and unmoved, and then the sermon goes for a poor dry discourse, and the man that delivered it for a dull and heavy preacher. Each of these hasty and irregular judgments, built on the passions, is very common to christians, and ought to be corrected.

7. I might add another instance a-kin to the last; and that is, when our devout affections of fear and hope, of holy love and heavenly delight, are raised in a place of public worship, whether at the established church, or among the several denominations of the protestant dissenters, and immediately we conclude, "This is the right of worship, this is most agreeable to the gospel, and these people are the only true church of *Christ*." How weak is this reasoning! And yet how many are there, who have been determined both in their opinion and practice, for or against such a particular community of christians, or mode of worship; and that for their whole life-time, merely by the effects that one or two attendances at such a particular place of worship have had on their affections?

These arguments drawn from the passions, have been often employed to support idolatry and transubstantiation, and all the wild inventions of men in the worship of God. What sighs and tears, what warm affections of sorrow and joy, have been sometimes produced by some ingenious orators in the roman church, in their sermons at *Lent*, when they have held up a crucifix before the face of the people in the midst

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of their discourse? While they set forth the sufferings of our Saviour in most pathetic language, the preachers have fallen down on their knees, and embraced and adored the wooden image: The natural affections of the hearers have been awakened in a very sensible manner, and being mingled with some thoughts of *Christ* and religion, they have fallen down and worshipped the idol, and have imagined all this to be pure devotion and piety towards God, and his Son *Jesus*; and after all they have made their lively passions a sufficient argument that God approved all their fooleries, though, in his own word, he hath expressly forbidden the worship of images.

I have read of another instance; when a poor devout creature hath come to the sacrament of the mass of the romish church, and her passions being raised to a rapturous degree, as she thought, by the presence of *Christ* there, under the form of the consecrated wafer, she hath boldly declared, "should all the men on earth, and all the angels in heaven, join together to assure me, that God himself was not there, I would not believe them, for I have seen him, and felt his divine presence." What a wretched and mischievous abuse of passion is this, when persons shall suffer it to lead them to such unwarranted and sinful modes of worship, and persuade them to believe such strange doctrines, as are not only contrary to the express word of God, but a perfect contradiction to nature, sense, and reason!

Instances of this kind might be still multiplied. I have mentioned these few only to make it appear how unreasonable a thing it is to form our opinions in religion by the influence of the passions.

Abuse II. Then must the affections in matters of religion be pronounced irregular, "when they run before the understanding, or when they rise higher toward any particular object than the judgment directs." As in the foregoing particular, I told you that the passions were not designed to be directing powers of the soul, in the search of truth or duty; so neither are they made to rule all within us; but they are to be governed by reason and understanding: And in whatsoever instances they assume a superiority over the understanding, or run before it, they are excessive and irregular. Let us enter into a few particulars.

I. Some persons as soon as they begin to find further light dawning upon their minds, and are let into the knowledge of some doctrine or sentiment, which they knew not before, immediately set their zeal to work: Their zeal is all on a flame to propagate and promote this new lesson of truth, before their own hearts are well established in it, upon solid reasonings, and before they have considered whether it be a doctrine of great importance, and whether it merit such a degree of zeal. How common a case is it among christians, and too often found among ministers of the gospel, to give a loose to their affections at the first glimpse of some pleasing opinion, or some fresh discovery of what they call truth? They help out the weakness of the proof by the strength of their passions, and by the pleasure they take in the opinion they have embraced. This confirms their assent too soon, and they grow deaf to the arguments that are brought to oppose it. They construe every text in the scripture to support this doctrine, they bring in the prophets and apostles to maintain it. They fancy they see it in a thousand verses of their bibles, and they pronounce all men heretics that dare maintain the contrary opinions. Their conduct in this matter is so vehement, as though every gleam of light were sufficient to determine their faith, because it happens to fire their affections; they grow so warm about it, as though every opinion in religion were fundamental; and so fiery is their zeal, as though every mistake deserved the severest censures.

Nor is this the case of the christians only, with relation to the new opinions they receive: There are too many who take up most of their articles of faith at first with-

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out due examination, and without sufficient argument : Their veneration for great names, or their affection to a particular party, has determined their opinions long ago : Their passions and other prejudices have formed their schemes of doctrines, with the neglect or abuse of their understandings, and yet they pronounce as positively upon truth and error, as though they were infallible. Happy are those whose faith is built on better foundations !

2. Again, there are some persons, when they begin to be convinced that such a particular practice is culpable or unlawful, their indignation is too soon awakened, and rises too high ; immediately they condemn it, as inconsistent with salvation : Their hatred of it grows as violent, as if it were blasphemy or idolatry : They are ready to break out into hard speeches and railing accusations against all that practise it, and pronounce them apostates and sinners of the first rank. The sudden rise and warmth of their passions does not suffer them to consider that there are some faults and follies that a good christian may be guilty of through ignorance or inadvertence ; there are some sins that do not carry in them such malignity and poison as to destroy all our christianity.

3. There have been some weak christians, when they have heard a sermon, or read a discourse full of sublime language and mysterious darkness, and especially, if the style and manner has been very pathetic, and they have been raptured and transported, as though it contained the deepest sense, the noblest truths of religion, and the highest discoveries of grace and the gospel : Whereas, perhaps, there may be scarce any thing in it which has a just agreement with reason or scripture ; but when well examined, it proves to be a mere jargon of words, a mixture of unintelligible and unmeaning sounds, with some affectionate airs among them, whereby their passions were fired, and that without knowledge, and beyond all reason : And it is well, if after these flashes of affection and violent transports, they are not deluded into shameful iniquities. This has been the case of some high pretenders in elder and later days. They have spoken great swelling words of vanity, they are murmurers and complainers against the common rank of christians, but they "walk after their own ungodly lusts ; they turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, and they allure others into lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness ; and while they promise liberty, they are the servants of corruption," 2 *Pet.* ii. 18, 19. and *Jude*, verses 4, 16, 18.

4. This irregular exercise of the affections running before reason, is eminently exemplified also in another weak sort of people, who are very sincere in the main, but if they read an awful and terrible threatening, or if they hear it pronounced in the pulpit with a just degree of authority and proper accent, their fears are raised in an excessive manner, and their soul is filled with long sorrows and doubtings : Or, if they happen to read or hear a sentence of comfort, they are transported with sudden joy, and rise almost to assurance of the love of God : They give themselves up to the sudden efforts of passion, before they suffer themselves to enquire, according to scriptural grounds, whether this text of threatenings, or whether the other sentence of comfort, do really belong to them or no.

There are many other cases, wherein it is evident, that the affections in the things of religion, get the start of the understanding, and run far before it. But I proceed.

Abuse III. It is a very gross abuse of the affections, "when we encourage them to rise high, and grow very warm about the lesser things of religion, and yet are content to be cold and indifferent in matters of the highest importance." There are too many christians whose warmest zeal is employed about the mint, the anise, and the cum-



min of christianity, *Matth.* xxiii. 23. and have few passions awakened or engaged in the weighty things of the law, or the gospel. They are furiously intent upon speculative notions, and some peculiar opinions, that distinguish the little parties of christendom, and crumble the church to pieces: Their fears, their hopes, their wishes, their desires, their grief and joy, are all employed in party-quarrels and in a strife of words: But they are thoughtless and indolent about the momentous duties of love to God, and *Christ*, of justice to men, of charity to fellow-creatures and fellow-christians. So a sickly fancy is fond of trifles, and careless of solid treasures: So children have their little souls wrapped up in painted toys, while the matters of manly life and necessary business awaken no desire, no delight in them.

Suppose a man mourns to see the church of *England* lose ground in the nation, or to see the assemblies of protestant dissenters grow thin and decrease, and yet he finds not his soul grieved, and his heart mourning over the atheism and profaneness of the land, the drunkenness and lewdness, the growing heathenism and infidelity of the age: Or suppose a christian triumphs to see the controversy about baptism well managed, and his joys arise, according as his own opinion is bravely supported, while at the same time he takes little pleasure to hear of the conversion of a sinner, or that a wicked family is grown religious. What shall we think of such a person? Is not his religion in a childish and sickly state? Are not his passions, even about religious objects, managed in a very irregular manner, and worthy of just and severe reproof.

Abuse IV. There is also another evil conduct of the affections, in the matters of religion; and that is, "when they express themselves in an improper or indecent manner, and especially in such a way as is unnatural and un instituted, foolish and ridiculous, savage and barbarous, contrary to the dictates of reason and human nature, or the word of God."

Take for instance, some of the persecutors and idolaters, the bigots and enthusiasts of the church of *Rome*. And I wish such persecution and bigotry, enthusiasm and idolatry, were never found among any other sects of christians.

1. With what furious and burning barbarity do popish persecutors express their zeal for their religion! They arm their tongues and their pens with bitter reproaches, and gall against those who divide from their communion, and would reform their gross corruptions; and they still profess it is out of love to *Christ*, and to the souls of men, that they imprison, cut, burn, torment, and destroy their fellow-christians. O my soul, come not into their secrets, nor learn such unrighteous and bloody zeal!

2. Survey popish idolaters. They imagine they can never shew their affectionate devotion to *Christ* sufficiently, without making images of a crucified man, and placing them continually in their sight, in order to pay their worship to *Christ* by those unappointed mediums. Sometimes they wear these little idols in their bosom, near their heart, and then they think they manifest how much their heart loves him. They kiss these wooden baubles, or their silver figures, with a strange childish fondness, and sometimes bedew them with their tears, to shew their inward affection to *Jesus*, their Saviour. There may be much animal passion, much commotion of nature and the flesh in these practices, with very little spiritual love. Sometimes they make pictures even of God the Father, and then perform their devotions toward them with forbidden ceremonies, and break God's second commandment to express their love to him. Strange and preposterous expressions of love, to practise what he forbids so often in his word, and that upon severe penalties!

3. Turn your eyes now to the romish enthusiasts. God forbid that I should so condemn all that are educated in that church, as though there was no sincere devotion among them, though the church itself is abominably corrupt: But it is well known, that when some of these devotees have fancied themselves possessed with such a sublime love to God, that they have thrown themselves into odd postures and strange disorders of body, and appeared more like distracted persons than sober christians, as though it must be something not human that must express their divine affections. Others have imagined they could never do nor suffer enough to manifest the inward fire of that love to God which dwelt in their heart, and they have contrived what torments they should inflict upon themselves, as they used to express it, for the love of God.

Others, to shew their sorrow for having ever offended him, have not only worn sackcloth upon their skin, but they have scourged themselves, till they have been covered with blood; they have bound themselves with vows to travel bare-foot, and to make long and tedious pilgrimages to distant lands. Some have sent themselves to death by volutary starving; others have tortured and destroyed themselves with excessive thirst; and either made their bodies miserable, or put an end to life to shew their love to God. These are wild and frantic superstitions indeed, extravagant methods of expressing any devout passion, and most of them utterly unlawful. Let us remember, that the religion which God teaches, has nothing in it contrary to the light of nature; nor must our inward piety break in upon the rules of reason and decency, when we would express it by any outward signs.

There are some religious affections, which are very properly expressed and manifested in the common way, whereby nature usually expresses those inward sensations of the soul. Godly sorrow naturally vents itself in groans and tears, *Psal.* vi. 6. Holy joy sometimes by a smile of the countenance, and often by the voice of sacred melody: And this not only appears in the example of the royal *Psalmist*, but in the precepts of the new testament, *Eph.* v. 19. *James* v. 13. "If any be merry, let him sing psalms." Pious and earnest desires of the presence of God, and of his favour, are signified by stretching of the arm towards him, or lifting up the eyes and hands to him, *Psal.* lxxviii. 31. and xxviii. 2. and cxxi. 1, 2. Repentance and shame is naturally signified by down cast eyes or blushing, *Luke* xviii. 13. *Ezra* ix. 6.

Some of the stronger outward appearances, and vehement tokens of inward holy passion, are indeed rather to be indulged in private than in public worship: But in all our behaviour in this respect, let us take heed that the inward affection is sincere, and is the real spring of all the outward signs and expressions. Let us see to it, that we indulge not that practice which our Saviour so much condemns in the hypocrites of his day, *Matth.* vi. 16. Let us make no sad faces, nor put on dismal airs, nor smite the breast with the hand, and disfigure our countenances, merely to make the world believe that we are penitents: Nor let us make ourselves remarkable in public and mixed company, by turning up our eyes to heaven, to tell the world how often we pray in the midst of our secular affairs; though secret prayer may and ought to be sometimes rising to God, and we may lift an eye to him, while we are among men: Nor in public worship should we use frequent and loud groanings, to persuade our neighbours that we are more deeply affected with divine things than they; though devout affection will sometimes vent a groan or a sigh.

But above all, let us take heed lest we make use of these outward colours and forms of passion, to cover the want of inward devotion and piety. We should al-

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ways make our religion appear to the world with a natural and becoming aspect; and in a decent dress to invite, and not forbid those who behold us. Let us take care that we do not disguise our holy christianity, nor make it look like an irrational thing, by unmanly or unbecoming sounds or gestures; lest we thereby expose ourselves to the charge of hypocrisy, and give up our holy profession to the ridicule and contempt of the profane world.

Abuse V. It is an irregular management in the affairs of religion, or an abuse of devout passions, "when we content ourselves with the exercise of these inward and affectionate sensations of the mind, while they have no influence on the holiness of our conversation." Consider, my friends, what were the passions made for? Not merely for the sensible pleasure of human nature, but to give it vigour and power for useful actions. I have but a poor pretence to be a sincere lover of *Christ*, if I rejoice to hear his name repeated often in a sermon, and say never so many affectionate things of him, in the language of the book of *Canticles*, and yet take no care to keep his commandments: Whereas this is the appointed way wherein *Christ* has required his disciples to manifest their love to him: *John* xiv. 15. "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" chapter xv. 14. "Then are ye my friends, if ye do what soever I command you." In vain do I pretend to pious sorrows, in vain do I mourn for some great and grievous sin, in my secret retirements, or in public worship, if my life be spent among the gay follies and vanities of the world; if I run into new temptations whensoever the world beckons to me, and follow every son of mirth that waves the hand of invitation.

True christianity, where it reigns in the heart, will make itself appear in the purity of life. We should always suspect those flatteries of affection, those sudden inward sensations of sorrow or delight, which have no power to produce the fruits of holiness in our daily conversation. The fruits of the Spirit, are found in the life and the heart together, as they are described, *Gal.* v. 22. "Love to God and man, joy in holy things, peace of conscience, and peace with all men, as far as possible, long-suffering, gentleness; goodness, faith, that is, faithfulness, meekness, temperance, and particularly a crucifixion of all sinful affections. Let us never content ourselves with any exercise of lively devotion, unless we feel our corrupt affections in some measure subdued thereby.

O how shameful a sight is it, and what a reproach to the profession of the gospel, to see a christian just come from church and holy ordinances, where his devout affections have been raised and moved, and immediately to find him breaking out into vain, earthly merriment, and carried away with idle and sensual discourse! What a scandal is it to our religion, to see some zealous professors coming down from their closet, where they fancy they have been favoured with holy raptures, and enjoyed much converse with God; where they think they have exercised repentance and love, and holy desires, and yet immediately fall into a fit of rage against their servants or children, for mere trifles, and express their wrath in very unchristian language and indecent behaviour! This is an open contradiction to their profession; and the shop and the parlour, or perhaps the kitchen, gives the lie to the pretences of the closet. O glorious evidence of a disciple of *Christ*, where all the pious passions join to resist every temptation! Where divine love keeps warm at the heart, where it purifies the whole behaviour, and exalts the life of men near to the life of angels!

Abuse VI. That must certainly be a culpable conduct, with regard to our religious affections, "when they are suffered to entrench upon other duties either to God or man, and withhold us from the proper business of our place and station in the world." Though devout passions should be indulged at proper seasons, yet they

should not so far govern all the powers of nature, and engross the moments of life, as to make us neglect any necessary work, to which the providence of God hath called us.

This is the case, when persons find so much sweetness in their religious retirements, that they dwell there too many hours of the day, and neglect the care of their families, the conduct of their children and servants, and other necessary duties of life, and let all things run at random in their household, under the excuse of religion and converse with God: Though I must confess this is so uncommon a fault in our godless and irreligious age, that it may almost pass without censure.

It is the same culpable conduct, when christians experience a sacred and affectionate relish of public ordinances, and they are tempted to run from sermon to sermon, from lecture to lecture, in order to maintain their spiritual pleasures, with a slight and careless performance of relative duties. It is yet more criminal in persons of low circumstances in the world, who would spend all their time in hearing or reading good things, or at some religious assemblies or conferences, while they, grossly and grievously, neglect their common duties of providing for themselves and their children. They are ready to expect, that the rich should maintain them, while they make their devout affections an excuse for their shameful idleness and sloth. Let us remember there is a time for working, as well as a time for praying, or hearing: "Every thing is beautiful in it's season." *Eccles.* iii. 11.

This sort of excessive and irregular affection appears also eminently, when, out of pity to the poor, or love to the public worship of God, dying persons leave vast legacies to the building of churches and hospitals, and endow alm-houses liberally, while their near kindred, and perhaps their own descendants, are in a starving condition, or want the conveniencies of life. He that takes no care of his nearest relations living or dying, is in that respect worse than an infidel. God does not love robbery for burnt-offering, nor does he permit us to abandon our natural affection to our fellow-creatures, to shew our love or zeal for our creator, in such instances as these.

Abuse VII. Religious passion is then certainly exercised in a very irregular and criminal manner, "when we suffer it to degenerate into carnal and vicious affections, and, as the apostle expresses it, in another place, when we begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh." *Gal.* iii. 3. Examples of this kind are too common in the present age of christians.

1. Zeal may turn into wrath and fury. A high veneration for the glorious truths of the gospel, and a warm zeal for the defence of them, has too often degenerated into malice and indignation, against those who differ from us in religious sentiments; and that too in matters which are of small importance to practical godliness. Pious zeal against dangerous errors is a just and laudable thing, when it carries moderation and good temper with it, and does not break out into wrath and malignity against the persons of those who are unhappily betrayed into those mistakes: But, it becomes a guilty passion, and hateful in the eyes of God, our Saviour, when it breaks all the bonds of charity and christian love. The flaming bigot and the persecutor come in, naturally, at every turn for their share of this caution and reproof, as abusers of the passions in the things of God and religion.

When we come sometimes into worshipping assemblies, where a man of burning zeal leads the worship, we find the wildfire of his own passions spreading through the whole congregation. Is it not a shameful thing to hear the preacher railing against his brethren, because they differ a little from him, and will not use some unscriptural modes of expression, or will not admit some favourite explications of a  
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verse of scripture, or will not consent to practise some lesser forms and rites of worship? And it is a matter of equal shame to see many persons, who imagine themselves to be christians of the first rank, take a malicious pleasure to hear such scurrilous reproaches and public railings against their fellow-christians, and curses denounced against them, because they differ in ceremonies and phrases. And the crime is certainly the greater, if these opinions and forms, wherein they disagree, are but of small importance. This is a wretched abuse of passion in the things of God; and yet so deceitful is the heart of man, and so given up to self-flattery, that perhaps both the preacher and the hearers vainly presume they are expressing a sacred love for divine truth, and paying sublime service to God, and their Saviour. What madness is mixed with mistaken zeal!

2. There is another instance of the abuse of the passions, which is very near akin to this, and may stand next in rank; and that is, when we behold the vices of men with holy aversion and hatred, and immediately transfer this hatred to their persons, whereas we ought to pity and pray for them: Or when we see a fellow-christian fall into sin, and because we hate the sin, we hate the sinner too, and suffer our hatred to grow into disdain and irreconcilable enmity, and that even though the offender has given signs of sincere repentance. This is not christian zeal, but human corruption; and such criminal indulgence of the passions, which ought to be mortified, if ever we should be imitators of the holy *Jesus*: He hated even the least sin, but loved and saved the greatest of sinners, and delighted to receive penitents to his love.

3. It is a culpable exercise of the passions, when holy emulation degenerates into envy. At first we admire the virtues of others, we respect their persons highly, we imitate their conduct, and aspire after the same degrees of piety and goodness; we have a holy ambition to equal them in every grace, and in every virtue, and if possible to exceed them; all this is right and worthy of praise: But when I fall short of the attainments of my neighbour, and envy him on the account of his superior character; when I feel an inward displeasure against my brother, because his gifts or graces shine brighter than mine, then the holy affection degenerates, and becomes a lull of the flesh, instead of a fruit of the Spirit.

4. I might give another instance also of this kind; and that is, when love to fellow-christians begins on a spiritual account, between persons of different sexes, and there is a mutual delight in each other's company and pious conversation; but without great watchfulness this christian love may be in danger of degenerating into vicious desires and corrupt passions.

5. It may be worth our notice also, that there is another danger of the degeneracy of a devout passion, when persons of a pious and chearful spirit have taken great delight in singing the praises of God, and meet together at the stated seasons for this purpose; but, in time, this has sensibly sunk into the pleasure of the ear, into a mere natural relish of harmony, and delight of sounds well connected. This may have easily happened, when fine instruments of church-music have been used to assist psalmody, or when persons pride themselves in too nice and delicate a skill in singing, in too exquisite a taste in harmony, even though the words which they sing may be holy and religious.

To guard against these dangers, let christians frequently enter into their own hearts, and endeavour, as far as possible, to examine their spirit and conscience, to distinguish between their inward workings of piety, and the mere exercises of animal nature, or the workings of corrupt affection, and set a constant guard upon their hearts in this respect.

Abuse VIII. The last thing I shall mention, wherein some christians are guilty of an irregular conduct, with regard to their affections in matters of religion, is this; “when they live entirely by their devout passions, and make these the only rules of self-inquiry concerning their temper, their habitual state of soul, and their present frame of spirit, and concerning every thing that belongs to their christianity.” Such persons have little regard to the growth of their knowledge, the improvement of their understanding in the things of God, the steady and fixed bent of their will toward religion, and the constant regular course of a holy conversation. They seem to make all their religion consist in a few warm and pious affections. There are two sorts of persons subject to this mistake.

1. Awakened sinners, who feel their passions of fear and desire excited by some convincing sermon, or awful providence, and the rich doctrines of grace suited to their case and state, raise in them some hopes of heaven, and sensitive commotions of joy. This may continue for many months, and incline them to infer that they are converted from sin to God; and being also in a great measure reformed in their lives, they imagine they are new creatures, and all is safe for eternity: Whereas they never had a heart fixed in the love of God, and in the hatred of every sin; they never became hearty and resolved christians; and, in a little time, their devout passions die, and all their religion vanishes, for it had no root.

2. There are also some real converts, who are but weak, and live too much by their passions. If their hope, and desire and delight, are but engaged and raised high in their secret retirement, or in public worship, then they are good christians indeed, in a heavenly state, and they think exceeding well of themselves: But if, at any time, there is a damp upon their passions, through the indisposition of their animal nature, when they feel not a great degree of animal fervour powerfully assisting their pious exercises, they are ready to pronounce against themselves; they sink into great despondencies, and imagine they have no true grace.

Such christians as these live very much by sudden fits and starts of devotion, without that uniform and steady spring of faith and holiness, which would render their religion more even and uniform, more honourable to God, and comfortable to themselves. They are always high on the wing, or else lying moveless on the ground: They are ever in the heights or the depths, travelling on bright mountains with the songs of heaven on their lips, or groaning and labouring through the dark vallies, and never walking onward, as on an even plain, toward heaven.

There is much danger, lest such sort of professors as these two, which I have mentioned, should deceive themselves, if not in judging of the truth of their graces, yet, at least, in their opinion of the strength or weakness of them, for they judge merely by their affections. Let us watch against this danger, and remember that though the passions are of excellent use in religion, yet they were never designed to stand in the place of reason and judgment, or to supply the room of an enlightened understanding, a sanctified will, and a conversation attended with all the fruits of holiness.

Thus I have finished what I designed to say concerning the abuse of the passions in religion.

The remarks which I shall make on this head of discourse are these three.

• Remark I. “Those christians are best prepared for the useful and pious exercises of their passions in religion, who have laid the foundations of it in a regular knowledge of the things of God.” Let your understanding therefore be fully persuaded of the necessity and excellency of religion, of the duties you owe to God, as your maker and governor; let all your reasoning powers be convinced of the evil of sin,  
of

of the holiness and justice of God, of the danger of eternal death, of the relief and hope that is held forth in the gospel of *Christ*, of the necessity of faith and holiness, in order to eternal happiness; and amidst all the workings of devout affections, maintain a constant exercise of your reason and judgment. The scripture itself was not given us to make the use of our reason needless, but to assist its operations, and to render it more successful in our enquiries into the things of our everlasting welfare. Knowledge and affection should go hand in hand, in all the affairs of religion: The more we know of God, and the things of the upper world, we shall have the stronger spring for our holy passions, and a more secure guard against any excesses and irregularities in the exercise of them.

Remark II. "As it is the business of a preacher to assist the devout passions, so it is part of his work to guard his hearers against the abuse of them.

We have granted and maintained that it is the business of every sacred orator, to raise the affections of men toward the things of God: Let him therefore manage his divine arguments, in such a manner, as to awaken the fears, the hopes, the desires the penitent sorrows, and the pious joys of the whole assembly, in a sublime degree; but, in order to secure them from excesses and irregularities of every kind, let him lay the foundations of their religion in clear ideas of divine things, and in a just and proper explication of the holy scriptures.

When he has a mind to lead his hearers into any particular religious sentiments, which he firmly believes to be true, and which he supposes useful to their edification, let him not begin with their passions, and address himself to them in the first place: He must not artfully practise upon these warm and animal powers, before he has set these doctrines or sentiments of his, in a fair and convincing light, before the eye of their understanding, and their reasoning faculties: The affections are neither the guides to truth, nor the judges of it, nor must the preacher set them to their sprightly and fervent work, till he has informed the mind by clear explication and sincere argument. The sun in the heavens gives us a fair document in this case: His light comes before his heat: The dawn of the morning grows up by degrees, and introduces the fervours of noon. So let the preacher diffuse his light over the assembly, before he kindle their warm affections. Let him convince their reason and judgment of the truth of every article of religion, which he persuades them to believe; let him shew the duty and the necessity of every part of holiness, which he prescribes for their practice. Let him imitate that noble pattern of divine oratory, *Apollos at Ephesus*, who "was an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, he was fervent in spirit," and could raise the passions of those that heard him, yet he was willing to kindle the flame of his own oratory by the light of his own understanding, and when he himself "had learned the way of God, more perfectly, he mightily convinced the *Jews* by divine argument, and shewed them by the scriptures, that *Jesus* was the *Christ*, *Acts* xviii. 24—28. Then there was a proper way made for his following zeal and fervour to display themselves.

Remark III. If the passions are of such eminent service in religion, and yet they are in danger of unruly excesses, "how much need have we to beg earnestly at the throne of grace, that they may be all sanctified?" It is only the sanctifying influence of the blessed Spirit, that can excite them in a due degree, and can give them proper limits and regulations. It is nothing but divine grace can raise them to a due height, on all just occasions, and yet preserve them from any irregular conduct and unhappy effects.

In this sinful state of corrupt nature, we are averse to the things of God: Our passions are violent toward sensible objects, but are hardly moved by the most important

tant discoveries in religion. It is God alone who can correct and change their corrupt bias, and give them a divine tendency. They are so ready to take a wrong turn, and sometimes to make wide mischief, even in the matters of religion, that God alone can keep them constant in their right situation and course. They are living wheels of strong and powerful movement in human nature, but they make wretched work if they are not put in motion by a regular and happy spring. They are glorious and noble instruments of religion, when under good conduct, but they are ungovernable and mischievous powers, when they go astray; and they are also too prone to wander from their proper place and duty. Let it, therefore, be the matter of our daily prayer, that we may be "sanctified throughout in body, soul and spirit." *1 Thess. v. 23.* and that every faculty of our nature may lend it's proper aid to the kingdom of grace within us, till we are trained up by the piety of this present state, and made fit for the unknown exercises of a sublimer sort of devotion in the kingdom of glory.

### M E D I T A T I O N.

**W**HAT a wide and unhappy ruin has the fall of man spread over all the powers of our souls! Our understanding is darkened, our will grown perverse, and our passions corrupt and irregular in their exercises; and even when they are engaged about the things of God, their conduct is not always wise and holy. We have seen what glorious instruments they are, when managed by the hands of divine grace, to promote piety and goodness: But if they are left to themselves, they will sometimes make wild mischief, even in the sacred concerns of religion.

"Guard and secure me, O my God, against those false lights which my affections may cast upon the objects I converse with, and so delude my judgment. Suffer me not to be imposed on by the false colours, in which my passions may happen to dress up error, and make it look like truth. Let my judgment be always directed steadily by the reason of things and the discoveries of thy word, and not by the delusive flatteries of the passions. Let me remember that these were not given for my guides in the search of duty or truth; they were not made to teach me what is false and what is true, but to awaken me with the greater zeal to pursue truth, and to practise whatever I learn to be my duty.

"May I be so happy as always to lay solid reason and scripture for the foundation, whence my devout affections may take their rise, and ascend high toward God! Let them never flutter in the dark, nor break away from the government of my understanding; that if, at any time, my conscience calls me to account for the warmest and boldest flights of my pious affections, I may be able to support and justify them all upon the foot of reason, and by the divine examples and encouragements of the word of God.

"If, at any time, my zeal has been too fervent about the lesser matters of christianity, while it has been cold and listless in the things of the highest importance, I would take shame to my self in the sight of God and men. Blessed *Jesus*, never suffer my anxieties, my fears, my desires, and my joys to rise, but in due proportion to the worth and importance of their objects. Let my name never be numbered among those men of irregular zeal, "who strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. *Matt. xxiii. 24.* When I read or hear of the idolaters and the bigots of the church of *Rome*, in what a strange childish manner, and with what ridiculous fopperies they express their love to God and *Christ*, and to saints departed; when I read how they scourge



scourge their bodies to shew their sorrow for sin, and put their flesh to torments which God never appointed nor required; when I have been told how they cut and burn and destroy their fellow-christians, animated by a supposed zeal for God and his church, I bless God that I have been taught better methods of expressing my devout affections. "Come not, O my soul, into their secrets, to their assemblies be thou not united." *Gen.* xlix. 6. Nor let my religion make me sour and unsociable; nor let me indulge awkward gestures, or put on a distorted countenance, nor appear with any unmanly or unbecoming airs, to express the inward workings of my heart. I am afraid of all those outward forms which would turn piety into contempt, before an ungodly world, who take all occasions to ridicule things sacred.

"I would remember that religion does not consist in a warm flash of affection, or in sudden efforts of devout joy, where holiness has no settled root in the heart, nor any visible fruits in the conversation. Let me be all of a piece, and if my christianity raises my pious passions in the church, or in the closet, may the same christian spirit be found in all my daily behaviour: May it regulate my words and adorn my actions, that God, angels, and men may see the golden thread of religion running through my heart and life, in an uniform manner, in all times, places, and stations.

"Never let my devotions break in upon any part of other necessary duties which I owe to God or man: The great God does not permit sacrifice to stand in the room of works of mercy, nor will he allow of robbery for a burnt-offering. Remember this, O my soul!

"Help me, O my God, to keep up my pious affections to their own character, and let them not degenerate into a vicious or criminal temper of mind. Suffer not my zeal against error to turn into fury against a mistaken brother. Teach me to pity the man while I endeavour to cure his unhappy mistakes by the only methods which *Christ* has appointed, by gentle reasoning, by arguments drawn from scripture, by the winning arts of love and goodness, and by earnest prayer for his recovery from the error of his way. Let me watch against every instance wherein holy affections may be corrupted and turned into vice or folly.

"Though I desire to have my passions deeply tinged by the things of God, yet I would not live entirely by the efforts of devout passion, nor judge of my state and frame merely by these sorts of emotion. It is possible that sudden flashes of affection may sometimes deceive our judgment, and make us determine suddenly and unjustly, concerning our selves and our state godward. Let my religion and love to God be deeply rooted in the mind, and in the principles of solid knowledge; let my will be strongly and unchangeably inclined towards God and things heavenly; and let my love and hope, my desire, my sorrow, and my joy, be all awake and engaged, in proper seasons, to promote the divine work within me, and make blessed advances daily toward the world of perfection." Amen.

# DISCOURSE VI.

The affectionate christian vindicated, and the sincere soul comforted under his complaints of deadness, &c.

**W**E have seen what are the various advantages that may be derived from the exercise of the passions, in the concerns of religion; and we have taken notice of the irregularities to which they are liable, and have endeavoured to guard against the abuse of them.

We proceed now to the fifth general head of discourse which was proposed, and that is to vindicate the affectionate christian from the unjust reproaches of men, in his warmest exercises of love to God and devotion. Surely one would think there appears sufficient reason for pious souls to indulge their most lively affections in worship, and that without any abuse of their reason, or abasement of their religion. These inward sensations of holy delight, these secret joys which a stranger intermeddles not with, these experimental parts of godliness may be set in a rational light, and be justified to the understanding of men. What is there in all this account of a christian's love to God, and the regulated exercise of pious passions, that is not agreeable to solid reason, and to the natural notions that we have of God and our duty, as well as to the brighter discoveries we have by divine revelation? What is there in all these workings of a holy soul, but what is the just and proper result of the nature of man, as an inferior spirit, in the present circumstances of flesh and blood meditating on God, the infinite and supreme Spirit, with a lively hope of his favour and acceptance?

Will the deist and the infidel tell me, that "this is all mechanical religion, the mere effect of animal nature, the visionary scenes of fancy, and the boilings of a warm imagination?" Will they laugh at all this account, and say, "there is nothing in it but the passionate ferments of flesh and blood, which we mistake for a reasonable religion and worship?" I would enter the lists with them, even upon the foot of reason, and justify these sensations of experimental christianity, by a few plain and gradual steps of argument.

1. Is not the great God the creator and supreme governor of all things? Is he not the most glorious and most excellent spirit? Is he not a being of infinite majesty, of holiness, and of mercy? Is he not a God of awful sovereignty, a wise ruler, and righteous judge? Is he not kind and compassionate toward his humble and obedient creatures? Is he not a fountain of eternal blessedness, and an all-sufficient and everlasting good to those that seek and serve him? Is he not a God that hath terrors to vindicate his government, and to punish those that break his law? Is not this the God that the wiser and better sort of heathens acknowledged, and do acknowledge as well as the christians?

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2. Is not the mind of man made capable, in some measure, of knowing this God? And are we not bound to acquaint ourselves with him? Is not man therefore bound to get these notions and ideas of the attributes of God, his maker, represented to his mind, in the truest, the fairest, and the strongest light? Or, are the faintest and the feeblest notions of our creator, the best? Are we not under an obligation sometimes to recollect these ideas of God when we come to converse humbly with him? Should we not endeavour to bring them fresh and strong into our memory, and to make his majesty and his mercy, as it were, present to our souls, by the fullest and brightest conceptions we can form, when we come to worship before him, when we address him with prayer for any blessing that we want, or when we praise him for any mercies we have received from him?

3. Ought not this knowledge, this holy remembrance of God, to influence the other powers of our nature? Doth not conscience itself tell the deist, that his own sentiments of so glorious a being demand his highest honour, and his humblest worship? Do not his own thoughts require of him a behaviour agreeable to all those high conceptions which he hath of the perfections of the divine nature? Are not our minds bound to think of him with high esteem? Are not our wills bound to resolve upon obedience to this wise and holy governor, and to submit with patience to all his providences? Are not our eyes made to contemplate his works, and ought we not to give him the honour of his wisdom and power, that formed this world of wonders which our eyes behold? And are not our tongues obliged to speak honourably of him, and to render him a just revenue of praise? Is it not our duty to offer the tribute of our lips in thankfulness for a thousand blessings we receive from his bounty and beneficence?

4. Are not our passions or affections a particular power of human nature that owes God some honour as well as the understanding and will, the eyes and the tongue? Were not these affectionate powers made to be excited by thoughts of the mind, and to be exercised agreeably to the judgment and conscience? Or are the passions the only powers of our nature that owe no homage to the God that made them, and must not be employed in his service?

Many of the affections are pleasing to nature in their various exercises, and can they not have leave to be employed in piety? Must religion be made so dry and tasteless and melancholy a thing as to forbid all pleasure? Have we not permission to love God the most amiable spirit, whose perfections and glories surpass all created beings? Must we never take delight in God, the author of our nature, and the source of eternal blessedness? Is religion the only thing whence all pleasing affection must be for ever banished and excluded? And must I withhold all these pleasant and powerful sensations of nature from intermingling with the things of God? Hath my wise and merciful creator given me such a faculty as admiration, and may I admire the heavens and the earth, the fishes, the beasts, and the birds, and not admire that all-wise and almighty being that made me and them? May I lay out my wonder on any thing, or on every thing besides the great God, who created all these wonders? Hath he formed my soul to delight and love, and hath he confined these sweet and pleasurable capacities only to be employed about creatures, when the creator himself is infinite and supreme in loveliness? Will not this most amiable of beings expect that I should love himself, and give me leave to make him my delight? Is it lawful for me to fear a lion or an adder, a whirlwind or a flash of lightening, and may I not indulge a holy and solemn dread of that glorious being that made lightnings and whirlwinds, adders and lions, and has unknown thunders in reserve for profane sin-

ners? Doth he give me leave to mourn and weep for the loss of my ease or my health, or my friends, and may I never indulge my sorrow, to arise for all my multiplied offences against his law, my former rebellions against his government, and my refusals of his grace?

Thus far I have begged leave for the passions to assist religion, and I think reason gives an ample permission. But I may rise to bolder language here, and pronounce my argument with stronger force, if I should resume the first part of this head of reasoning, and make all these enquiries turn upon the point of obligation and duty. Since I know this God to be infinite in goodness, and the author of all my comforts, am I not bound to love him with all my strength, and with all my soul? If he is a being of sovereign power, holiness and justice, ought I not always to fear before him, and to grieve heartily that I have offended against his holy laws? Is it not my duty to mourn for sin, and to be ashamed of my unnatural and unreasonable conduct? And doth not God require, that I should rejoice before him with thankfulness, when I have some hope that he hath accepted my submission, pardoned my sin, and holds me in his favour and love?

But let me proceed yet further in this argument, and say, have not my passions themselves been too often engaged in folly and sin? And must they do nothing for the interests of religion and virtue? Hath not the great and blessed God been affronted and dishonoured by these warm and active powers of my nature? And may not he make some reprisals on them, by leading them captive by his grace, and devoting them to his own service? Must the passions which have been defiled with so much iniquity, and which have helped to defile the soul, never be refined? Never be sanctified? Never attempt to restore that tribute of honour and obedience to the great God, of which they have long defrauded him? Have I loved vanity? Have I delighted in sin? Has my desire, my hope and my joy, been heretofore employed on criminal objects? And must these affections of desire and hope, of love and delight, be forbid to pursue objects divine and heavenly, and be for ever excluded from all pious employment? Have I grieved for the loss of a sinful pleasure, or been angry with my brother, and hated him without a cause? And ought I not to turn the stream of my wrath and hatred against my sins, and to give a loose to the passion of grief, and pious sorrow for my guilty behaviour toward God and man? Are these faculties of my nature capable of sinning only, and incapable of practising virtue and goodness? Or is it not lawful to attempt to employ them in the service of religion?

Let the deists, and the men of cold philosophy tell me, that virtue and piety, and goodness, consist only in sublime ideas of God, and in a will devoted to him; and that it is only the pure affections of the mind or spirit, that are to be exercised toward God and religion; but the motions of flesh and blood must have nothing to do here, nor passions of the animal have any part or share in the religion of the man.

To such objectors I would reply thus;

5. Is it possible that the purest affections can be exerted in any vigorous efforts in our present state of mortality, but flesh and blood will feel and follow them a little? Can these sublime ideas of the blessed God, and these pure and spiritual affections be raised to any high degree, but the powers and passions of animal nature will be suitably touched and moved, at least in some degree, according to the natural temper? All persons are not equally capable of warm affection, and vigorous ferments of blood: But there is not a son or daughter of *Adam*, without some degree of these natural emotions. They have been felt by wise and holy men, that have lived in all

ages

ages of the world ; and it must be so, in some measure, while we are such a composition of flesh and spirit.

I grant, indeed, that some such cold and indifferent worshippers as can make this objection, whose religion consists only in a philosophical thought of the great God, and a devout wish perhaps once in a week or two, may not feel any of these sensible effects in animal nature. Those also may be excepted who are brought up in a mere round of forms, and never say their prayers, but at the sound of a bell, and a public hour ; I except also those popish devotees, who mutter over their *latin* service, “ their pater-nosters” and “ave-maria’s” by tale, and drop their beads, to count their prayers right, and to secure themselves from mistaking the number. All these sorts of worshippers may join in the same opinion, and renounce their affections in their religion, and that for this reason, because they have not religion enough to employ them. But where a constant and supreme love to God is the real spring that moves us to our duties, the rest of the natural passions will have some correspondent share in the work. And it is a very false way of judging for these kinds of people, to compare all men with themselves, and make their cold indifference, and their lazy practice the standing model of the religion of all mankind.

Let us suppose for once, that we were confined to the mere religion of nature ; hath it not been sufficiently proved, that reason and the light of nature provide for the passions some share of employment, even in natural religion ? And it is to be feared, that it is not merely the unbelief of christianity, but the want of serious inward religion of any kind, that inclines the infidels of our age, to oppose and ridicule the exercise of devout affection. Is not the book of *Psalms* a noble and sublime collection of lyric poetry ? Are not several parts of these sacred odes confined to such notions and practices in religion, as the light of nature and reason dictates ? Now if these persons had true piety at heart, one would think they should rejoice in these sprightly and pious compositions, and use them as a help to raise their souls to God, their creator, in love and praise. Will they make this excuse, that the language is too warm, too much animated and pathetic, that there is too much of the beauty of metaphor, too many bright images that strike powerfully upon the passions, whereas the religion of nature, in their opinion, is a more calm and sedate thing ? Surely it is much to be feared and suspected, that their prayers and their praises, and all their pretences to piety, will go but a little way to raise their souls to heaven, when their modes of worship cannot bear the language of such devout affection, and admit of no elevations above calm ideas and sedate indolence.

But I return to my vindication of the affectionate christian, in his warmest exercises of devout passion.

I might proceed much farther on this point, and say, when the affections are impressed and awakened to a powerful exercise, by divine truths, will not these lively powers have a farther and a reflexive influence on the mind and the will ? Do they not sensibly impress the ideas of divine things with much stronger force on the mind ? Do they not set all the affairs of religion in a more lovely and attractive light ? Do they not confirm the will in all it’s holy resolutions for God and heaven ? Have they not often been found to stamp divine things on the memory and conscience, with more lasting efficacy ? Do not the devout passions awaken the latent images of fancy, and dress all the chambers of the soul with divine ideas and ornaments ? And have they not, by this means, assisted the soul to maintain it’s constant converse with heaven ? Is it not in the power of the sacred passions to raise and brighten the language of the tongue, as well as command the tears of the eye-lids, and the smiles of the counte-

nance? Are not our hope and our fear given us to be living spurs to duty, and wakeful guards against temptation and disobedience; and do they not often employ the hands and the feet, direct the eyes, and awaken the voice? Will not holy love and joy give a lively and pleasing motion to the blood and spirits? And the hope of having sin forgiven, and our souls made for ever happy, excite a thousand pleasures in human nature? Will it not fill the soul with overflowings of gratitude, and make the lips abound in expressions of joy and praise? And will not these be attended with a peaceful and pleasing aspect, and establish a sweet serenity in the heart and eyes? And all concur to maintain religion in the power and the joy of it?

Christians, be not afraid of professing the pleasures of religion. These men of pretended reason are vanquished at their own weapons, when they dare deride your converse with God, and fight against the inward power of your devotions. Be ye convinced therefore, and be established in this truth, that it is not the warmest exercise of our affections, that can be ridiculous in religion, when they are excited by a just apprehension of divine things: But then it is, the passions are justly censured, when they are indulged to raptures in the confusion and darkness of the mind; when they flutter and make a tumult in the twilight of the understanding, or when they are raised high by mere enthusiasm, and the visions of fancy, without the solid foundation of knowledge and judgment to support them, as I have shewn in a foregoing discourse.

Give diligence therefore, O my friends, to improve in the knowledge of God the Father, and in the gospel of our Lord *Jesus Christ*! Maintain your humble converse with heaven, labour and strive in meditation and prayer, till you get near the seat of God, and find sweet access to his throne, through the blood of *Christ* and the aids of the blessed Spirit: Awaken all the springs of holy love and divine joy. These sacred pleasures will animate you to every duty; will be a guard to your souls against temptation, and give you courage to stand the ridicule of an unbelieving age: These divine refreshments like the heavenly manna, will support your spirits through all the wilderness, and make your travels easy and delightful: These will lead you on with joy to the promised land, and prepare you to dwell for ever with that God, with whom you have here enjoyed so long and blessed a correspondence.

We proceed now to the sixth general.

Since it appears to be a matter of such importance to have the affections engaged in the affairs of religion, some humble and sincere souls may be ready to pronounce hard things concerning themselves, and conclude they have no true religion, because they feel their affections but little moved: We proposed therefore, that

The sixth general head of discourse should offer some "consolations to such honest and humble christians, who endeavour to love and serve the Lord their God with all their powers, but find very little of this exercise of the pious passions in comparison with what others feel." Let me address such persons as these in the following manner.

1. Since you doubt whether you love God with all your heart, that is, with your warmest affections, "search and enquire with holy fear, and with the greater diligence, whether you love him with all your mind, with all your soul, and with all your strength." Do you love him with all your mind? Have you the highest esteem of him in your judgment as the most excellent and best of beings, and as your only-sufficient good? Do you love him with all your soul? Have you chosen him for your eternal portion, both in this world and that which is to come? Is your will firmly resolved for God and religion? Are you sincerely willing to forsake every sin and

and to return to God, to give up yourself to him as your Lord and ruler, and receive him as your God and reconciled Father, according to the discoveries of his grace in *Christ Jesus*? Do you love him with all your strength? Do you desire to obey and serve him all your days? Do you worship him with holy diligence, and promote his honour in the world, according to the utmost of your capacity?

If you find these things wrought in you, and done by you, you have abundant reason to take comfort in this evidence of your christianity. Where the mind and will are sincerely engaged on the side of God and religion in this manner, the love of the heart is not utterly wanting; the affections must be in some measure sanctified, though perhaps you may not feel so frequent, so powerful, and so lively an exercise of them as other christians may enjoy. These things are a better proof of true faith and real piety, than a sudden flash of affection can be, where these more steady operations of the mind and will are wanting.

II. Though all the sons and daughters of *Adam* have some degrees of passion in their very frame and nature, yet remember that the temper of all men is not equally affectionate. Consider now and enquire, whether your temper has so much of these affectionate principles wrought in it, as some of your neighbours may possess: There are some of a much calmer and more sedate constitution; their passions of desire and joy, of fear and hope, of sorrow and anger, are seldom moved about earthly things; and then it is no wonder that they are not so sensibly impressed with things heavenly: God requires no more than he gives; where he has wrought these pathetic principles in the constitution, he requires the exercise of them in the things of religion: But where persons are of a more dispassionate and a calmer frame, there God will require less of the sensible exercises of affection in the christian life. *2 Cor. viii. 12.* "If there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man has, and not according to what he has not."

I confess if you have warm and lively passions for all other things, and none at all for God and religion and heavenly objects; if your fear, joy, sorrow, and desire are vigorous in their emotions, and are immediately raised by the affairs and occurrences of this life, and yet lie always asleep with regard to divine things, it is a very bad sign indeed, and has a very unfavourable aspect on the case of your soul: For "where much is given, much shall be required," *Luke xiv. 48.*

III. "Consider what is your present stage of life: Are you in the flower of youth, when all the powers of nature are active, when the passions are warm and lively; Or are you in the decay of nature, and on the verge of life? Is old age coming upon you, or is it already come, when the animal powers are weakened, when the operations of flesh and blood are more languid?" An old man cannot have those lively passions and appetites with regard to sensible things as belong to the years of youth and the vigor of nature. Old *Barzillai* could not feel his desires awakened and tempted to dwell at court by all the dishes of a royal table, or the sprightly music, or the rich entertainments there; *2 Sam. xix. 35.* And therefore it is no wonder, if the devout passions be then more languid and unmoved. An aged christian may have the most fixed resolution for God, and the firmest principles of piety rooted in his soul; he may do much service for God, and in this sense "may flourish and bring forth fruit in old age," *Psal. xcii. 14.* and may have great advancements in real godliness, though there may be few such sensible evidences of it, given to himself or to his neighbours, in the lively motion of his pathetic powers.

But on the other hand, it is a very sad and melancholy symptom, if the evil passions of covetousness, of anger, of revenge, of envy, reign and exert themselves with

with violence in old age, while there is little or nothing of warm affection exercised in the things of religion.

IV. "Let humble and sincere christians remember also for their encouragement, that though spiritual things may be the chief object of our hope and desire, yet our passions may not always be so powerfully impressed by them as they are by sensible and carnal things, and the reason is because they are spiritual and invisible."

The passions which are wrought into our present frame, belong partly to animal nature, as well as to the mind; and therefore, the things of sense are nearer akin to them: They touch and strike our passions sooner, and awaken them to more vivacity, and engage them with more vehemence than things which are unseen. The passions are certain principles in man which depend much on flesh and blood, and therefore, they are more naturally impressed by things that strike our eyes and our ears, and by them find a way to their hearts. It is possible that God and heaven may be really more beloved than men and this earth, though the animal powers of joy, hope, fear, and desire, may not be so sensible and vehement in their operations toward spiritual absent and future objects, as towards things present and sensible. There is not therefore sufficient ground to conclude that we do not love God above creatures, because we sometimes feel the more passionate exercises and commotions of flesh and blood about creatures, than we do about God himself: And indeed were it not for this reasonable salvo, this spring of consolation, a multitude of christians would be ready to give themselves up to despair, and I doubt there would be very few of us who would not have reason to suspect the truth and power of our inward religion.

Yet I cannot conclude without this observation,

In the last place, that "what comfortable evidences soever of our love to God may be derived from the high esteem of him in our minds, and the attachment of our wills to him, yet these evidences and comforts will be greatly brightened and increased by feeling the affectionate love of God in the heart." To love the Lord our God, with all the mind and with all the soul, and with all the strength, becomes more glorious when it influences the affectionate powers of the heart to join in the practice of religion.

It is granted that the mere flashes of sudden passion in a devout moment, without a settled supreme esteem of God in the mind, without a firm attachment of the will to him, and careful obedience to his commands, will yield but small and feeble consolation in a time of trial and enquiry: The hearers who "receive the word like seed in stony ground are said to receive it with joy," but their religion was but a flash; it "endured but for a short season; it sprung up on a sudden and quickly withered, because it had no root" in the understanding and the will, *Matth.* xiii. 20, 21. Yet it is better, infinitely better to find and feel that we love God with all our powers; we should therefore use all proper methods to stir up our drowsy affections, and engage them in divine things, that we may live in the pleasures of godliness as well as in the power of it, and have our hopes rising high and approaching to the joys of heaven, while we dwell here on earth. What these proper methods are, whereby the devout passions may be raised, will be the subject of our next enquiry.



## M E D I T A T I O N.

**I**T is strange that any person should cavil against the exercise of the warmest affections of man in the things that relate to the great God, and in matters of our own immortal interest. It is strange to hear any dispute arise against the engagement of our strongest and most sprightly powers in the service of the best of beings, and our eternal friend. O may I know him, and love him, and fear him, and delight in him, as becomes a creature to fear and to love a God, that is, in a supreme degree. In vain shall the world assault me with their keenest reproaches, in vain shall a bantering and godless age attempt to laugh me out of countenance for indulging the divine sensations of religion. Let them tell me, "It is mere animal nature and the caprices of flesh and blood," let them charge me with enthusiastical folly and feverish heats of religion, I dare pronounce boldly in the face of ridicule and scandal, that the prudent affectionate christian in his devoutest hours does nothing beneath the dignity of reason, nor unbecoming the character of the wisest of men. I have *David* and the prophets, I have *Christ* and his apostles engaged on this side of the question by their own practice, and I shall count it my honour to be a humble imitator of such blessed patterns.

"O may I find the secret joys of religious retirement, joys which a stranger intermeddles not with! May I feel some pious affection animating me to all the duties of the christian life! May I see myself rising high above earthly things with holy contempt, mounting as on eagles wings toward heaven; and then I shall not be frightened nor discouraged at all the arrows of reproach that are shot against me. The affectionate christian has much more reason on his side than all those indolent worshippers, those dry and joyless creatures, those cold pretenders to religion, who have renounced their affections in the things of God, and creep on at a low and groveling rate, feeding only on some natural truths and speculations without life, power, or pleasure.

"But if I find my natural temper has very little of the pathetic composition in it, and that my affections by nature are not so vigorous as those of my neighbour; if I feel the more vehement efforts of love and fear and holy sorrow, and pious pleasure sink and decline, through the decay of nature or growing age, I will comfort myself with this, that it is the desire of my soul to have all it's powers and passions engaged for God in their most vital and active exercises.

"If at any time I am so unhappy as to feel my affections exert themselves, in a more vigorous manner, towards the objects of flesh and sense which are present, than they do toward things absent, divine and heavenly, I would mourn over the frailty of human nature in this present state, where we are so much attached to the things of this body. I will endeavour through divine grace "to love the Lord my God with all my mind, and with all my soul," to raise him higher in the esteem of my judgment, to cleave to him more firmly by a resolute bent of my will, to abide daily with him, and live upon him, as my all-sufficient and everlasting good, that I may attain some comfortable establishment in the hope of his love: And when my flesh and heart, and all my animal powers shall fail me, I may still rejoice in having God for my God, who will be the strength of my heart, the life of my spirit, and my portion for ever." *Psal. lxxiii. 26.* Amen.

D I S-

# DISCOURSE VII.

## Means of exciting the devout affections.

**W**E are now come to

The last thing designed in these discourses, and that is to propose a “ few proper methods, whereby the affections of nature may be awakened and employed in the christian life.” Take them in the following order.

I. See to it that the leading and ruling faculties of the soul, viz. the understanding and the will, be deeply and firmly engaged in religion. Let the mind be well furnished with divine knowledge, and the will be as resolutely bent for God and heaven.

Where the understanding has but a poor and scanty furniture of the things of God, the pious affections will have the fewer springs to raise them: And if our ideas of divine things are obscure and confused, our passions are in great danger of running wildly astray, and of being led away by every delusion. Seek therefore not only a large and plenteous acquaintance with the things of God, but endeavour, as far as possible, to get clear and distinct conceptions of them, that the pious passions may have solid ground whence to take their rise.

And then let your will be steadily set for God without weakness or wavering. If the resolves and purposes of the heart be feeble and doubtful, the affections will never rise to any high degree in a regular or lasting manner.

But I have said so much on these points that I shall not enlarge here. If the mind and will are sanctified, it is certain, according to the very frame of our natures, that the passions will in some degree follow the influence of these governing faculties. Why is it our passions are suddenly alarmed and so warmly influenced by the things of this world? It is because our minds have too high a value for them, our wills are too much attached to them, we place our happiness too much in them. *Matth. vi. 21.* “ Where the treasure is, the heart will be also:” The heart with all its passions. Why are our desires, our longings, our fears, and hopes, our sorrows, joys, and resentments so keen, and so intense about the things of life? It is because these things are too much esteemed as our treasure, our portion, our inheritance. If God be our portion, *Christ* our life, and heaven our inheritance, and our home, then our affections will be set on the things that are above, where *Christ* is at the right hand of God.” *Col. iii. 1, 2.*

II. “ Engage the most powerful and governing passion for God, that is, the passion of love:” All the train of affections will obey its ruling power and influence, they will all follow its motions and sovereign dictates, as was made evident in the second discourse on this subject. And we have shewn you before, that in order to excite divine love in our hearts, we must meditate frequently on these things, viz. what the great and blessed God is in himself, what he has done for us, what he daily does

does for us, and what he has promiſed to do, both in this life, and the life to come.

Never be eaſy, or at reſt, therefore, if you find your love to God flag and languish; for then the other affections will grow cold and lifeleſs in religion. Take all opportunities to warm your heart with this ſacred paſſion, and to re kindle the fire of divine love within you, when at any time you find it declining.

III. “ Watch carefully againſt the too ſtrong attachment of your affections to creatures: Remember that this world is at enmity with God,” *James* iv. 4. “ If any man love this world, the love of the Father is not in him,” *1 John* ii. 15. Where the love of the world is habitually prevalent, the love of God is not found; for God is the ſupreme good, and the moſt lovely of beings, and he counts that love as nothing which is not ſupreme. “ No man can ſerve two maſters. You cannot ſerve God and mammon.” *Matth.* vi. 25. that is, the true God, and the god of riches: And we may ſay by the ſame rule, you cannot love the true God, and the god of honour and ambition, or the god of ſenſuality and carnal pleaſure. A God carries a ſupreme idea, and demands all the ſoul.

Not only unlawful objects, and ſinful pleaſures, but even ſenſible delights, poſſeſſions, and enjoyments, which are lawful, take too faſt hold on the heart, and draw it away from God. Remember that the creatures around you have this advantage, that while God is a ſpirit, an unſeen being, the creatures are ever ſtriking upon our eyes or ears; they are ever making their court to our ſenſes and appetites, and have a thouſand ways to inſinuate themſelves into the heart. The world, and the flattering enjoyments of it, are ſuited to work upon fleſh and blood, and to draw off the ſoul from God it’s center and it’s reſt: They are ever near at hand on all occaſions, and they are ready ſometimes to ſay, “ Where is your God?” Keep your God therefore, always, near you, and watch againſt the pleaſing flattery of alluring creatures, leſt your heart cleave too faſt to them, and be thereby divided from your God.

Amidſt all the endearing relations and engaging buſineſſes of life, ſingle your ſelves, as much as poſſible, for God, and let not many things dwell too near your ſoul, leſt you loſe the ſight of your heavenly Father, and the pleaſing ſenſations of his love. Where the love of ſenſible things prevails, it draws with it all the long train of hopes and fears, of deſires, joys, and ſorrows; of painful heart-aches, and fond wiſhes, and keen reſentments. Thus the affectionate powers of nature are carnalized, are tinctured deep with the things of earth, and become too much eſtranged from God and heaven.

Whenſoever you find a tempting creature taking too faſt hold of your paſſions, ſet a guard of ſacred jealousy upon it; keep your heart at a holy diſtance from that creature, leſt it twine about your inmoſt powers, and draw them off from their allegiance and duty to God your creator. The love of God is a flower of divine original, and of the growth of paradise; if the holy Spirit has planted it in your heart, let not any other love be planted too near it, nor too much nourished, leſt it draw away the vital moiſture, and cauſe the love of God to languish and wither.

IV. Be not ſlight and careleſs in ſecret religion. Let private devotion, reading, meditation, prayer, have a proper ſhare of your time allotted them. In pious retirements you may indulge all the holy paſſions with much greater freedom: You may there give a looſe to all the devout affections of the ſoul in their warmeſt exerciſes and expreſſions: You may ſay a thouſand things to God in ſecret, which are not proper for public worſhip: You may pour out your ſouls before him in the ſtrongeſt

and most pathetic sentiments of holy desire and divine joy: You may tell him all the inward pains of your conscience, the secret anguish and shame of your heart, be cause of your past offences; you may sigh deeply, and blush before him, and dissolve your eyes into tears: You may tell him in secret how intense are your desires to taste and be assured of his love, and to be formed after his image: You may rejoice in his sight with pious exultations and triumph, in hope of his eternal presence in the upper world. Such exercises as these will keep all the passions in a habitual practice of religion, and maintain inward piety in the life and power of it.

V. Converſe much with thoſe parts of our holy religion, and with thoſe books of ſcripture, which are ſuited to awaken your warmeſt affections.

Let your thoughts take occaſion from the various occurrences in nature and providence, to meditate on the glorious perfections of God, the wonders of his wiſdom in contriving the ſeveral parts of the creation, ſo happily fitted to answer his great deſigns. Think on his amazing power, that could form all things by his word, and bring a whole world into being at his will. Awaken your ſouls, to admire the wide ſpreading influence of his ſovereignty and government, who manages the immense affairs of the upper and the lower worlds, the nations of men, and the armies of angels; and yet extends his care to every one of us in particular, and even to the meaner figures of flies and worms. Think on the infinite extent of his knowledge, that he is acquainted not only with every creature he has made, but with every thought that paſſes through our hearts, with all our moſt ſecret actions and purpoſes. This will awaken in you a holy fear of his majeſty, and you will dread the thoughts of ſinning againſt him, ſince it can never be concealed from his notice; and while you think on his omnipreſence, you may rejoice in him as your guardian and defence through all times and places where or whereſoever it is poſſible for danger to attend you. Meditate on his boundleſs goodneſs: Our God is love, and all nature is filled with the bleſſings of his bounty. He has overſpread the ſkies with light, and covered the earth with food for man and beaſt. Of what a vaſt and ſurprizing extent is the whole family of creatures which are maintained out of the ſtores of God! What a tranſcendent veneration ſhould we have of that goodneſs, which ſatiſfies the craving appetites of millions daily and hourly!

Befides theſe general effects of the divine goodneſs, it is proper to have the memory furniſhed with particular inſtances of protections, deliverances, eſcapes from danger, rich and unmerited bleſſings, which we our ſelves have enjoyed, that we may awaken our gratitude, re-kindle our dying love, and exalt our hearts and our voices in praiſe.

Nor is it leſs uſeful to meditate ſometimes on the ſins and follies of mankind, that we may admire the patience of a God ſo affronted and ſo abuſed: Nor is it leſs needful to recollect our own follies, and our guilt, that we may keep holy repentance in it's lively exerciſes: for the ſpring of godly ſorrow ſhould never be dried up while we dwell in theſe regions of ſin and defilement.

Then the aſtoniſhing deſigns of divine mercy, towards guilty creatures, call for a due ſhare of our meditations: Deſigns of mercy in the heart of God, counſels of peace tranſacted with his Son *Jeſus Chriſt* before the world began, in order to reſcue mankind from the ruins of nature, and to raiſe up a choſen ſeed for his own glory out of the rebellious race of *Adam*.

Here the thoughts of a chriſtian ſhould ſpread themſelves abroad, and give a looſe to holy contemplation and wonder. Let us run back to antient ages, and view *Jeſus* the Son of God, “ the brightneſs of his Father's glory in his pre-exiſtent ſtate  
of

of light and happiness, before he visited us in flesh, *Heb. i. 3.* There he dwelt in the bosom of the Father, before he made our world, or appeared in it: We should trace his various appearances to the patriarchs, and his conduct of the church through many ages, under the name of the angel of God's presence, under the character of the king of *Israel*: We should meditate on his wondrous condescensions to become incarnate, to dwell in such feeble flesh and blood as our's is, to be compassed about with infirmities, to sustain perpetual labours and sorrows, fatigues and reproaches through the course of a mortal life, to bear those unknown agonies in the garden, and on the cross, which were the price of our pardon, and the means of his atonement for our guilt. What amazing love is this! How divine! How unsearchable! "It has heights and lengths, and breadths, and depths in it, that pass all our knowledge," *Ephes. iii. 18, 19.* and demand our devoutest praises. Trace him then from the cross to the tomb, follow him through the regions of the dead, behold him in the power and glory of his resurrection; see him ascending on a bright cloud to heaven, attended "with the chariots of God, which are twenty thousand, even unnumbered thousands of angels;" *Psal. lxxviii. 18.* view him sitting on the right-hand of God, making intercession there for sinners, rebels, enemies, that they may be divinely transformed into saints, children, friends. Survey him at the head of all principalities and powers, ruling all things according to his Father's decrees, for the glory of his Father, and for his own glory, as well as for the eternal welfare of his church. What bright and vigorous contemplations, what entertaining ideas, what efforts of pious passion may be raised by a sanctified mind travelling such a spacious round of divine wonders!

Enter into yourselves, think what once you were, corrupt, abominable, unclean, unholy: Remember the distinguishing grace of God, whereby you were awakened to a sense of your sin and danger, and were taught to fly for refuge to *Jesus*, your all-sufficient hope: Think on your iniquities all pardoned; think of your garments and soul washed white in the blood of the lamb; think on the powerful influences of the Spirit, that hath changed your vile nature, and made it holy, that has guarded you from a thousand temptations, and is training you up to everlasting blessedness. Which of the passions is there, that would lie cold and silent, under the lively sentiments of such a various and important scene of things?

But I proceed to the second part of this fifth direction; and that is, "we may have our devout passions quickened by converse with those parts of the holy bible, which contain the most affecting subjects, and express them in the most pathetic manner." Read some of the wonders of mercy and love, in the transactions of God with his ancient people, how he rescued them from the midst of barbarous nations and hostile armies; how he brought them out of bondage and brick-kilns, by a mighty and miraculous effort of power and grace; how he led them through seas dry-shod, and commanded rivers to cleave asunder, and leave a path for their march; how he visited them after by missionary angels, and sometimes in his own royal person; for "they saw the God of *Israel*." *Exod. xxiv. 10.* Read and meditate the vengeance, and the terrible destruction executed on the old world that was drowned in the flood; the deluge of wrath that fell on *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, which perished by divine lightening; for "the Lord rained down fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven upon them." *Gen. xix. 24.* Read the ten plagues of *Egypt*, and the desolations that were sometimes spread over rebellious *Israel*, and sometimes over the heathen nations by an angry God, in the writings of *Moses*, and the book

of *Judges*. Read the soft and melting language of divine mercy, inviting sinners to return to God by *Ijaiab*, the evangelic prophet. Survey the promises that are big with blessings, that contain pardon, and righteousness, and grace, and life, and salvation, and glory in them; and let the pious affections of hope and love break out and diffuse themselves with sweet delight. Read the history of the life and death of our blessed Lord, which is made up of love and wonders, and look into some of the more affectionate paragraphs of *St. Paul*, and the pathetic parts of all the sacred epistles.

But above all, for this purpose, I must recommend the specimens of divine meditation, and divine worship, the complaints, the supplications, and the songs of praise which are offered to God by holy men in the old testament, and in the new. You find some of these in the books of *Moses*, *Ezra*, *Job*, *Daniel*, and other prophets; especially, the *Psalms* of *David*: A rich and heavenly treasure is this. A repository, or an altar of sacred fire. The people of God, in all succeeding ages, have had recourse to it, both as an example and a spring of most lively and exalted devotions. Chuse a psalm suited to your own case, and frame and temper; compare your hearts with the *Psalmist*, and your circumstances with his; lift up your souls to God in the words of *David*, or imitate his language, where his words do not so perfectly express your case. Enter into his spirit, form and model your pious affections by that illustrious pattern; and be sure to bring *Christ* and the sweet discoveries of grace, and the blessings of the gospel into this sort of devotion. *David* himself, under the influence of the holy Spirit, practised this; though in a more obscure manner, and in the stile of prophecy: And if in the midst of such a dark dispensation, surrounded with types and shadows, we find surprizing efforts of fear and love, of joy and wonder, of desire and hope, of faith and adoration, and praise, how unspeakably glorious and entertaining would it be to us, if we had a book of such holy melody, such harmonious worship, written by divine influence in the language of *Christ* and his gospel, interlined with the blood of the Son of God, adorned and enlivened with the grace and glory of a rising and reigning Saviour, and animated and enriched with the holy Spirit, and the blessings of the new testament? Perhaps, this is too sublime a privilege, too high a favour for the church to expect or enjoy in this corrupted and degenerate state: Perhaps, we must wait for such a seraphic volume, till we are raised to join the songs and the harps of the heavenly *Jerusalem*; or at least till the happy time of the restitution of all things, when a new heaven and a new earth shall introduce such a state of things among men, as shall be near a-kin to the glory of the upper world.

But it is time now to go on to the next particular.

VI. "When you find a devout passion arising in your heart, indulge and cherish it, if there be a convenient season." Take heed that you do not banish the holy thought, or suppress the sacred affection. Do not immediately plunge yourself, without necessity, into the businesses of life, or any vain amusements, lest you damp the wing of your holy desires, which would bear you upward to God; quench not those seeds of divine and heavenly fire, which God has kindled in your souls. When the quickening Spirit takes hold of your heart, take care that you do not refuse to follow him: Resist not the motions of the blessed Spirit, lest he retire grieved, and it may be long ere he return. 1 *Thess.* v. 19. *Eph.* iv. 30. When the blessed God does, as it were, take you by the hand, and lead you aside from the world, to converse with himself; when your blessed Saviour  
doth

doth, if I may so exprefs, touch the fprings of devotion within you, and as it were invite and beckon you to holy fellowship with him, have a care that you do not turn rudely away from him, and renounce his invitations. Let fuch facred feafons, fuch heavenly moments, be duly valued and improved. Let pious affections be indulged and promoted, unlefs plain and neceffary bufinefs call you away, at that time, to other engagements.

But if it fhould happen, that the providence of God and your duty demand your thoughts and your hands to be employed in fecular affairs, when you feel a devout paffion arifing, you may in fome meafure remedy this inconvenience, by the following advice.

VII. "Endeavour to keep up a constant favour of religion, in the midft of the bufineffes and cares of this life." While you are travelling through the wildernefs of this world, walk always with God: Do every thing in the name of God, as under the influence of his command, and with a defign for his glory: And let your foul go forth often towards him, in fhort and holy exercifes; this will keep the devout affections awake and active.

If you have found God in the clofet, or in the church, carry him with you into the things of the world, into the fhop and the family, fo far as a proper attention to your daily bufinefs will permit. Suffer no long intermiffions of your heavenly work, left your pious affections grow cold. Let your thoughts in fhort intervals of worship go out towards God. Never let a hour pafs, if poffible, without fome devout aspirations towards heaven. In the evening-watches, at midnight, and at the dawn of the morning, the holy *Pfalmit* fent up his thoughts to God; and he was often breathing out his foul towards him, amidft the affairs of the day, *Pfal.* lxxiii. 6. "I will meditate on thee in the night-watches; *Pfal.* xxv. 5. thou art the God of my falvation, on thee do I wait all the day." O bleffed fouls, who imitate the practice of that fublime faint, the man after God's own heart!

VIII. "Confine not your religion always to your thoughts." Sometimes, perhaps, while you are mufing, the fire will burn, as *David* found it, *Pfal.* xxxix. 3. Then fpeak with your tongue, to God, or to man, as *David* did, who was moft exquisitely skilled in all the holy methods of a devout life, and was the nobleft pattern of facred fervour.

Gain fome acquaintance with lively chriftians: Mutual converfation fhall raife the divine flame higher, like united torches, which increafe each other's blaze. Sharpen your defires, and kindle your hopes and joys, by mutual and holy difcourfe. Borrow a coal from the altar of the fanctuary, from the ordinances of public worship, and warm your own hearts, by endeavouring to warm the heart of your neighbour. Speak to one another of the heavenly world, till each of you find your wings ftretched for the flight, and you long for the divine fummons. Mix your flames of celeftial love, as angels do, and let them fpire upward, and point toward *Jesus*, your beloved. Man is a focial creature, and his paffions were made to be raifed by converfe. Break therefore through the reproach and fhame of a degenerate age, and aspire to the life and difcourfe, and joy of angels.

IX. "Seek earnestly the influences of the quickening Spirit." Without him you can do nothing. It is the Spirit of God, who raifes dead finners at firft into a divine life, and he puts all the languid fprings of life into new motion. Thofe vigorous and active powers of the foul, which have fo ftrong an influence to

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promote the vivacity and beauty of true religion, are under his government, and they want a divine touch from his finger, to quicken and accelerate their motions. It is he who awakens our fear, who excites our hopes, who kindles our love and desire to things holy and heavenly; and it is he who exalts our spiritual joys. How often does the pious *Pſalmiſt* cry out for quickening grace in the *cxix. Pſalm*, and for the continued influences of the holy Spirit, in other parts of his devotional writings? The whole church prays for the ſame quickening operations, *Pſal. lxxx. 11*. “Quicken us, O Lord, ſo will we call upon thee.” Let this be the matter of our daily and importunate requests to heaven.

And let us remember too, that, under the goſpel, *Chriſt* is the ſpring of our life; he is appointed by the Father to beſtow his Spirit: He himſelf is called our life, *Coloſſ. iii. 3*. He himſelf is a quickening Spirit, *1 Cor. xv. 45*. All the principles of our holineſs muſt be derived from him, as our head of vital influence.

X. The laſt thing I ſhall propoſe, in order to keep the devout paſſions awake and lively in religion, is to live much in the faith of unſeen things, and to die daily. Set yourſelves continually as on the borders of the grave, and the inviſible world: This was *St. Paul's* practice, *1 Cor. xv. 31*. “I proteſt by our \* rejoicing which I have in *Chriſt Jeſus*, our Lord, I die daily: And his daily living, in the views of death, had a happy influence to maintain his rejoicing in *Chriſt*.”

If you conſtantly look on yourſelves as dying creatures, and place yourſelves on the borders of eternity, you will then take leave daily of ſenſible things, and live by the faith of things inviſible. You will then behold God as ever near you, God, the judge of all, the everlaſting hope, and the portion of his ſaints: You will be very unwilling to have your heart abſent from God, while you look at death as juſt at hand.

Then the bleſſed *Jeſus*, both as a Saviour, and as a judge, will be much on your thoughts. “Am I ready to appear before my judge? Have I any ſtrong and ſecure evidences that *Jeſus* is my Saviour?”

Then the gates of heaven will be ever as it were open before you, and the glories of it always within your view: You will think much of the heavenly world, with all it's holy inhabitants, with it's divine enjoyments, with it's everlaſting freedom from temptation, and ſin, and ſorrow, with it's delightful buſineſs, and it's unknown pleaſures.

Then this world will be as a dead thing in your eyes; it will have very little power to work on your paſſions, and to draw you aſide from God: He will be your love, and your all. The ſtrength of faith, and the views of death, will command your fears, and hopes, and deſires, and confine them to the things of religion.

Then you will be ever ſolicitous to brighten your evidences for heaven, to keep your hopes firm and unſhaken, by often reviewing the grounds and foundations of them: And your ſpirit will be ſolicitous to be found ready at all hours, for the call and ſummons into the upper world. Every power of nature, and every paſſion will be kept in it's right frame and poſture, under the influ-

\* Moſt of the greek copies, as well as our own tranſlation, read it “your rejoicing;” but it is hard to make ſenſe of it, without changing the word “your” into “our” which in the greek is but the ſmall change of one letter; and one or more manuſcript copies have the word “our,” and ſupport this alteration.



influence of such an expectation. You will hate every sin, and abhor the thoughts of it, lest your souls be defiled afresh, when they are just called to depart: You will keep your desires of God always warm, and set a guard on your love, lest it suffer any decay: You will raise your thoughts to a continual delightful converse with heavenly things, and enter into the spirit of joy and praise. O blessed souls, who daily practise this sort of departure from the body, and anticipate the pleasures of the heavenly state! Who love the blessed God, and delight in him here on earth, as far as mortality will admit, and are breathing after the more consummate holiness and joy of paradise! This was the frame and temper, this the devout language of *Armelle Nicolas*, a poor servant maid, who had spent more than thirty years of her life in the constant exercise of divine love. "God has not sent me, says she, into this world, but to love himself, and through his great mercy, I have loved him so much, that I cannot love him more, after the manner of mortals: I must go to him, that I may love him after the manner of the blessed."

## M E D I T A T I O N.

"I Have learned so much of religion, as to know that it does not consist in vehement commotions of animal nature, in sublime raptures and extasies: We may be sincere christians in the exercise of repentance and faith, and in the practice of holy obedience, without any overwhelming sorrows, or transporting joys. Yet since the various affections of fear and hope, love and sorrow, desire and delight, belong to my nature, I am sure they ought to be all engaged in some measure in the service of God and religion: And I have been taught in this discourse, by what methods it may be obtained. Let me now recollect these advices briefly, in order to practice."

And first, "I will endeavour that the ruling powers of my soul, the understanding and the will be employed in these affairs of everlasting importance. O may my memory be richly furnished with treasures of divine knowledge; may I be fully convinced of the necessity and worth of true religion! May I have the most exalted esteem of God and things heavenly! May these be the objects of my dearest choice! May my will be firmly determined, to fix on these as my highest portion, and my everlasting all!

"And can I go thus far, without making God the supreme object of my love? Can I chuse him with all his excellencies, his graces, and his glories, as my all-sufficient happiness, and live upon him as such, and yet not love him? I think this is impossible. Let me then cherish and improve this divine principle of love; and divine love will govern all the other passions of nature, will employ them in their proper work, and distribute to them, their several offices in the religious life. Love is the sovereign and commanding passion.

"But what shall I do, O Lord, to love thee more? How shall I kindle this divine flame? How shall I nourish it and raise it high? I meditate on the wonders of thy nature, the extent of thy goodness, and the riches of thy mercy, and yet how little do I love thee? I review the sweet variety of blessings, that I have received from thy hand in this life, and the surprizing transactions of thy condescending grace, which relate to the life to come, "and yet how little do I love thee?" I behold *Jesus* thy Son sent out of thy own bosom to take flesh and blood, and to dwell among sinners, even *Jesus*, the Son of thy highest love, sent down to earth to be made

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a sacrifice, and to die for the sake of such guilty wretches as I am, an amazing instance of thy love to us, "and yet how little do I love thee?" I read in thy word, what thou hast done for me in ancient times and ages, long before I was born; and what thou wilt do for me in worlds and ages beyond death and time, and yet I am ashamed to think how little I love thee? My thoughts run from one eternity to another, and trace the various and transcendent wonders of thy love in the several periods of time; glorious and astonishing instances of the compassion of a God, to a worthless creature, to a worm, to a dust, an atom of being, yea worse, to a sinner, a rebel that deserves thy immortal hatred, and "yet how little do I love thee? I wander in meditation through the various fields of nature and grace, and methinks I see my God in all of them, diffusing the unbounded riches of his wisdom and love through them all: I endeavour, to take my warmest passions with me, while I rove among the unknown scenes of thy power and goodness, and yet, O my God, after all, I am forced to confess, "how exceeding little it is that I love thee!" Lord, it is thy own work to turn a heart of stone into flesh, to make it feel all the tender impressions of divine love, and to kindle the celestial principle of life and love within me. Come down from on high, thou sovereign of all nature; come down into my heart, take possession of it for thyself, and let it ever burn and breathe towards thee, and send up the perpetual incense of holy desire and love."

"I will set a watch upon my eyes and my ears, and all the avenues of sense and appetite, that the creatures may not enter in too far, and dwell too near my heart, which I have given up to God. I would place a sacred guard upon it, to keep off every rival. I know the danger that arises from the flattering objects of flesh and sense: If they but once gain admittance into the heart, they are ever busy to take too fast hold there. Many of the weeds of this wilderness have gay and flattering blossoms, and if once they are permitted to creep into the soul, they twine about every passion, and root themselves there, to the certain prejudice of divine love: Alas, for that holy plant! That flower of heavenly original! How the noxious weeds of this world choke it's growth, and cause it to decay and languish!

"O may all the tempting trifles and vain delights of this life stand aloof from my heart, for I have devoted it to God for a habitation. Keep your distance, ye dangerous creatures, from the gates of this temple where my God dwells. There let him dwell alone, and reign over all my powers for ever.

"I would seek after my God in his public ordinances, I would seek after him daily in my secret retirements: I would give my pious passions a greater loose where no eye beholds me, where no ear can take notice of me. O may these retiring hours be the special seasons for the lively exercise and the increase of my devout affections! There I can tell my God all my heart in private groans and private rejoicings. He shall know what my sighs mean, what are my fears and my painful sorrows: There I can blush before him for my secret sins, and open the floods of holy mourning: There I can pour out into his ear my bitter complaints of the rising corruptions of my heart; I can lament over the vanity of my thoughts, and spread my unknown temptations before his eyes. I can lay myself low at his feet in the dust, and tell him with humble confusion of face and soul, how much I have received from him, how much I have done against him, and how little I have loved him.

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“In these secret chambers of retirement, I may join the exercises of an active faith and a cheerful hope, with the sighs and tears of penitence: There I can breathe out my most vehement desires after the presence of my God, and after the sweeter sensations of his love. “My flesh and my heart may pant and cry out after God, the living God, and say, when shall I come and appear before him?” *Psal.* xlii. 1, 2. When shall I be made more intirely like him? When shall these days of sin and temptation, these tedious seasons of absence and distance from God, come to a final period, never, never to return again.

“The lonely and retired devotions of a christian, may lead him near the walls of paradise, and the seats of the blessed, almost within the sound of their songs and praises. In a solitary cell, in a field remote from cities and men, or in a grove, such as *Abraham* planted, we may “call upon the name of the Lord, the everlasting God:” *Gen.* xxi. 33. There we may send up our souls toward heaven in most pathetic breathings of love and joy: The heart and the tongue may rejoice together in God our Saviour, while none but the trees and the skies bear witness to the hidden pleasures of our religion, and the sweet sensations of a conscience at peace with God: The trees in all their lovely bloom and verdure, and the skies in a cloudless and serene season, are happy emblems of such a conscience, serene and blooming with life and glory.

“When the sun and day-light are withdrawn, we may talk over our hopes, and our holy joys to the silence of the moon and the mid-night stars: Silent are they, and secure witnesses of those divine delights, to which the noisy and the busy world are too much strangers, and which the public must not know. There we may make our boast aloud in the name of *Jesus*, as our Saviour, and our beloved: We may reckon up before him, who sees all things our fairest evidences of an interest in his love, and may glory in the hope of his salvation: Surely when all the pleasing passions of nature are excited into such a just and lively exercise on divine objects, the power and the pleasure of religion within us will acquire thereby a lasting strength.

“In order to carry on this happy work, I am directed to converse much with those parts of christianity, which are suited to raise the most sprightly affections. I have done it, O Lord, and yet I feel my heart too little warmed and raised! But I would repeat the holy work; it is all duty, and it should be all delight: I would repeat it, till I find the sacred fire kindle and glow within. I would run over again that vast and extensive field of wonders: Again, let me survey the sublime glories of thy majesty, thy power, thy wisdom, thy goodness, all unsearchable and all infinite. I would dwell upon them till I am lost in this boundless ocean of godhead, and swallowed up in adoration and wonder. Then would I recall my past days of life, and bring past years back to my remembrance. With a sacred solemnity would I revolve in my heart the multitude of my transgressions, and the multitude of divine mercies, till my soul be melted into repentance and love: There is an unknown pleasure in the tears of pious love and holy mourning. I would read the astonishing history of the love of *Christ*, and trace the divine path of it down from his Father’s bosom to his state of infancy, to the manger, and the stable at *Betlehem*: I would follow this golden track of love, through the weaknesses, the fatigues, and sorrows of a life of poverty and reproach: I would trace it on the midnight mountains of prayer, and through the solitary wilderness, the stage of his sore temptations: I follow the shining thread of this unwearied love, till it brought him to sustain unknown

agonies in the garden, and nailed him to the cursed tree : I behold him there groaning and expiring under the weight of my sins : Amazing spectacle ! What will awaken devout passion, if such varied scenes of divine love and divine sorrow cannot do it ?

“Let me borrow those blessed patterns of warm and living devotion, which *David* has left us, and tune the songs of *Zion* to the name of *Jesus* : The sweetest songs, and the sweetest name will happily unite and encrease the divine harmony. O when shall I feel the ardent desires, the penitent sorrows, the holy wishes, and pious elevated joys of the ancient *Psalmist* ? O for the return of the same Spirit that gave the soul and the harp of *David*, these sacred and immortal elevations !

“When I find a divine influence reaching my heart, and raising a devout passion there, I would hold fast and cherish the heavenly sun-beam, till I feel the holy warmth diffused through all my powers : Nor would I willingly suffer the tides of business or care in this world to quench the spark which was kindled from above.

“I would keep up the favour of divine things among the common affairs of this life. A present God in the midst of the labours of this world will sweeten and sanctify them all, and bring heaven down to earth.

“Suffer me not, O my God, to bury all my religion within me. Let my tongue communicate some of the wonders of thy mercy, and be the lively instrument of thy praise : Give courage and wisdom, that I may know when and how to divert vain discourse, and may dare to speak for God. O when shall the time be, that “they which fear the Lord, shall speak often one to another ;” *Mal.* iii, 16. and warm each other’s hearts with heavenly conversation ? When shall the blessed Spirit revisit the forsaken churches, and dwell again in the degenerate families of christians ? While we feel our hearts heavy, and our affections cold and languid in the things of God, we toil and heave in vain without this Spirit. We flutter upon the ground, and make attempts to rise heavenward ; but alas, we grovel and groan under our impotence, till the Spirit gives us an eagle’s wing to mount us up toward the heavenly world. With all our pious endeavours, let us join our efforts of important request for the return of the quickening Spirit, and his vital influences.

“O that I might live much in the faith of unseen things, and set myself continually as on the borders of death. Turn aside the vail, O blessed *Jesus*, that I may look into the unseen world ! Or give the eyes of my faith vigour enough to pierce through the vail, and see my God and my Saviour. And may this blessed sight make a divine impression upon all the powers of my nature, such as may awaken every vigorous and pleasing passion of the heart, such as may engage me to keep my hopes always awake, my evidences for heaven unspotted, and my desires ever breathing toward thy presence, my Saviour, and my God ! If my pious passions were in their warmest exercise, I should be ever ready to obey the divine order for my removal hence : I should receive the messenger death with a smile on my countenance, and follow the angel with a cheerful step, while he leads me away from a world of sin, sorrow, and darkness, to the regions of life and joy.

O happy country, where sorrow and sin have no place, where my spirit in it’s inmost powers shall feel an eternal spring ! While we dwell in this world, it is all winter with us : We behold the sun as afar off, and receive but feeble

ble influences. But in the world on high, all things around us are full of life and love: There are no gloomy hours, no chilling blasts, no cold and cloudy seasons. There no damp shall hang upon the wing of my devout affections, no waters shall ever quench the fervour of them. There I shall be for ever ascending nearer to God the center of my soul, and all my motions will be swifter too. Every power within me shall feel stronger influences of his love, when I am got so far within the divine attraction: Then I shall complain no longer of absence and distance, nor feel any more eclipse of the face of my God; but I shall be perpetually receiving a full efflux of light and love from the eternal sun of grace and glory. I shall spend the ages of my endless existence in a rich variety of sublime duties, and sublime delights; such delights and such duties as are, and must be unknown, till we put off these coarse and cumberous garments of flesh and blood, these veils that enwrap our souls in darkness.

Happy shall I be indeed, when all the troublesome and disquieting influences of flesh and blood shall cease: All my painful and uneasy passions shall be for ever banished: Grief, and fear, and anger shall vex my spirit no more. Animal nature must be buried in the dust, and all the ferments and emotions of it shall cease for ever.

But must I then lose all those kindly ferments of nature too, all those pleasing emotions, which in this present state, add fresh vigour and delight to the soul, in the exercise of it's best affections, love and joy? If all these must be lost, who can inform me what shall come in the room of them? Surely love and joy are immortal things; they were made for heaven, and cannot die, nor shall their vigour be diminished in a world that was built for happiness. What strange unknown powers then shall be given to separate spirits, whereby these divine affections shall be invigorated, and raised to nobler degrees of exercise? Or shall my separate spirit, when it is divested of every clog, and exulting in complete liberty, use all it's own affectionate powers in a nobler and more perfect manner, when I shall see the divine objects of them face to face? Surely the holy souls that are dismissed from flesh, shall be richly furnished with all necessary faculties for their own felicity. Every saint in glory shall find full satisfaction, and intense delight, when all it's best affections are united and employed on the most lovely and desirable objects; when they are all fixed on God, the supreme good, and on *Jesus*, the most perfect, and most divine image of the Father.

*Jesus*, together with the Father, shall be the object of our contemplation and love. And at the same time his holy soul, with all it's pure affections, rejoicing in it's own nearness to God, shall be the pattern of our heavenly joy. "I in them, says our blessed Lord, I in them, and thou in me, that they all may be made perfect in one." *John xvii. 23.* And we are told,—“We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” 1 *John iii. 2.*

These are the sweet notices of our future felicity, that he has given us to cheer our hearts in the present state of faith and labour: These are the bright, but distant glimpses of those entertainments, which are prepared for us in our Father's house. These are little prospects of those rivers of pleasure, that run between the hills of paradise, and make glad the new *Jerusalem*, the city of our God: Such joys as these await us on high, Do we not feel our hearts pant point and upward? These are the joys of divine love; the very faith and hope of this blessedness, the slight glimpses and foretastes of it here on earth, have something in them unspeakable and full of glory: But the complete relish and fruition of it is reserved for heaven, and for hea-

venly inhabitants to know and enjoy. There, and there only are such immediate and rich profusions of divine love, as the heart of man in this mortal state, is neither pure enough to partake of, nor large enough to conceive. We must die, we must die out of this world, to learn perfectly what those pleasures are; nor can we know them but by enjoyment. Missionary angels could not make us understand them, nor a visit from departed saints. Earthly languages were not made to express the fulness of these celestial sensations: The ideas of paradise demand unutterable words; nor are spirits dwelling in flesh, either fit or able to hear them. We must die then, to learn how these blessed ones love God, and how God loves the blessed. O when will the happy day arrive? When will the hour shine out upon us, and the bright moment appear? It is coming, it is coming, as fast as time can roll away, and the sun and moon can finish their appointed periods.

Come, my soul, rouse thy self from thy dull and lethargic temper; shake off the dust of this earth, that hangs heavy upon thy better powers. Hast thou not been long weary of such cold and frozen devotion, as is practised in this earthly state? Hast thou not long complained of loving thy God so little, and of tasting so little of his love? Come, raise thy self above these dull and despicable scenes of flesh and sense, above all that is not immortal. Lift up thy head with cheerfulness and eager hope; look out with longing eyes, beyond the shadowy region of death, and salute the dawning of thy eternal day: Stretch out thy arms of intense desire, and send a flight of devout wishes across the dark valley, to meet the approaching joys of immortality.

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E S S A Y

Towards the ENCOURAGEMENT of

CHARITY SCHOOLS,

Particularly those which are supported by PROTESTANT  
DISSENTERS, for teaching the children of the POOR to  
read and work.

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Y A S S E

TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OF THE COMPANY

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 1954



To the generous supporters of the schools of charity among the **PROTESTANT DISSENTERS**, and particularly to the managers of those schools.

GENTLEMEN,

**M**Y heart is with you in your pious and compassionate designs: Go on and prosper in your charitable cares and labours for the education of poor and unhappy children: Poor and unhappy children indeed, who have either lost their parents by death, or whose parents are not able to give them, or provide for them any tolerable instruction in the things of God or man. It is from occasional converse with some of you, that I have been better enabled to compose several parts of this defence of the schools of charity. It is also by some of your number that I have been informed what mistakes may be committed in the conduct of these affairs, and what methods may be most successful to attain your most desirable ends, that is, to keep the poor from being a nuisance to render them some way useful to the world, and to put their feet into the path that leads to their own happiness here and hereafter.

Give me leave therefore to set before you in one view, several of those things which seem necessary to support this cause of liberality, and which I have learned in some measure from yourselves.

I, Let your great aims and designs in all your zeal and diligence in this matter, be very sincere for the public good. Set your intentions right for the glory of God, for the increase of true religion in the world, for the benefit of poor destitute children in soul and body, for the training them up to become blessings to the nation, for the support and honour of the present government, and for the security and defence of the protestant succession.

II. See to it that in every step you take, you keep as many of these things as possible constantly in your eye, whether you seek masters or mistresses for the instruction of children, whether you prescribe orders and rules for their behaviour, whether you appoint seasons for their examination, or whether you enquire after families in which they may be placed, when they go out of your schools; and let no private ends or designs bias your thoughts and conduct in any of these affairs: Let it appear with bright evidence to the world, that the honour of God, and the good of the public, are your only motives in this work.

III. Take good care of the character of the masters and mistresses, whom you chuse for the instruction of the children. See that they be sufficiently skilled in the things which they pretend to teach: Admit none but those who are sober and religious in their personal behaviour, diligent and careful in all the parts of their proper duty, tender and compassionate to the children of the poor, prudent to deal with them according

according to their temper, age and capacity, solicitous for the welfare and improvement of their scholars, and faithful to the trust which you repose in them.

Let them not be persons of a hasty spirit, nor of an angry and rash temper: There have been some matters, I will not say in your schools, so brutal and uncompassionate, that because the children are poor, they are used with excess of rigour and severity in the treatment of them: Nor should the teachers be so familiar and easy, as to let their scholars trifle with them, or neglect their duty, or be guilty of criminal practices without due reproof or correction.

They should not be persons of sloth or indolence, that have no concern whether the children improve or no, so they do but receive their salary.

Nor should they be persons that are guilty of any degrees of intemperance, or violence, nor ill language, nor unbecoming speech or carriage, but such as may give an example of piety and virtue, charity and goodness, at the same time as they teach the rules of it.

As I would presume that no persons of any of these culpable characters, are entrusted with the education of children among you, so I am persuaded I need give no caution against the admission of persons into this trust, who are disaffected to the present government: For the very name and profession of a protestant dissenter, is utterly inconsistent with all the principles of those who have their eye to a popish pretender.

These things are not only to be considered at first, when you admit masters or mistresses into your schools, but you must carefully enquire whether they continue this prudent and pious behaviour, and act agreeably to their station and business, and are conformable to your appointment and direction. Remember that if teachers and governors behave ill, there is a huge injury done to children thereby. It is a waste of their time of life which is proper for learning, it is a deceiving of their parents, and a great disappointment to them, it is a cheat upon yourselves, and a loss both of your money and your care.

IV. Be not contented merely to have them read the bible, and be taught the catechism at proper seasons, but let the truths and duties of it be explained to them in a familiar and easy way, by taking the answers to pieces, and instructing the children till they understand the sense of them.

It would also be a very useful thing for the children to have a particular collection of scriptures which might impress upon their tender minds, not only the duties of piety towards God, but also the duties of sobriety and temperance, of justice and truth, of humility and submission to superiors, of diligence and industry in their business, of kindness and love to all men, and especially to persons of piety and virtue, whatsoever sects or parties of christians they belong to. I am informed such a manual is partly composed, and will be published in a little time.

They should be put in mind frequently, of the excellency of the christian religion in distinction from that of *Turks* and *Jews*, and heathens: and of the excellency of the protestant religion, in opposition to the papists, with all their idolatry and superstition, their cruel and wicked principles, their mischievous and bloody practices. They should be informed also, on every occasion, of the great and invaluable privileges of being born in *Great Britain*, and of living under so excellent a government as our's is, wherein there is liberty of conscience to serve God according to our own understandings, and wherein people are not punished and persecuted merely for their principles of religion. And on this account they should be taught to honour our most excellent king *George*, our most gracious queen *Caroline*, and all the royal family,  
and

and be ready to defend the protestant succession in this illustrious house, with their tongues, and their hands, and with all their powers.

It may be useful also to put other little books into their hands, to assist the devotion of their younger years, and to encourage and confirm them in the principles and practices of all moral and divine virtues. Some of these may be written in verse as well as in prose, which will allure children to read them and assist their memories in getting them by heart: They should all have lessons appointed in their books, and they should be required to repeat them to their teachers, at stated hours or seasons, once or twice in a week.

V. As the children are not constantly under their masters eye and care, but spend much of their time with their parents, so there should be some care taken to charge their parents to make them read at home, at least once or twice a day, and to keep them by due discipline to a regular behaviour, that they may not be guilty of profaneness or immorality, obstinacy, disobedience to superiors or any wickedness at home or abroad.

VI. Let not the Lord's-day be spent by them at random, nor let them wander after their own wills where they please: But let them be obliged to attend at some place of public worship, either with their masters or mistresses, that they may be under their eye and observation; or with their parents, who should be charged and engaged to take particular care of their religious observation of the Lord's-day.

And wheresoever children go to worship on the Lord's-day, whether it be with their parents or with their teachers, let it be a constant part of the business on the monday mornings, for their teachers to enquire what they remember of the sermons they have heard, at least, so far as to make them repeat the text by heart, on which the minister preached.

VII. Let there be certain seasons of examination appointed, two or three times a year, not only to enquire into the state of the school in general, or to fill up vacancies as the children are dismissed, but to make a particular enquiry how the children improve in their learning; and if there be any defect, to find out whether it be the fault of the scholars, or of the teachers: If the child's incapacity or low natural parts be the occasion of it, let him be excited and encouraged to double diligence: If the child has been negligent, reproofs and threatenings should be added: But if it be found that the non-improvement of children be owing to the neglect, or the mismanagement of the teachers, let there be due cognizance taken of it in a proper way, and new teachers be chosen, if two or three admonitions obtain no success.

VIII. It would be a great and unspeakable advantage to these schools of charity, if you could contrive some methods whereby all the children of the poor, might be employed in some useful labours one part of the day; that those who are to earn their bread by the labour of their hands, might be engaged in work for this purpose even from the younger years of life. This would fix them betimes in such a manner of life, as the providence of God has suited to their circumstances in the world. This would have a manifest tendency to secure them from pride and sloth, and would be the most effectual answer to a very common and powerful objection, in the lips of many persons against charity schools.

IX. For this reason I would propose, that if the parents can and will employ their children one part of the day in useful labours toward their subsistence, this should rather be encouraged than forbidden; always provided that there be such due care taken daily by the parents, that it may be no excuse for idle children to absent themselves from the school and play-truant, to the disappointment both of their parents, their teachers, and their benefactors.

X. When children have continued a proper time under the instructions of the school, and you find they have so much knowledge, as may lay some foundation for religion and virtue, and as may render them useful in some of the lower stations of life, endeavour then that they may be placed out, and fixed either in country-labours, in domestic services, in some inferior post in a shop, or in mechanic trades, that so they may not run loose and wild in the world, and forget all that you have taught them, and lie exposed to temptation and misery.

If this cannot be done immediately, take some care that their parents or friends employ them in proper business at home, and keep them to reading, and writing, to knitting, sewing, or domestic work, that all your labours, and expences may not be lost.

XI. Whensoever these children are to be placed out in families, see to it that these families have a due character for sobriety and diligence: Engage their masters or mistresses to take some care that these servants read their bible daily, and that they make use of any other part of their learning, as their post of service or employment will admit, that, if possible, the benefits which you have bestowed on them may be lasting.

XII. For this purpose, enquire now and then into their behaviour in those places where you have fixed them: And if it appear they have behaved well, give them some token of your favour; ten or twenty or thirty shillings the first year or two, after they are gone from the school. This will greatly encourage them to pursue the practice of piety and virtue. I know some of you do more than this. I wish it were the universal custom of all the schools.

In the last place, as I hope you pray for divine success in every good work in which you are engaged, so let your prayers accompany this your labour of love, for the temporal and eternal welfare of the poor children, who taste of your bounty. May the God of light and grace succeed all your designs to train up those young destitute creatures to be a blessing to the world, and that your schools may be nurseries for the church of *Christ*: And may your liberality and your pious cares meet with a rich reward from heaven, in the abundant blessings of this life, and that which is to come. Amen.

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A N

E S S A Y

Towards the ENCOURAGEMENT of

CHARITY SCHOOLS,

Particularly among

PROTESTANT DISSENTERS.

**T**HE good education of children is an important duty of parents, and a very valuable blessing to the rising age; yet there are great multitudes of parents, in the lower rank of life, who are so ignorant, that they are uncapable of instructing their own children well in the knowledge of things, that belong to this world or another: Or, if they have knowledge, yet some are so exceeding poor, that they can hardly withhold time enough from earning their bread, to spend in the careful education of their sons and their daughters: And among these poorer parts of mankind, there are others, who are too careless in this important concern, though the welfare of their children, here and hereafter, seems to depend upon it: And there are great numbers also who die in poverty, and leave their young offspring behind them untaught, and grievously exposed.

What must be done in this case? must all those children, who are so unhappy as to be born of poor or ignorant parents, grow up like the brutes of the earth, without education? Must they be abandoned to the wilderness of their own nature, and be let run loose and savage in the streets? Shall no care be taken to inform their minds, to curb their sinful passions, and to make them speak and act like reasonable creatures, and live useful to the world?

When we see or hear of such unhappy objects as these, methinks our compassion and charity for these young creatures of our own species, should work powerfully within us, to reach out the hand of bounty, to train them up to some degrees of knowledge, and to the practice of virtue, and put them in a way to support themselves by honest labour: Or, at least our zeal for the honour of God, for the good of our country, and for the welfare of the succeeding age, should inspire us with some

sentiments of liberality, in order to redress this grievance, and prevent the growing mischief.

Those that are blessed with a good competence of the things of this life, and have no children of their own, seem to be invited by providence to take these opportunities of doing good to the miserable and distressed orphans, who have lost their parents, and the children of the poor and needy, who cannot maintain and instruct their own off-spring. Those also who feel the tender sensations of parental love to their sons and their daughters, and, with zeal and delight, train them up in useful knowledge, should sympathize a little with those poor unhappy parents, who would fain have their children trained up in piety and virtue, in diligence, and duty to God and man; but their mere poverty with-holds them from giving their children the benefit of a school. Thus different persons should be led by various motives, to promote so pious and charitable a work.

These were the springs, which at first moved the hearts of some pious and generous persons to erect schools of charity for this purpose, and particularly in the city of *London*. There was one set up in *Gravel Lane*, in *Southwark*, by the protestant dissenters, a little before the revolution, and our deliverance by king *William* of glorious memory. Many others were formed by persons of the established church, to which several dissenters subscribed largely. But at last they found by sufficient experience, that the children were brought up in too many of these schools, in principles of disaffection to the present government, in a bigotted zeal for the word church, and with a violent enmity, and malicious spirit of persecution, against all whom they were taught to call presbyterians, though from many of their hands, they received their bread and clothing.

It was time then, for the dissenters to withdraw that charity which was so abused: And since the favour of our rulers gives us leave to educate children according to our sentiments, and the dictates of our consciences, some generous spirits among us, have made attempts of this kind, and employ their bounty in the support of a few such schools. And as we hope this charity will be acceptable to God, and useful to mankind, so we are well assured, it will be a sensible service to the present government, which has no friends in the world more sincere, and more zealous than the protestant dissenters.

Several excellent sermons have been preached among us, wherein persons have been warmly excited to contribute their helping-hand, to this charitable and beneficial design. That which was published in the year 1723, by my worthy friend and brother, Mr. *Daniel Neal*, gives the most large and particular narrative of the management of these schools, and their methods of education, with an account of the advantages arising to the public thereby: And to this useful discourse, I refer my readers who would be particularly informed in this matter.

When I was desired to preach on the like occasion last *November*, after a short account of the benefit of good education, I undertook to vindicate these schools from many common and popular objections which are raised against them: And I have here published this vindication a little enlarged, and descended into some more particular circumstances, at the earnest request of several gentlemen, who are concerned in the support and management of one of them, viz. that which is kept in *Crutched-Friars* near *Algate*. \*

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\* Since that time, the reverend Mr. *Samuel Chandler* has published his sermon which was preached *Jan. 1, 1728*. wherein he defends these schools of charity against the cavils which have been raised, and the censures cast upon them, by the author of the "fable of the bees." Upon the perusal of it, I find very solid

I designed, indeed, to have prefaced this discourse with a short treatise on education ; but that work growing larger daily under my hands, and being much importuned to let this appear sooner in the world, I have at last consented to it.

Before I apply myself directly to answer the objections, I ask leave to lay down several propositions by way of concession : And when those who raise complaints against our schools of charity, have seen how much I grant to them, this may perhaps have some good influence, to mollify their spirits, and abate their opposition to these schools, and may prepare them to give a more favourable attention to the answers which shall follow.

Proposition I. The great God has wisely ordained in the course of his providence in all ages, that among mankind there should be some rich, and some poor : And the same providence hath allotted to the poor the meaner services, and hath given to the rich the superior and more honourable businesses of life : Nor is it possible, according to the present course of nature and human affairs, to alter this constitution of things, nor is it our design to attempt any thing so unreasonable.

Proposition II. As the children of the rich in general, ought to enjoy such an education, as may fit them for the better businesses of life, so the children of the poor, especially such as need the charity of their neighbours, should not be generally educated in such a manner, as may raise them above the services of a lower station.

Proposition III. Yet surely there may be some exception made for the children of those poor parents, who have enjoyed plentiful circumstances in life, and have behaved well in them, and performed the duties of justice and charity ; but by the wise providence of God, have been reduced to great degrees of poverty, and are hardly able to provide food and clothing for their own off-spring, and much less to bestow a good education upon them. Some of these children are yet sunk deeper into distress, and are become orphans. Such misery has somewhat of a sacred tenderness belonging to it, and seems to claim the regards of sympathy and compassion from those who now enjoy plentiful circumstances, while they meditate on the uncertainty of human affairs, and remember that they are liable to the like calamity. And it is my opinion, that amongst all the poor, these children ought to have the chief advantage of the schools of charity.

Proposition IV. It seems also not unreasonable, that some distinction may be made between the children of the poor in great towns or cities, and those who are born and bred in far distant villages. The poor who are born and bred in towns and cities, see and know more of the advantages of mankind, and the brighter side of the world, and come into more acquaintance with the better parts and offices of life, and by this means are, as it were, naturally something nearer to them, and are sometimes occasionally called to assist in them : Whereas those who are born and bred afar off in country-villages, see and know little or nothing of this, and therefore, as they have less aptitude for these things, and have less need of them, so they have no tendency or reach of soul after them ; for providence seldom throws these objects or opportunities in their way.

Proposition V. If therefore the poor who are bred in towns and cities, should enjoy some small advantages in their education, beyond those who are born in far distant fields and villages, if they should be taught to add and subtract a few figures, as well to write a plain hand, it is but agreeable to, and correspondent with that providence which has determined the place of their birth, and “ fixed the bounds of their habitation.” *Acts* xvii. 26. But for the poorest of mankind in distant parts of

the solid and effectual answers given to the objections of that author. His discourse has touched upon several points which I had omitted, and has given considerable assistance toward the support of this cause of charity and beneficence.

the country, perhaps the art of reading, may be sufficient to answer most of their necessities: And if they are taught to read well, I will not urge the charity of my friends to bestow any higher degrees of learning upon them, on supposition that they are to be engaged in the business of husbandry and day-labour.

Proposition VI. And if it were possible, I would have every charity school so constituted, that the children of the poor both in city and country, might be employed in some work and labour, generally one half of the day; that it might have partly the nature of a work house, as well as of a school, for all those who are to live by their hard labour, rather than by their learning.

I mention several of these things but very briefly here, because I shall have occasion to resume these subjects in the following parts of my discourse.

I proceed now to give some answers to the common objections, against all our charity-schools for the instruction of the poor.

**OBJECTION I.** There is no need of any learning at all for the meanest ranks of mankind: Their business is to labour, not to think: Their duty is to do what they are commanded, to fill up the most servile posts, and to perform the lowest offices and drudgeries of life, for the conveniency of their superiors, and common nature gives them knowledge enough for this purpose. They are born in the lowest station, and they ought always to be kept in ignorance, that so knowing nothing but what they are bid, they may do their work without reasoning about it.

Answer 1. Shall I argue a little against this objection, upon the mere principle of compassion and pity? If we consider how many thousands of the poor, both men and women in this nation, are stupidly ignorant of every thing that belongs to religion and morality, and know nothing of the true life of a reasonable creature, who are almost perfect heathens in a christian country, surely it must raise some compassion in our hearts towards them; have we any tenderness about our souls, and yet refuse to do any thing to prevent the young rising generation, from being immersed in the same stupid ignorance and gross errors about the things of God and man? Or, can we be content to see multitudes of mankind growing up wild and thoughtless of their best interests, and perishing by thousands, from one generation to another, for want of light and knowledge?

Answer 2. Give me leave yet farther, to talk with such objectors upon the foot of that golden rule, which our Saviour gave to all his disciples, *Matth. vii. 12.* Is this dealing with others, as you would have others deal with you? Is this advice concerning the poor, such as you yourselves would think reasonable and agreeable to the rules of christian charity and goodness, if you had been born in the midst of extreme poverty and ignorance, and had several wealthy neighbours near you, who could relieve your misery at so easy a rate? Turn the tables a little, and set yourselves for a moment in the place of the poorest creature, and then enquire, whether you would think it a kind and equitable conduct in your wealthy neighbours, who call themselves christians, to bind you for ever down to a state of darkness, and discourage the charity of others, who would give you a lift from the deeps of ignorance?

And must every soul of mankind who is born in poverty, be confined to live without knowledge? Suppose one in twenty should give some very promising prospect of an uncommon ingenuity and sense, must he be confined with his fellows, to the same darkness and drudgery for ever? Let it be considered, that the God of nature has distributed genius, capacity, and sprightliness of mind with a promiscuous hand among the rich and the poor. The same God "is the maker of them both," *Prov. xxii. 2.* and he has not always made the richest to be the brightest of men. There  
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may be here and there a fine and sparkling genius born in cottages; there may be some bright souls amongst the poorest of mortals: These may, perhaps, by good cultivation, grow up into honourable and useful members in the church or or state: We have had surprising instances of this kind in our day. And why should not such sprightly children, if I may so express it, have their chance to rise in the world? And be put into a capacity of exerting their powers for the service of God and man? Why should the world be deprived of all the benefit that might be drawn from such ingenious minds, under the care of a happy education? Let them at least be taught to know their letters, and have a way made for their brighter talents to discover themselves. Diamonds of a noble lustre are taken from common earth, and every diamond is rough or cloudy, till it is cut and polished. If there should happen to be a vein of silver mixed with the leaden ore, why should it be denied the favour of the refining-pot, since nature seems to have made it on purpose to shine and glitter?

Answer 3. A confinement of all the poor to such shameful degrees of profound ignorance, is the ready way to bring in confusion and slavery upon a whole nation. When the common people have no knowledge of any thing, they are the fittest tools for ambition and tyranny, for treason and public mischief. Men of crafty and aspiring minds, know how to make use of persons bred up in such gross ignorance, to carry on their own seditious purposes, and raise dangerous tumults in a peaceful state. Or if subtil and imperious men should ever obtain power among us, these poor, thoughtless creatures are soon turned into fatal instruments to enslave a rich and free people. Or finally, if a rude and untaught multitude set up for themselves, and rise into tumult, or rebellion against our present sovereign King GEORGE, contrary to all right and justice, it would be found very hard to suppress them: They would never be convinced of their present folly, or of their true interest, because they were never taught to practise reasoning, nor to understand common sense. A silly noisy word or a foolish rhyme tost about through such a brutal multitude, has raised and fired a whole country into sedition and treason: Our british annals are the frequent witnesses of this madness, in those antient days, when our fore-fathers could neither read nor write.

Let it be remembered, that knowledge is the truest spring of liberty among mankind. Had many of the foreign nations in *Europe, Asia, or Africa*, ever enjoyed such means of knowledge as *Great Britain* enjoys, they had never been immersed in such deeps of bondage and slavery. It is knowledge that preserves and secures a sense of true freedom in the minds of men. *Sampson* was not put to grind in the mill, till he had lost his eyes. And if we are agreed to prevent light from striking into the souls of the multitude, it is possible that, in some few generations, it may come to our turn to grind in the mill too.

Answer 4. Such stupid ignorance will fit and prepare the minds of the poor for all the superstitions and iniquities of the popish church. Ignorance is the true and fruitful mother of such devotion. When persons are not taught the better principles of religion they will become ready believers of all the lying tales and miracles of the *romish* clergy: They will quickly be induced to practise all their gay and senseless superstitions, though they are never so contrary to reason and scripture, when they are not capable of saying any thing against them. They will be led blindly by the priests into any absurdities of faith, or any criminal practices which they please to consecrate by the name of religion.

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Besides, if there be no care of the instruction of the minds of the poor among us, whatsoever forms of worship, or of political service they happen to fall into, it is, as it were, by chance and without knowledge: It is all a mere matter of stupid mechanism: Whether they are in the church, or the street, in a fleet or an army; it is like a croud of bodies without souls. And can such a set of creatures when they are grown up to the age of men, and know nothing, can they be either acceptable to God in their pretences to religion, or can they be useful to *Great Britain* in it's best interests? But this thought leads me to the next particular.

Answer 5. If young persons have no manner of education, they will not so much as know the God that made them, nor what is their duty towards their maker. What lamentable profaneness, what irreligion, what horrid blasphemy, what swearing and cursing, and all manner of impiety would abound amongst us, if the poorer part of mankind were never taught to read, nor instructed in the things of God?

And indeed the instruction which this sort of objectors would allow them, is so very small, by permitting them to go to church once a week, that they would gain very little knowledge of God and *Christ*, and our holy religion thereby, if they were deprived of all other advantages of knowledge. I have sometimes conversed with some of those miserable creatures, and I have found them ignorant to a most amazing degree of the first principles of religion and the gospel.

Has *Great Britain* been blessed of God with many rich conveniencies, for the improvement of the mind, by writing or printing books of every useful kind, and shall these blessings be made useless to so great a part of our nation? This would be to practise much as the papists do, who rob the common people of the bible, the book of life, and permit none to enjoy it, but in the *latin* tongue. It is a fountain of heavenly grace, but it is a sealed one to the poor, that are educated in popish countries. And is it not a shame in this protestant nation, that the scripture should be a fountain sealed to any of her children? When the bible is translated into our mother tongue, is it not a lamentable thought and almost a scandal, that there should be any amongst us to whom it should be a useless book, because they have never learned to read? And those that are unwilling that their fellow-creatures should attain the knowledge of reading, it is as if they sealed up the book of life. If I am not learned enough to read, it is all one to me, as though the book were for ever shut, *Isa. xxix. 11.*

What an envious creature is he who would obstruct the free entrance of the common light of the heavens to mortals who are born in darkness, or would forbid sight to be given to the blind? What a provoking crime is this against the God of nature? And is it not as hainous and provoking a sin against the God of grace, that when he has opened the book of life amongst us, there should be any persons, who should forbid us to be taught to read it, because we happen to be poor? Would it not be a most flagrant and complicated instance of ill-nature, pride and scorn, if we should hear a rich man say concerning his poor neighbours, "Because they are born in extreme poverty, let them live and die in darkness?"

Answer 6. If we lay the case of religion aside, and those important duties which all men owe to God, yet how ignorant will the poor be of the various duties which they owe to their fellow-creatures, if they have no manner of learning bestowed upon them? How little sense will they have of justice, of truth, of honesty and faithfulness? How little sense will servants have of the honour and obedience that is due to their own masters? How little will they know of that equity and righteous dealing  
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which should be practised between man and man? What happy seeds of equity and truth, of labour, diligence and temperance are sown in the hearts of children by a wise and careful education in their younger years? But how many young creatures have been easily allured to theft and robbery, to lying and deceit, and all manner of iniquity and mischief, for want of a virtuous education? Their honest neighbours have been deprived of their just property by pilfering and plunder, and the criminals themselves have run headlong to the destruction of body and soul.

Tell me, you that forbid children the knowledge of letters and would not suffer them to learn the art of reading, tell me, whether you can suppose they can ever become the worse labourers, worse servants, worse ploughmen or soldiers by reading in the word of God what duties they owe to men? Are not all the principles and rules of virtue and goodness, of diligence and sobriety, of obedience to superiors, of justice to their neighbours, of truth, faithfulness and love to all men contained in his holy book? And when the poor young creatures shall find all these things commanded and required by the great God that made them, when they shall read many happy examples of these duties, and the vengeance of God against transgressors, will all this have no influence upon their hearts, to lead them to practise these virtues?

Are there not many other little books drawn out of the holy scriptures, wherein these virtues of the civil life are reduced to a shorter form, and set in a plain and easy view for those who have but little time to read? And if children have these manuals put into their hands, is it not the most likely way to train them up in all the good qualities of the social life, and to guard against those vile and pernicious practices, against that sloth, that falsehood and lying, that thievery and drunkenness, rage and malice, which abound among the ignorant rabble of mankind, who never enjoyed the blessing of education, nor the benefit of a school, where their manners might be formed to virtue and goodness?

Answer 7. Let it be considered in the last place, how wretchedly the poor will spend all their leisure time, when they are released at certain seasons from the drudgery of life, if they are never taught to read. How do they stand prepared for every temptation, and for all manner of mischief, when they know not how to improve a few leisure moments? Human nature rude and untaught is the more prone to wickedness. At best, we can only suppose them to sit, whole families together, in the long winter evenings, and talk scandal of their neighbours, because their minds were never furnished with better subjects of conversation. They are tempted to fill up their empty hours of life with trifles or follies, or with wicked stories, because they were never taught to know letters.

How much happier would it be for the poor, if their seasons of leisure, could be employed in reading the holy scriptures, for their improvement in acquaintance with God, or in conversing with any useful books, that might furnish their minds with solid and profitable knowledge? This would refine their souls, and render them every way more useful in their stations as fathers, mothers, sons, daughters or servants. I have known such a poor family, where neither the grandmother, mother, father, nor any child could read: And I have often pitied them in my heart, to think how impertinently or sinfully their long evening hours must be spent after the work of the day is done: And they have gladly embraced the privilege of having their children taught to read in one of our schools of charity, under a sense of their own great unhappiness for want of this benefit in their younger years.

**OBJECTION II.** But some will say, if the poor have any manner of learning bestowed upon them, they grow proud and haughty; they think they are immediately fit for better business, and they will not be content to do servile work, and especially the lowest offices, and the most laborious drudgery either of the house or the field: There is great want of ploughmen and labourers in the country, and poor boys will never submit to this, if they once get acquaintance with books and knowledge.

Answer 1. I would ask leave here, if it were lawful to enquire, whether some of these very masters, who make this objection, would not keep the poor in profound ignorance, that they might turn their servants into perfect slaves? But when some of the poorer sort of people have gained a little knowledge, perhaps, it has been found that, here and there, a morose rich man, or a covetous and surly farmer, cannot make such mere slaves of them, as if they were asses or oxen? Permit me only to propose a query, whether this may not be some ground of the complaint.

Are there not some persons, that would subdue their fellow-creatures, of their own species, into a perfect brutal servitude, and make them as much their tools and instruments of labour as their cattle are, and treat them as though they had no souls, as though they had no share in human nature, as though they were not formed of the same flesh and blood, and had not the same sort of immortal spirits as themselves.

Now if the poor know nothing at all, but are bred up in gross ignorance, and constant stupidity, it is supposed they are fitter to become beasts of burden all their lives, without ever thinking that they are men. If this be the case, I pity the slaves indeed; but wo to their lords and masters, who keep them all their lives in such profound ignorance, upon such wretched and inhuman motives. There is a day coming when the rich and the poor shall appear without distinction before that God, who is no "accepter of persons." *Acts* x. 34.

Answer 2. Do some persons complain, that the plough stands still or drags heavily for want of hands? But does the plough stand still no where but where there is a school of charity? Alas, it is not such a slender education, as we can give to a few poor children in the city or the country, that hinders this work. We would not pretend to breed them too high for that station in life, for which their birth has designed them, nor to raise them above the labours in the country-villages, where any of our schools are kept. And these villages also are exceeding few where we have schools.

If there are any public schools of charity in such villages, which breed up the children of the poor, to such degrees and refinements in learning, whereby the tillage of the fields is prevented for want of hands, we disclaim all such sort of charity, and leave those who support these schools to defend them against so just an objection.

But if it may not be an offence, I would make a humble enquiry, whether there be not a far more powerful allurements that calls hands from the plough, and that is, that such a great number of persons, who had blessed their paternal seats in the country with their own residence, utterly remove their habitations and households to the city, and fix themselves near the court: May not this be a much greater occasion of draining the fields and villages of a multitude of the poor, who scarce ever return to a country life again: They are tempted and allured to follow their masters, and, as they call it, to "seek their fortunes in the town:" And some of these tempt their poor neighbours hither too: This fills the city with many hundreds, if not thousands, of the lower rank, more than the city itself produces: Then several of these shift their places of service, or leave them in hopes to find better; and by  
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this means it comes to pass, that the very servants that are out of place in *London*, perhaps would sometimes be sufficient to plough up half a country or a diocess.

Far be it from me to blame all those gentlemen, who change the country-seat of their ancestors, for a habitation in the city : Many of them may have a just call of providence for this change. It is not my province nor pretence to direct others in the choice of their dwellings : Yet I cannot but think if this practice should increase and become universal among the more sober and religious part of the gentry, perhaps it may have an unhappy tendency to weaken their good influence on the adjacent country, to diminish the true strength of the nation, and endanger our civil liberties. But I recall myself from this hint. My present business is only to shew, that it is not our charity-schools, but this conduct of many rich men in the country, whether it be right or wrong, that calls off such a multitude of hands from husbandry.

Answer 3. Suppose it should be granted for once, which is not always true, that none but the ignorant will be brought to perform the meanest services ; yet after all the education that is provided for children in our charity-schools, there will be stupid and ignorant creatures enough for those lower offices of life : There will be many in every county, who live not within the reach of these schools ; and there will be some whose parts, and study, and improvement in these schools, or in better, will never arrive above a fitness for the meanest services. I confess I am not of the opinion of these gentlemen, that none but blockheads will follow the plough : But if I were of that mind, yet I might venture to say, the plough will never want hands, if it does not stand still till there be no blockheads.

I add farther, with regard to the charity-schools of this great city ; that those children of the poor who are born in *London*, are not born in a place to make ploughmen of them, even if they were left in the highest degrees of their native ignorance. They would not leave the city, nor be tempted to go down to country parishes to be employed in the business of the husbandman, though they should never have opportunity to learn their letters.

Answer 4. But you say, " They grow haughty and proud, by means of the little knowledge they attain in those schools." I would ask, are there not many as haughty and as proud, who have no learning at all ? I have seen some servants who have been blessed with a happy education, and have attained far greater degrees of knowledge both of the things of God and men, than any of the rest of the family, and yet they have been more humble, more diligent, more ready to put their hands to mean servile offices, than others who have not had a tenth part of their capacity or their improvement. I know at this time two servants in one large family, who were instructed in one of the charity-schools of the protestant dissenters, and yet according to their stations, they are as diligent, as humble, and as willing servants as any in the house. It is chiefly their temper, or their want of due instruction, rather than their learning, that renders servants either haughty or humble.

Here perhaps, the great apostle shall be cited to countenance this objection, *1 Cor.* viii. 1. " Knowledge puffeth up." But why should not the next sentence also be added, viz. that " charity edifieth ?" Let the charity of these gentlemen who make this objection, encourage these schools, where the pride of the poor may be cured, where the souls of these young sinners may be edified ; in humility and every virtue where they may be taught their proper duty and behaviour both to God and man.

Answer 5. But I add in the last place, that if all the nation were as happy as I could wish, in the enjoyment of some degrees of good education, and if all the children

children of the poor were taught to read, then the art of reading would be as common as that of speaking, and no one would look on himself as superior to another, because he knows his letters, and could join syllables together. Then it would follow that no person would refuse to do the meanest services, if there were none beneath himself. For my part, I wish that there was not the meanest figure of mankind in *Great Britain*, whether employed in the drudgeries of a family, or holding the plough, but knew how to read his bible, that he might be better acquainted with his duty in this world, and the way to attain happiness in the next.

OBJECTION III. But is there not a general complaint of bad servants in our day? Are they not high and haughty and wasteful? Do they not claim larger wages, and at the same time refuse to do the servile works that belong to their place? And what can this be imputed to more than to their education in these charity-schools, wherein they are bred up to more learning and knowledge than the poor had in the days of our fathers?

Answer 1. Give me leave in the first place to make a humble enquiry, whether masters or mistresses are in our day so pious, so virtuous, so frugal, so regular in their conduct, and so humble as in the days of our fathers? Whether families are regulated with so much care, and whether family-religion is maintained with such a holy constancy? Whether there be such wise government and order, as in the days of those who went before us? Whether children are educated in the practice of that modesty, that humility, that diligence as in the times of our ancestors? And if there be such a sad degeneracy found amongst the higher parts of mankind, it is no wonder, if the lower ranks of human nature are corrupt, and grow degenerate too: So that you see this corruption among servants, may be accounted for, without laying all the load on our schools of charity.

Answer 2. Some persons who have made their observations on human affairs, are ready to think that the luxury and finery of this age is very much increased, and that in one particular instance, which has no good influence on the temper and deportment of servants. "Do we not desire, say they, that our servants now a-days should make a better appearance and shine brighter than is necessary for persons of their rank? Are there no masters who love to be waited on by servants in such apparel, as may make them think too well of themselves? Have mistresses done nothing to support that pride, haughtiness and vanity of mind in servants, which they afterwards complain of? And it may be enquired, whether some servants have not been encouraged to think themselves too good for the lowest and meanest offices of life, when at other seasons, they appear as gay, and glistering and as well dressed as their superiors, and can hardly be distinguished from them." I would only hint this way of reasoning here, not to undertake the vindication of it, but merely to be made the matter of further enquiry and consideration: For I would not have those crimes of servants charged on our charity-schools, which perhaps may have their foundation in the imprudence of their superiors.

Answer 3. If it can be laid at all to the charge of any charity-schools that they have been the unhappy instruments of increasing pride among some servants, yet I am well assured, that those schools amongst protestant dissenters have done very little or none of this mischief. For amongst the vast multitudes of servants that are in *Great Britain*, I am persuaded that there is scarce one menial servant in two hundred, which has been bred up in the dissenting charity-schools. And it is a very hard case, if these schools must bear the accusation and the guilt of those crimes in general, whereof not one in two hundred can possibly belong to them.

For

For my part, I could wish where there is one servant of either sex bred up in our charity-schools, there were twenty educated there: I should then hope for fewer complaints of this kind in the world. And if we do not take care to train up more children of the lower rank in our schools, in order to fit them for servants, I have good reason to say that we shall scarce find servants who will comply with the religious customs of our families, and we shall see cause to repent it on more accounts than one.

I would persuade myself, that the masters and mistresses of these schools among us, teach the children of the poor which are under their care, to know what their station of life is, how mean their circumstances are, how necessary it is for them to be diligent, laborious, honest and faithful, humble and submissive, what duties they owe to the rest of mankind, and particularly to their superiors, whensoever they shall be placed in families. I am sure this ought to be part of their instruction, and their teachers should have this charge given them, that the children should be educated in such a manner, as to know and remember, that they are bred up by charity, and to learn and practise humility upon all occasions\*.

Answer 4. If there should happen once now and then such an instance, if a child should grow vain and haughty under the advantages of the instruction which he receives from the bounty of others, if a servant thus educated, should now and then be found unwilling to perform the duties of his place, this is to be reckoned an abuse of knowledge, and not a necessary effect of it. We are not to charge any useful constitution among mankind, with those unhappy consequences which are merely the effects of that constitution abused. There is nothing so well contrived, nor so happily managed in the affairs of men, but may be perverted to vile and unhappy purposes. Surely no man would judge that the sun in the heavens should be blotted out, because it bestows day-light on the practice of a thousand iniquities. The admirable art of couching a cataract and giving sight to the blind, should not be forbidden, because a man who had enjoyed this benefit, used his eyes to commit theft, or murder, or to write treason and blasphemy. To give knowledge to those who are born in ignorance, is but like couching a cataract, it is letting in the light to a blind soul: Curied are they that so horribly abuse this light: But they are not blessed that would with-hold it from all, for fear lest some should abuse it. The inconveniencies of having none of the children of the poor taught to read, would be vastly greater, and bring far heavier disadvantages on the nation, than the injury that is done by, here and there, an ill-tempered boy or girl, who have made an ill use of the knowledge they have attained, and grow vain and conceited.

OBJECTION IV. But if the poor were permitted to learn to read their bibles, this might be done by the labour of half a hour in the day. A very little time would serve to have their letters pointed out to them, and to teach them to spell their syllables, and put them together. There is no need of whole days instruction for such a purpose

\* On this occasion I cannot but transcribe a passage of the reverend Mr. *Ghandler*, in his late sermon on this subject. viz. "Undoubtedly pride and sloth ought never to be encouraged in any, especially not in the children of the poor, who are to maintain themselves, and become useful to the public by a modest, diligent and industrious behaviour. And in order to prevent the effects complained of it is highly necessary, that besides their being taught the common principles of religion in the catechism, they should have some particular instructions proper to their condition, continually inculcated into their minds; and be taught such little portions of holy scripture as recommend labour and industry, fidelity and honesty, modesty and humility, gratitude and submission and the like virtues upon which their future usefulness more especially depends. I know not whether there be any body of such instructions drawn up for the use of the charity schools. If not, I am persuaded it is a defect that ought to be supplied." This I have taken notice of in the preface, and have had some assurance given me, that such a book will be published.

a purpose as this. They ought to employ their lives in work, and their limbs in bodily labour; they should chiefly be taught to get their own bread: And if they were thus educated, they would be made much fitter for servants and labourers.

Answer 1. Have all the children of the richer world such sharp parts, and such a sprightly genius, as to learn the art of reading with so much ease, and in so little a time? Do the persons who make this objection, find all their own children so ingenious as to improve one daily half-hour so happily, and find it sufficient to acquire a good talent in reading? Why then should it be expected, that the children of the poor should learn with so little pains, and so scanty a share of instruction? Do these gentlemen suppose that the poor are of a sharper make, and have greater penetration than the children who are born in better circumstances?

I am verily persuaded that one half-hour in a day, is by no means sufficient to acquaint the younger parts of mankind with this useful science. If they had no more labour bestowed on them, they would never attain a competency of skill to make sense of what they read. I have known several persons, who for want of being taught the art of reading well in their younger years, blunder so often, and mis-name their words, that they can hardly understand the plainest chapter in their bibles when they read it. And if we consider the capacities of the greatest part of mankind, I think two or three hours in a day, may well be employed for this purpose, if we would ever make their skill in reading serviceable to them for the business of this life or that of another. Such a portion of time is little enough to make children become good readers, except where the genius of a child is very extraordinary, or where there are several years allotted for this learning.

Answer 2. I much approve the joining of labour and learning together in the education of the poorer parts of mankind. I think it necessary that they should be bred up to work with their hands, since the providence of God calls them to gain their bread by the sweat of their brows: And they ought not to eat the bread of idleness. I would never have them educated in the same manner, as the sons and daughters of gentlemen, or even of the middle order of men, who can bestow upon their children something more considerable towards their support in life. I acknowledge also, that charity-schools will never be set upon the best foot, and managed in the most unexceptionable manner, until some way be found to employ the children both in the city and country, that they may work as well as learn. I have been many years of this mind, and therefore I laid it down among my first propositions.

But let the persons, who would destroy our schools on account of this defect, find out some ways and means of employing the children of the poor. I am persuaded the supporters of our schools of charity, will cheerfully fall in with such proposals, and those who refuse it, should never be vindicated by me.

I know there are several managers of some of these schools, who have been earnestly desirous of engaging the children in work and labour one half of the day; they have consulted with their friends about various manufactures, or any useful labours of life; they have set their thoughts at work in good earnest, and would have been glad to have been directed to any expedient of this kind, that the children might not have spent their whole days in a school, but might have employed half the day in the labour of their hands: But in some places, both of the country and city, this project could not be brought to bear: What then? Must the poor ignorant wretches be turned out of the school and never learn to read, because their friends could not find work for them? Must they be sent to saunter in the streets and lanes all the day long, and grow wild in idleness, and be exposed to every temptation,



tion, without either work or learning? May they not be civilized and taught their letters one part of the day, even though there be no manual labour appointed for them the other?

But here is the great difficulty and hardship of our case: we are reproached for educating the children of poor, without their confinement to labour, and the rich objectors know not how to propose any sufficient methods to effect what they desire: Even the wisdom of the nation in parliament, hath been often and in many sessions engaged in some contrivances for so valuable an end as the employment of the poor, both old and young, and something has been done towards it; but they have not yet been able to determine any thing of universal use in all places, and which is practicable throughout the nation.

In some of our schools of charity, this has been practised, and that not only in the country, but in the city too. The boys in our dissenting charity-schools have been sometimes employed in digging, in weeding, in gathering stones out of the ploughed grounds; and where the weaving manufacture hath been cultivated, all the children have done something towards it, for some hours in the day.

As for the girls that are educated in these schools, they are always taught to work with their needles of both kinds, both knitting and sewing; and in some places they are obliged, as I have been told, to make the beds, to use the besom or the mop, and when grown up, to do harder work, perhaps to stand at the wash-bowl, and to perform the servile offices which belong to a family. I wish these things were more universally taught and practised, as far as possible.

And wheresoever any methods of employing these children who are bred up by charity in labour, are contrived, proposed, and rendered feasible and practicable in the city or the country, the managers of these schools will never refuse to promote it, nor should the children ever refuse to comply, under the penalty of being utterly shut out from the benefit of this liberality.

OBJECTION V. But if we allow them to learn to read, what need is there that they should learn to write also? This puffs them up with a huge conceit of themselves and their learning. This makes them think themselves immediately fit for clerks, or some superior business: And this knowledge surely can never be pretended to be necessary in the lower ranks of life.

Answer. I will by no means contend for writing as a matter of equal necessity or advantage with that of reading. There may be some places where the bounty of the contributors to such a charitable work, may not be able to maintain a writing master, nor to keep children long enough at school: Yet even there they should be taught to read well. And there may also be some of the poor who dwell in very obscure villages, and are confined to rural labours, and others in towns or cities, and especially girls, whose business is most within doors at home, who may have but very little occasion, and as little inclination to use a pen. I would not therefore by any means have it made a necessary part of a charity-school, that the children should be taught to write.

Yet I beg leave to give my opinion, that there are several conveniencies, that even the poorest of the people, and especially servants, may attain by learning to write, which can be no disadvantage to the public, and some of which may be for the sensible benefit of their masters and mistresses, as well as of servants themselves.

I. For the servants themselves.

1. Why may not a poor servant have the privilege of conveying his thoughts to a dear relation, to a father, a mother, a brother or a sister, and letting them know their

their welfare or their troubles by writing? Why should all the lower part of mankind be universally, and for ever cut off from all those mutual tenderesses which nature inspires, and which may be communicated by a paper-messenger? Perhaps some of their souls may have as much humanity and softness in them as those of the rich, and they may have as sweet a relish of the endearments of kindred or friendship: They may long as much to know how it stands with their father's house, from which they are as it were banished by the necessities of life and their servile stations; and it is a hard case if none of these must ever be permitted to partake of this privilege, because they happen to be poor: Hard case indeed, that they must never taste of these refreshments, these sweet solaces of the heart, to relieve the drudgery and fatigues of life.

2. There are many of the poorer parts of mankind, who have not their minds so crouded and encumbered with other things, that fill their letters with serious religion, and communicate to each other the lively sense which they have of divine things on their own hearts, and encourage each other in their progress in virtue and piety. There are several of these pious poor, who have given their friends many a supporting word in their conflict with temptations, and mutually send this sort of assistance to each other, and are encouraged hereby to go through their daily labours with cheerfulness. And why should this be utterly forbidden them? I wish all those who enjoy better circumstances improved their pens for so pious a purpose.

3. When the poorer part of the world who are truly serious attend upon the ministry of the gospel, they labour as well as the rich to treasure up in their minds as much of it as they are able, and take as much pains to retain it: But alas! Their memories are as feeble and treacherous; may they not be permitted then to take the first moments of leisure, and commit to writing those things which have affected their own hearts? May they not, in this manner, by a frequent review of what they have heard and written, maintain upon their souls a long and lively relish of divine truths, and preserve the sermon from being utterly lost? I know this is the practice of several who can use a pen, and I wish it were more universally practised. Perhaps we should not preach so many sermons, with so little profit to our hearers in this manner; and why should the poor in an auditory be for ever cut off from this religious advantage, and forbid to use a pen for so sacred a service?

4. May not the poor have some little concerns of their own that relate to their souls, or their bodies, or their friends, or their engagements, and their circumstances in life? And must we suppose all their memories to be so extensive and capacious, so happy and faithful as to preserve all these concerns, and recollect them whenever they have occasion? Are not the memories of the rich perpetually unburdened, relieved and assisted by the pen? Why may not the poor in their little affairs, be indulged something of this benefit? Useful sentences, counsels, advices, moral and divine must be forgotten, if they cannot write. Their little agreements, promises, duties, debts, transactions of life, and memorable providences, afflictions, blessings, all that belongs to their sphere of action for time and eternity, must be in danger of being lost out of their thoughts, if they cannot use a pen. Writing, what a blessed and divine invention! And must all the poor be for ever secluded from all the privileges of it, where they may be obtained with so much ease?

Here I might make a pathetic address to all those who by mutual intercourse of letters, have maintained their love to their dear relations at a distance, and have felt the inward pleasure of receiving tidings of their welfare; I might address myself to those who have written or have received letters of piety to or from their friends; to those

those who have found the sweetness of recollecting past providences, by the help of their paper-memoirs, and of preserving some useful sermon long on their memories by the aids of writing; have not these things been a matter of special refreshment and delight to you? Have you not counted it a very valuable advantage to yourselves? And why should you for ever deny your fellow-creatures, that are made of the same clay, and cast in the same mould as yourselves, why should you for ever deny all of them such benefits as these, when they may be attained at so easy a rate? And if you do not think proper by your own liberty to bestow this benefit on the poor, yet by all the sacred pleasure and profit you have derived from the use of the pen, I intreat you not to discourage and forbid the liberality of others who would confer this privilege on them.

II. But in the second place,

Consider whether a servant incapable of writing, can be so useful to his master? Or whether it will not be some considerable advantage to superiors, to have their servants, and their poor labourers able to make use of a pen.

1. May I have leave to ask whether it be not far better they should be able to write their own names, when you employ them, if it were but to give a receipt for their weekly, or their monthly, or their yearly wages? Is not their name better than merely their scrawling marks, which are such poor doubtful and uncertain tokens of their own giving a receipt?

2. It is a frequent case that occurs in common life, that servants are sent out perhaps to a considerable distance, with messages to several persons at once, and at the same time are ordered to buy several little necessaries for different persons in the family: Their zeal and diligence, it may be, is great and unexceptionable, but their memory fails them, and they drop two or three of their orders by the way: They are chid at home, if the master be choleric, perhaps with some severity, the family is in great and present want of the necessaries they should have brought with them, and sensible inconveniencies are hereby sustained: But all these inconveniencies find an easy remedy, if the servant can use a pen: He puts down on a scrap of paper, some memoirs of his several orders, and he punctually fulfils them all. This is a known and common case, and among other things may plead for servants learning to write.

3. When masters are at a distance from their households and leave their servants in trust with their affairs, is it not a most unhappy thing if a household servant cannot communicate to his master by writing any sudden accident that may attend his concerns, his goods or his dwelling? If he cannot give notice of any new occurrence that relates to his master's interest? Is it not a most lamentable circumstance if a servant be left in the city or in a country-house for a few days together, and any terrible sudden calamity should attend his habitation or the family, and no servant could give notice of it to his distant master? Are not masters willing to know what messages have been left for them during their absence? And must every such message be trusted merely to the untaught and unfaithful memory of a servant, for many days together till they shall see their master?

I know there are such cases wherein persons of good figure in the world, who keep two dwellings at some distance from each other, are unwilling to hire those servants, whom they must leave behind them at one of their habitations, if they are not able to write; because they expect frequent notice from their servants by letter, whereby they may be informed of the affairs of one part of their family or another; and this makes their minds easy wheresoever they are, by the pleasurable tidings of

the welfare of their absent children, and the regular conduct and peace of the distant part of their household.

4. I might add in the last place,

If servants have never learned to write themselves, it is very seldom they are capable of reading what is written: And would it not be a great and frequent inconvenience to a master, when he is absent from his home, if he could not send a command to a servant in writing, about some necessary affair of his household, but this servant must go to some learned neighbour to read it for him, and thus communicate the concerns of his master to any one who could assist him to read his master's letter?

Let things of this kind, which are transacted between master and servant, be never so important and momentous, let it be never so much for the welfare of the family, the young children, the goods, or the estate, it is all one in this case where the servant cannot write: The loss must be sustained, the damage must be incurred, all inconveniencies must be born; and these masters at least, may thank themselves for it, who discourage the support of these schools of charity, and will not suffer those of the lower rank of people, to learn to use the pen of the writer.

OBJECTION VI. But if we grant that the art of writing may be a convenience both to masters and servants, what necessity is there, that the poor should learn arithmetic, or be acquainted with accounts? Their poor fathers managed their little affairs without figures, and why may not their children do so too?

Answer 1. All that is pleaded for of this kind, is, that they may be taught to add and subtract little parcels of money, such as may come within their possession, or may be entrusted with them. Let it be considered, that it is the custom of the nation in our day, to run much deeper in debt, and deal more generally upon trust and credit, than was done in the days of our fathers; and even poor labourers are seldom paid every night, nor perhaps every week now-a-days: And is it not a hard case, if they may not have leave to learn to help their memories by short accounts of the money that is due to them, that in their demands they may neither do injury to their masters nor themselves? I am well assured that for want of this many mistakes have arisen, sometimes to the prejudice of the poor, and sometimes to the damage of those that employed them.

Answer 2. Or, suppose one of these poor unlearned children become a servant in a family, and the master intrust him with a small matter of money, to lay out for the common little necessaries of a week, how unable is he to account even for this little, without a pen and figures to help his memory? What lame and broken accounts must the master receive? Or, he must take it upon content that his servant is honest, and accept of the general story, that so much is expended, without any notice of the particular detail of the things which are bought or paid for: Or else he must be troubled often in a day, for every little necessary expence of life, and, perhaps, sometimes have his servant interrupt him, in his great affairs, with the narrative how he hath disposed of pence and farthings; and all this, because his servant was never taught to add or subtract a few shillings.

OBJECTION VII. But if it should be allowed that charity-schools may teach the poor to write a little, and instruct them to make a few figures, and to add and subtract little sums of money, a few months would be sufficient for this. There is no need of three or four years schooling; no need of their learning to handle the pen in a nice and artful manner, to write a fine hand and to excel in curious penmanship; no need of their entering into the learned languages, or the deeps of arithmetic, which

which are proper for divines and physicians, for merchants and their clerks, for accountants and mathematicians, and the children of gentlemen.

Answer. I perfectly agree to all this objection, and acknowledge the justice of it, except in this one particular, viz. That a few months is time enough for this learning. I am sure so scanty a space of time is not sufficient, to teach a youth of a common or low capacity, the art of writing and accounts enough to serve all the purposes even of the lower ranks of life. If children are not pretty thoroughly instructed in it by their masters, and acquainted with it by much repetition and practice, it has been often found that they forget these things before they come to make any use of them for any valuable purpose. Surely a year or more may be allowed for this part of their instruction, without any inconvenience: The generality of children are not blessed with so swift a genius.

This one thing being allowed; I would prosecute and urge the rest of this objection myself; for I do not think it reasonable that schools of charity should breed up children to all that politeness in any science, which should belong only to young persons of higher rank, and in better circumstances, and whose parents can furnish out a better education for them.

And here it may be confessed, that it is possible these niceties of learning, these refinements beyond the true design of charity-schools, may perhaps have raised some aspiring conceits in the minds of those children, who are generally born for the lower offices of life. I cannot but take the liberty here to transcribe, and recommend part of thright reverend, the bishop of *London's* \* directions for this purpose: "If charity-schools should grow by degrees into a more polite art of education, if the boys should be taught fine writing, &c. the girls fine working, and both of them fine singing, he grants, they would be too ready to value themselves upon their attainments, and this would have a natural tendency to set them above the meaner and more laborious stations and offices of life: All these things therefore, says he, should be carefully kept out of our charity-schools: Which doubtless will stand more clear of objections, and best answer the end of their institution, when they pretend to no more than to prepare children to be good christians, and good servants."

This wise and sagacious prelate, who well knows the conduct and state of many of the charity-schools in the church of *England*, saw sufficient reason for these cautions: He found that there were too many of these schools of ancient, if not of later, foundation, wherein children are taught latin, greek, mathematics, and many parts of learning, which are by no means necessary for the poorer sort of mankind: And therefore he gives prudent advice against it. But the schools among the protestant dissenters have no such supports and endowments: They are poor in the contributions that support them; and as their poverty confines them to teach only a few plain and necessary things, so the very notion of charity-schools should forbid these refinements, lest too much of the younger life of children should be spent therein, and be withheld from more necessary business and labour for their own maintenance.

Three years of diligence and application under prudent teachers, will furnish most of the children of the poor with reading, writing and arithmetic enough for their future stations of life, provided they are not taken into these schools too young: And indeed, it is my opinion, they ought seldom to be admitted under eight or nine years old; and, that when they have spent two or three years in learning, they may go forth to some of the harder labours, and lower businesses of life, that are suited to their rank. I confess if it could be contrived so that half the day should be spent in labour, and half in learning, then they might be indulged in a larger space of

time, and this mixture of labour and learning, would render the charity-schools much more useful, and free from all exceptions: But of this I have spoken before.

And yet after all, I cannot but beg leave to put in one word of apology for here and there a lad of a bright genius, that may happen to be found in these schools of charity. If any one blessed with more sprightly talents of nature, should make a swifter progress in learning than his fellows, and discover uncommon seeds of ingenuity and science, let him not be thrust out of the schools sooner than his neighbours, out of a mere caution lest he should learn too much. I would become an intercessor, that he might not be turned abroad into the wide world, before the common term of years in that school is fulfilled, merely because he happens to have better parts than his school-fellows, and hath improved his time better than they. This would be a most unreasonable and grievous discouragement of industry, and a hard penalty laid upon wit and virtue.

**OBJECTION VIII.** But if these children of the poor, who are supported by the charity of others, be trained up in reading, writing and arithmetic, will not this render them qualified for clerkship, or book-keeping, or any better sort of place or employment, where learning is necessary? And then they become "competitors for such places with others of equal talents, who have yet far better pretensions to them." The sons of tradesmen and mechanics, who have paid public-taxes and parish-dues, and even have given bread and clothes to the poor, their sons have a right to be employed in all these stations, as clerks or servants to merchants and others, wherein there is a prospect of advancement in life: And there are a thousand such in *England*; but if the charity-bred youth are preferred before them, it is taking the bread from those, whose fathers have fed, and clothed, and fostered them, to the prejudice of their own children.

**Answer.** The foregoing account of the slender and low degrees of learning, which are bestowed on the children in our charity-schools, seems to anticipate and exclude this complaint. There are none of these poor who are, or ought to be bred up to such an accomplished skill in writing and accompts, as to be qualified for any of these posts; except here and there a single lad, whose bright genius, and whose constant application and industry have out-run all his fellows: And for such an one I have pleaded before, that he might not be thrust out of school the sooner, and be punished merely for his ingenuity and diligence.

As for the children or orphans of those who have fed and clothed the poor, and have lived in good fashion in the world, but have fallen into decay and poverty, I presume it would not displease the persons who make this objection, to see here and there one of them qualified for a little better business: For this is perfectly agreeable to their own sentiments, viz. That the children of persons who have lived well, and paid taxes, should have the first and chief benefits and advantages of lower life offered them, since they have the best pretensions to them.

**OBJECTION IX.** Suppose it be allowed, that the children of the poor, be indulged the favour of learning to read and write, to add and subtract a few figures, since you have shewn that these things are so useful to servants and labourers: But why then are they not all made servants either to gentlemen, to farmers or to house-keepers? Why are they not bred up all to the plough in the country, or to be mere labourers in the city, or confined to household services or menial offices of life? "Why must any of them be placed out in a way of apprenticeship, to trades and manufactures?" Even this is a discouragement to the children of those persons of a little higher rank who

who have paid taxes, and helped to maintain the poor in their parishes: And unless all these children of a little better rank were supplied with such trades, none of the poor bred up by charity, should have the advantage of such apprenticeships.

Answer. In most of the schools of the country, and in some of those in *London*, both the boys and the girls, are bred up with a design for service and hard labour abroad, or for such mean works or businesses, as their own parents can employ them in at home. The girls, as I have hinted before, are taught to read, spin, sew and knit, and to perform domestic labours, and being made fit for service in families, they are placed out in such services. The boys are called home perhaps, to assist their fathers in their poor labours of life, wherein they get their bread. But in some of the schools in and near *London*, and in some considerable towns, if there be a small provision made for their being put apprentices to the poorer trades, such as shoe-makers, taylor, water-men, gardeners, workmen in timber, iron, &c. there are several considerations, which I have learned by converse about these matters, which may be offered in favour of it.

Consideration I. If all the children of the poor both in city and country, were entirely cut off from trades and manufactures, there would not be families enough in *England* to receive them all as menial servants, or as retainers to the plough.

And besides, one may ask the question, why should menial servants be multiplied beyond all necessity, since too many of them in great families, are bred up rather in idleness than labour? The business of common handicrafts, is much more laborious than the common domestic service in most families.

Consideration II. It is not menial servants, but mechanics and manufacturers that increase the commodities, and thereby the riches of the nation. And if the wealth of the nation be more increased by the number of manufactures which the nation produces, why should the apprenticeships of some of the poor, to these low mechanical trades in great towns and cities, be a forbidden exercise of bounty and charity? At least this argument will hold as to those mechanical businesses of life, which are not already over-stocked: And I have been assured, that the managers of charity-schools have a just regard to this, in placing out the children of the poor.

Consideration III. The same assurances have also been given me, that there is great want of apprentices to several of these meaner trades: The master-workmen address themselves frequently to the managers of these schools, to help them to lads fit to be trained up in their trades and occupations. As the nation continually multiplies, so more of the necessaries of life are wanted, and increase the want of these mechanic arts. Let it be observed also, that the children of every common tradesman, are aspiring to better business: The working shops and stalls of these meanest mechanic artificers want more hands, and seek for apprentices; so that there is no detriment done to the children of these tradesmen, by supplying them with servants out of our charity-schools.

Consideration IV. Many of the children of these lower tradesmen are taught to read and write in our schools, and have instructions in the things of religion given them there. Such tradesmen, I mean, who are honest and industrious, but by reason of a numerous family, by losses or sickness, or other events of providence, are kept still under poverty: Their children are not only taught in our charity-schools, but also they enjoy the benefit of being placed out in apprenticeships proper to their character. And these very persons have thankfully accepted of the instruction of their children in these schools.

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Consideration V. There is another reason that may encourage the managers of these schools to place out some children apprentices to manufacturers. Many of them are orphans, without father or mother, and they have no friends to provide business for them : Others have parents who cannot provide any employment for them : Now some children in the country, and multitudes who are born and bred up in *London*, would not know whither to go, or how to employ themselves, nor where to offer themselves for servants at eleven, or twelve, or thirteen years old : What family will take them in when they are capable of doing so little of the business of a footman ? But at that age they may be employed in several of the manufactures of the land, if they are carefully and prudently placed in such a station.

Consideration VI. If these children are turned out of these schools to shift in the wide world too early, or to spend their time at random, many of them will forget their learning, and lose the benefits they had obtained by being taught in schools. Some of them would not only forget the good lessons of religion and morality, but even the knowledge of letters and syllables, till they cannot read their bibles, and run wild again in the world : But when they are placed by the managers of these schools in sober families, they engage their masters to see that they keep their learning in some good measure and make use of it.

Consideration VII. I add in the last place, that if neither parents nor friends of any kind take care to fix children in some particular business, nor place them in sober families, where they may be under due government, they will be in danger of growing idle and slothful, they will wander about the streets and lanes, and lie exposed to all manner of iniquity. Sometimes the wicked propensities of nature, and sometimes the necessities of nature will tempt them to cheating, stealing, robbing, &c. and they will be in danger of falling into shameless intemperance of every kind. The remains of their younger education, may be some check upon them indeed, and lay their consciences under some restraint ; yet at best, in this great city, even children who are well instructed in their younger years, are too much exposed to wicked company and mischief, if there be no care taken to provide any fixed employment for them. But, on the other hand, as it is well expressed in Mr. *Neal's* charity-sermon, page 19. " If you give them learning, and put them to a trade, you give them a lasting inheritance ; for understanding, even in this sense, is a well-spring of life to him that hath it : It is a treasure that can never be taken from them ; and therefore this must be the best way of shewing compassion to the children of the poor."

OBJECTION X. But why must these children of the poor be clothed as well as taught ? Why must they have a suit of new apparel given them yearly ? This clothing makes the young creatures value themselves too highly, especially while their raiment is new : They are ready to think better of themselves than becomes them ; and while they have it given them once a year, they are tempted to rank themselves with children of better fashion ; their little souls are puffed up with pride, and their spirits are raised above their circumstances.

To this, I answer in general. There are very few schools of charity among dissenters, where the contributions arise high enough to provide clothing for the scholars : Nor is it necessary nor proper, that it should be done where the money may be better expended in their instruction, or in training them up to such employments whereby they may support themselves, or where any inconveniencies arising from it are greater than the good done by it. Yet where the liberality of benefactors will reach



reach so far, in great towns, and especially in the chief city, there may be several things offered in the defence of it.

I. The covering of the poor and naked, in general, is a work of liberality approved in scripture, recommended to christians, and joined with that of feeding the hungry, and giving drink to those that are athirst; and it has a blessing pronounced upon it: Why then may not these poor children be sometimes the objects of such liberality, who have scarce any garments to cover them? Indeed, many of them are so miserable in their own nastiness and their tatters, that they are hardly fit to come into a society that is well ordered, and to meet together in a school in order to their education, without some more convenient apparel than what their parents can provide them. This is an act of charity and bounty to the poor parents themselves, who are not capable to provide the necessaries of life for their off-spring. Besides,

II. Let it be considered, that the clothes which are bestowed upon them once in a year or two, are of the coarsest kind, and of the plainest form, and thus they are sufficiently distinguished from children of better rank, and they ought always to be so distinguished.

I grant if their clothing were the same with that of other children of higher circumstances, the temptation might be strong, and the objection might have some force: But there is no ground for these charity children to grow vain and proud of their raiment, when it is but a sort of livery, that publicly declares those who wear it, to be educated by charity.

Let me add also,

In the third place, that there are so great numbers of these charity-schools erected by the members of the established church, not only in *London*, but in many other places too, where the children of the poor are taught and clothed, and put out apprentices to useful trades, that many of the poor among us, would be laid under great temptations to send their children to these schools, to be educated in those forms of worship, which they disapprove, and in religious sentiments different from their parents.

OBJECTION XI. I know it will be smartly replied here, "And where is the hurt of all this?" What if they are educated in all the forms of the church of *England*? Surely, the difference between the dissenters and the church, is not so great and formidable, but that the poor should be willing to accept of such an education for their children, since they are not able to bring them up without the charity of others.

To this, I answer,

First, That it is readily granted, that the religion itself, in substance of it, is the same, which is professed and practised by both parties. God forbid, that I should suppose that a good education of youth in the established church, should prevent their usefulness here on earth, or their arrival at heaven. I hope, and believe, there are thousands of holy souls in the church of *England*, which are beloved of God, and shall be for ever happy in his presence. I love them heartily, and rejoice in the success of their ministers, and beg of God their labours may be more abundantly blessed to the honour of God, and the eternal happiness of a great multitude of souls.

Yet I beg leave humbly to mention, what every body knows, that there are some forms and ceremonies, which were invented by men, and which *Christ* never appointed, that are yet imposed on the ministers and the people in that church; not to mention some other disadvantages which the protestant dissenters have many times complained of. Now the poor have consciences as well as the rich; and the poor are concerned as well as the rich to have their children trained up in that way of worship

ship which they think most agreeable to the will of God: And why should they be put under such temptations to resign up their children to a different education, if there may be another provision made for them, by a very small exercise of liberality among their own richer friends, who have the same religious sentiments with themselves.

Since our governors have been so just and kind to us, as to abolish those cruel, and unrighteous laws which forbid us to worship God according to our consciences, or to train up children in our own schools, why should not the poor among us be partakers of this privilege, as well as the rich? And why should not the rich among us be a little solicitous, that through their bounty and charity, their poor brethren might enjoy the advantage of bringing up their off-spring in their own way of worship, which the law of the land indulges, and which they themselves rejoice in?

Besides, it should be added here, that in all our dissenting schools, they are only taught the assembly's catechism, and in some, they are brought once a day to attend the public worship in our congregations, without any private influences to set them against the church of *England*, or to make them bigots to any sect or party. As we refuse no children of the members of the established church, so we teach them nothing that I know of inconsistent with their continuance in that church.

In the second place, I answer, that though some few of these charity-schools in the established church, may perhaps indulge moderate principles, and have some favourable opinion of the protestant dissenters; yet it has been sufficiently evident, that too great a part of them have trained up children in a furious and blind opposition to all who separate from the church of *England*.

And if parents, who know not these things, should be tempted for the sake of clothes and apprenticeship, to permit their children to learn a different way of worship, which they do not so well approve of, yet it is hard, to think that they should be almost constrained to send them to such schools, as may not only fill their heads with party-notions\*, but also tincture their hearts with a bitter party-zeal; such schools as may not only give them a set of different principles, but might indulge them to mock and deride the religious sentiments of their parents. And yet this might be the case in many places, where the protestant dissenters are very poor; they would fain have their children taught to read and write, yet perhaps there is no other charity-school near them, but such as hates the name of a dissenter.

And after all, I must entreat leave to observe, that this is not the worst of the case. The children in many of these public schools, would not only be brought up with an aversion to the religious sentiments and practices of their parents, but would be also in great danger of learning to hate the present government under his most excellent majesty king *GEORGE*, and to rail at the establishment in the protestant succession, which is the glory of *Great Britain*, the defence of the reformed religion, and the securest guard of the liberties of *Europe*. This is not spoken at random, for I shall produce a most unquestionable authority for it, who declares it to have been lately so notorious, as that it is not possible to be denied. Now the education of youth in such schools, would not only prove the highest inconvenience and mischief to the children themselves, but a very great injury to the whole nation, and to mankind; and this would be the evident and unhappy effect, unless these schools are  
vastly

\* See Mr. *Candler's* sermon for the benefit of a charity-school, *January* 1. 1727-8. pages 34, 35.

vastly reformed from these hateful practices, and freed from the dishonourable character, which most of them bore, and which many of them merited in years past.

The right reverend the lord bishop of *London*, whose words I cited a little before, is a very great friend to these schools of charity; but he does not deny but that there has been too just ground for complaint some years ago, that in many of them the children have been trained up to a disaffection to our present government. His words are these: "This is a very heavy objection indeed, viz. that in many of the charity-schools, the children are trained up to disaffection to the government, and it is a point that the government is nearly concerned to look after, since it is to little purpose to subdue and conquer the present ill humours, if a succession of disaffected persons is to be perpetually nursing up in our schools. And it is as little to be expected that any persons who are well-affected to the government, should contribute to the maintenance of such schools, as long as the opinion of this disaffection continues."

After that, his lordship hopes and believes, "that there is not at present the like ground to complain of disaffection in our charity-schools, as there was some years ago;" yet he acknowledges, that "while the protestant succession remained doubtful, and no stone was left unturned to defeat it, some persons who had their views a different way, that is, jacobites, endeavoured to get the management of these schools into their hands, and to make them instrumental in nourishing and spreading an aversion to the protestant settlement. Which, says he, was so notorious, as well from some particular recommendations of masters and mistresses, as from the behaviour of too many of the children themselves; that the fact as to that time, cannot possibly be denied." His lordship indeed concludes, "that there is great reason to believe that much of this leaven is worked out;" and he is willing to hope, that since things are better, true and loyal subjects will begin to think more favourably of them.

It must be confessed his lordship, who is a most sincere and hearty friend to the protestant succession in the house of *Hanover*, hath employed his zeal and influence to recover the charity-schools of the established church from this bad character: But things are not changed all of a sudden; and his lordship gives us but very low and doubtful indications of any universal change for the better, when he only tells us, "there is not the like ground to complain of disaffection, as there was some years ago, and there is great reason to believe much of this leaven is worked out." Though perhaps there may be too much of it still remaining. And what a dismal thing would it be, if a great part of the poor among the protestant dissenters, whose zeal for the present government, is their known and constant glory, if these very persons by the temptation of clothing and trades to be provided for their children, should be allured to place them under such sort of masters and mistresses as the bishop describes? What if their children should abhor, mock and ridicule the particular modes of religion which their parents practise; if they should ridicule and curse their parents for fanatics and presbyterians? And at the same time, if these young creatures, should be in danger also of growing up to practise sedition and rebellion against our excellent king and his posterity in years to come. I heartily join with his lordship to hope better things, and wish his zeal for a reformation may have great success.

Yet I think I ought to add a word in this place also, in favour of the poor of the church of *England*, who love and value the present government, and the protestant succession: What a grief would it be to them, if they should find their own children when grown up, to become enemies to the illustrious house of *Hanover*,

and to be deeply tinctured with such principles as are contrary to the interest of *Great-Britain*, and to the civil and religious liberty of men and christians?

On this occasion therefore, I think it may not be amiss to request every subscriber for the support of any charity-school, to make due and strict enquiry, Whether the teachers and governors of it, are hearty and zealous friends of the present government? That they may not lay out their money to propagate sedition instead of virtue, and to nourish the seeds of rebellion in the rising age, and lay a foundation for our future slavery and ruin.

Wheresoever therefore there is the least danger of this kind, surely every true briton must consent to say, "Let charity-schools among protestant dissenters go on to clothe the naked, and to furnish the poor with trades, and to breed them up in all the forms of useful knowledge and industry, lest their needy parents should be tempted to venture them into dangerous nurseries, and lest their children should grow up to become the factious disturbers of our protestant government, as well as the persecutors and tormentors of their parents." If some persons are still of opinion, that the clothing of poor children may be attended with some inconvenience; I think it is but a small one, and it ought to be endured rather than the danger of a far greater evil should be incurred.

Upon the whole, I conclude, That those who are dissatisfied with the clothing of children in these schools of charity among the dissenters, are desired to contribute something towards their being taught to read, and write, and cast accompts; that they may be disposed of to some of the lowest businesses of life: Those that are displeas'd with their using the pen, or their learning to make figures, let them contribute something towards their learning to read the bible: Or if there are any persons that can suppose that this is too much knowledge for them; yet even then they may give something towards the forming their rude and ignorant minds, and correcting their brutal manners, towards their being taught in a school something of religion and a catechism that they may learn to worship God, and know their duties to men.

If you have any desire that the poor of the nation should not be left to grow up in all manner of vice and iniquity, and become a burden and a nuisance to the kingdom, if you have any value for the preservation of property, for the propagation of virtue or religion and the transmission of them to the next age, if you have any tenderness for the immortal souls of mankind, and any zeal for the honour of God in the growing generation, bestow a mite toward the support of this most useful and generous charity: Give something towards the instruction and education of a company of wretched young creatures, that they may be taken from the street, that they may be rescued from the vile company of those that curse and swear, rob and steal, that they may be kept from fatal temptations to drunkenness, lewdness and vile intemperance, and be preserved from sin and ruin.

If by the good effects of this slender education which you bestow upon them they should ever hereafter grow up to become useful members of civil society, and a blessing to the world, the following age shall thankfully acknowledge your hand in it, and the children themselves shall call you blessed: And above all, if they are by this means trained up to the fear of God, to the faith of Christ, and the practice of sincere piety, there will be so many precious souls rescued from the gates of hell, and so many blessed inhabitants added to the heavenly regions, What a grateful and surprising pleasure will it be to you to see such a glorious harvest sprung up there from your grains of charity scattered here on earth? What an unspeakable joy to reflect that you have been made the happy instruments of this salvation? And your labour of love shall not be forgotten in the great and solemn day of recompence.

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## A P P E N D I X.

Containing a short account of the signal and surprising appearances of God in his providence for the erecting and the support of a charity-school among the *Pietists*, or *Puritans*, in *Germany*.

**I**T is now about thirty years ago, that some masters of art; in the university of *Leipsick*, in *Saxony*, set up a private conference among themselves for the better understanding of scripture, and for the regulating their studies and their conversation accordingly: The first part of that exercise was critical, to find out the literal meaning of the text, and the other part consisted in the deducing of propositions and practical uses from it. This was kept up with good success for some time in a private chamber after evening service was over on sundays. One of the persons concerned in this affair was Mr. *Augustus Hermannus Frank*. Many of the young students were powerfully wrought on by this plain and practical way of reading the bible, and excited to an ardent love for the study of the holy scriptures, rather minding now the hearty reformation of their souls and conversion from darkness to light than unnecessary strifes and disputes. They always begun and ended with prayer.

When this thing began to have a wider spread and influence, the other students who had no mind to enter upon a new course of life, in derision called them *Pietists*, as our fathers in *England* were called *Puritans*, and much on the same account. The clamours against them grew fierce and violent, the pulpits rung with this new name of reproach, ecclesiastical courts bestirred themselves, and the first instruments of *pietism* were banished from *Leipsick*: Mr. *Frank* was persecuted from place to place, till at last, by the providence of God, he was chosen professor of the oriental languages at the university of *Hall*, and pastor of *Glauchau*, in the suburbs of that city.

This good man when he was settled at *Glauchau*, being grieved at the gross ignorance of the poor and at their wicked lives, appointed them to come every thursday to his house in order to make some charitable distributions amongst them, and to instruct

struct them in the things of God. This was about the year 1694. The next year he fixed an alms-box in his parlour, and in a little time a certain person put into it at once about the value of eighteen shillings and six-pence. He took this in his hands and said in full assurance of faith, "This is now a considerable fund, worthy to be laid out in some important undertaking; wherefore, I will even take this for the foundation of a charity school." The same day he bought as many books as cost eight shillings, and then got a student to teach the poor children two hours in a day. He fitted up a place before his study for a charity-school, and fixed a box on one of the walls. At the top thereof, he set down these words: "For defraying the charges of putting to school poor children and providing books and other necessaries;" *Anno MDCXCV*. And at the bottom, *Prov. xix. 17. He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and, that which he hath given, will he pay him again.*

"We had, saith he, many poor children brought together before we had built a house to receive them: In the mean time the Lord inclined the heart of a person of quality to lay out the sum of a thousand crowns for the use of the poor: And two other persons supplied us with four hundred crowns to encourage the design on foot.

Much of this money was spent in feeding and clothing and instructing the orphans before they begun to build a hospital: and, as the author expresses it; "The Lord knows we had not so much as would answer the cost of a small cottage, much less a building as might hold two hundred people: But the Lord strengthened my faith, and on July 13, 1698. the foundation of a hospital was laid in the name of God; and as for the building itself I was to wait upon God, and from week to week receive at his hand what he would be graciously pleased to furnish me with for carrying on the same."

The pious author goes on and informs us how successfully the building proceeded in opposition to all the froward censures of ill-meaning people, by the most unforeseen and amazing instances of the liberality of persons known and unknown, which brought in daily, weekly, and sometimes hourly supplies both for the support of the orphans and the building of the house; till it has at last arisen to such a fair extent and to the support and instruction of so many hundreds of the poor as to become the glory of the *German* churches, the wonder of the nations, and the most miraculous instance of the effect of faith and prayer that was ever known of this kind, not only since the days of the apostles, but perhaps since the creation.

It is hardly possible to read the account without a sacred astonishment. There we find to what an extreme necessity they were at several times reduced in the building, and yet before night their supplies were as suitable, sufficient and surprising, as if an angel had been appointed to oversee the work, and to take care that the workmen were paid.

God has not only manifested his divine approbation of charity-schools by such a perpetual series of testimonies, as it were, from heaven promoting this building and supplying their wants, but the success of this work in the conversion of a multitude of souls here, and in spreading vital religion through many adjacent countries gives a further demonstration how pleasing it has been to God.

Out of these schools under the care of this great and pious man hath proceeded a great number of pious and learned tutors for gentlemen's children, schoolmasters and divines who have done much towards the spreading a new and lively favour of christianity through many of the provinces of *Germany*; and besides this, they have educated multitudes of honest and pious christians who were taken in here as orphans, and

and who have been placed out to various trades, artifices and labours in life, whereby there is a considerable reformation in those parts of the world and a glorious change from a cold formal lifeless profession of religion to the practice of solid piety and goodness.

The late reverend and pious doctor *Josiah Woodward*, the present right reverend doctor *Kennet* bishop of *Peterborough*, and other divines of the church of *England* have given their public encomiums of this strange and surprizing work of liberality several years ago. It was a most heavy and painful stroke which this glorious scene of piety and charity sustained last year by the death of the most excellent founder professor *Frank*, but the work is still carried on by his worthy successors, and may the same happy success still attend it through a rich supply of the spirit of Christ among them.

The larger account of these things is contained in several narratives written by professor *Frank* himself, and by the late pious Mr. *William Anthony Boehm*, chaplain to the late prince *George* of *Denmark*; these are all put together and prefaced by doctor *Woodward*; printed by Mr. *Downing* in *Bartbolomew-Close*: And are well worth the perusal of the present age, to let them see there is a divine providence in the world, and a divine approbation of sincere works of charity.

A S E R M O N





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S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

*S A L T E R S - H A L L,*

TO THE

S O C I E T I E S

FOR

Reformation of Manners,

In the CITIES of

L O N D O N and WESTMINSTER.

O C T O B E R 6th, 1707.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

GRADUATE COURSE

PHYSICS 311

LECTURE NOTES

BY [Name]

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A

S E R M O N

TO ENCOURAGE the

Reformation of Manners.

EXOD. XVII. 11.

*And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.*

**T**HOUGH the design of my discourse be derived from this sentence in the history, yet it is necessary that the scene of the whole action be drawn, and the field of battle spread before us; then we shall see this passage in it's true light, and the discourse will proceed in a more regular conformity to the words; nor can I describe the fight with *Amalek* so well as *Moses* has done: Let us read the account which this ancient and divine historian has given, beginning at the eighth verse.

Verse 8. "Then came *Amalek*, and fought with *Israel* in *Rephidim*. 9. And *Moses* said unto *Joshua*, chuse us out men, and go out, fight with *Amalek*: To morrow I will stand on the top of the hill, with the rod of God in my hand. 10. So *Joshua* did as *Moses* had said to him, and fought with *Amalek*: And *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Hur* went up to the top of the hill. 11. And it came to pass when *Moses* held up his hand, that *Israel* prevailed; and when he let down his hand, *Amalek* prevailed. 12. But *Moses* hands were heavy, and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon: And *Aaron* and *Hur* stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. 13. And *Joshua* discomfited *Amalek* and his people with the edge of the sword.

Vol. II.

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14. And

14. And the Lord said unto *Moses*, write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of *Joshua*: For I will utterly put out the remembrance of *Amalek* from under heaven. 15. And *Moses* built an altar, and called the name of it *Jehovah-nissi*, that is, the Lord is my banner. 16. For he said, because the Lord has sworn, that the Lord will have war with *Amalek* from generation to generation."

Not only the ceremonies of the *jewish* church, but the civil affairs of that nation, in many instances, were typical of the christian state: Their release from the house of bondage, and their march through the wilderness to *Canaan* was a shadow of our rescue from the slavery of sin, and our travels through this desert-world to the heavenly country. Their rebellions and murmurings, their fiery serpents and destructive plagues which swept them away by thousands, were but a figure of our sins and sorrows, our backslidings and divine judgments. This is evident to those who will read and believe what *St. Paul* writes to the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* x. 1—11. Where, after he had briefly recounted their transgressions and punishments, he asserts verse 11. that "all these things happened unto them for examples, or types, as it is in the original; or these things fell out typically, τυπικῶς, as the *Alexandrine* manuscript in the royal library bids us read it; "and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

The enemies they met with in their way, represent those sinners that vex the christian church in its journey through this mortal state; and *Amalek* may well figure out the biggest impieties, the most daring and profane wretches, against whom it concerns a christian to make his utmost efforts: For these were the people that came first out against *Israel*, just after their escape from the hand of *Pharaoh*: They came out with violence and without any provocation; they were those against whom the "Lord swore he would have everlasting war," verse 16. or such whose "hand was lifted up against the throne of the Lord," as some translate this phrase. It is a description of sins and sinners of a bold and impious character, that fight directly against heaven and holiness, against the light of nature and the laws of God and nations: Such as the Lord hath resolved that the remembrance of them shall utterly be blotted out, verse 14.

It is against such iniquities and such transgressors, immoralities and wickednesses of the biggest size that you have taken up arms, who appoint and attend this season of worship; and my soul shall rejoice if ye may be this day animated to pursue the war.

Now let us take a survey of the several persons that are placed in their proper posts and offices in this warfare against *Amalek*. Here is *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Hur*, *Joshua*, and the chosen men of *Israel*.

*Moses* the law giver, the supreme magistrate: "He was king in *Jeshurun* when the heads of the people and the tribes of *Israel* were gathered together," *Deut.* xxxiii. 4, 5. He gave orders to *Joshua* to fight the *Amalekites*, while himself stood on the top of the hill, with the rod of God in his hand. This may be called a rod of authority and command, whereby his orders were continued: It was a scepter in the hand of *Moses*, and the most powerful one that ever was held by a prince: It was a rod for signal, like an ensign or banner, to encourage the soldiers: It was a rod of faith, for by faith alone it could produce wonders: Wonders of destruction upon *Egypt*, wonders of division upon rocks and *Red-seas*, wonders of deliverance for *Israel*, and all this without any natural force of its own; for it received all its power from faith, and from the presence of divinity with it. It was lifted up constantly from an eminent place where *Moses* stood, whence the holy army might see it, and obey

obey orders, and renew their courage in battle. Though the hands of *Moses* seem to have been lifted up alternately, and not together, yet because the lifting up of the hands sometimes in scripture signifies prayer, therefore the constant fervency of intercession may be also implied here; and no doubt but these earnest requests to heaven, which this man of God offered upon the mount, while the people were fighting below, had a mighty influence on the labour and success of the day.

Blessed be God, we have a *Moses* in the midst of us on the top of the hill, a queen of a manly soul upon the throne of our *british Israel*: She has by her royal proclamations given order to fight with *Amalek*, to oppose and suppress the armies of iniquity: She still holds up the rod of command; and it may be well called the rod of God, not only because all authority is derived from God as the original source of government; but because here it is held up in his quarrel too. It shall be called a rod of faith and of power, for it has wrought wonders at a distance: This the fields of *Blenheim* witness, and the plains of *Ramillies*; wonders of rescue for the *german* empire, and wonders of liberty for mankind. Her hand is still stretched out against the enemies of heaven at home and abroad; and we have still reason to believe, that it is lifted up in addresses to heaven by faith and prayer, that all the adversaries of the Lord may be overcome. O may her life be precious in the sight of the Lord, and guarded by the angel of the covenant, as the life of *Moses* was! May her days be many, as the days of *Moses*! *Deut. xxxiv. 7.* May her eye never grow dim to the true interest of our *Israel*, nor her natural force and resolution to fight the battles of the Lord be ever abated!

*Aaron* is the next person mentioned here, *Aaron* the high-priest, though, perhaps he was not at this time invested with that office, yet being designed for it, we may take him now under this character; he was to assist *Moses* in bearing up his hand on the one side, as *Hur* on the other: We have also the ministers of the gospel in our age attending this holy warfare: Those whom the favour of her majesty hath advanced near to her royal person support her hands in this design, encourage her zeal to lift up this standard against sin, and assist her to pray for victory: Nor are these who lie at a distance from the throne, but still within the verge and shadow of it's protection, less zealous in their assistance of the war, or less fervent in pleading with God for success. O may our *Aarons* never grow weary of encouraging the work of reformation, and giving their utmost aid to the pious design of our supreme magistrate! May they still revive and quicken the languishing diligence of all that have engaged in the same cause! And wheresoever men are joined in societies, to build the house of God, or to demolish the houses of *Satan*, there let it be always said, that "with them are the prophets of God helping them, *Ezra v. 2.*

*Hur* follows the mention of *Aaron*, and his post is to support the other hand of *Moses* against *Amalek*: His character seems to be a prudent man, and a considerable counsellor, *Exod. xxiv. 14.* when *Moses* left the camp of *Israel* for a season, "behold, saith he to the people, *Aaron* and *Hur* are with you; if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them." The rod of power lifted up by the civil magistrate must be well managed by the hand of zeal, and the hand of prudence. Ministers and counsellors are the supports on each side to exhort to the work, and advise the best methods of performance. All persons and societies that are contriving means of reformation, fall under the character of *Hur*; such are those gentlemen who have formed a scheme for carrying on war with sin and sinners, and brought their methods to a regularity and consistence; they have made the execution of them practicable, and much easier than at first. Our praises are due to the God of wisdom

dom that such men are found in the nation ; that the prudent man is not cut off, nor the counsellor perished from amongst us : O may their pious consultations be continued in their stated seasons ! May they be executed with daily vigour, and attended with growing success !

*Joshua* is the chief person concerned in the execution of these orders of battle against *Amalek* ; he ventures into the field, and fights the enemy. The inferior magistrates of every kind and degree bear a resemblance to his office, and should wear the image of his spirit ; courage and resolution becomes each of you that act according to the several ranks of your authority ; fear not the rage nor the threats of *Amalek*, of the most profligate and haughty sinners ; remember you have the warrant of *Moses* for what you do : The supreme magistrate ceases not to lift up the rod.

The chosen men of *Israel* are the last character I take notice of here ; they assist *Joshua* in the performance of his divine orders ; such are those brave and generous spirits, whether of larger or meaner outward circumstances, who pursue sin and sinners with the peril of their lives, and lead them captive to courts of justice that they may be punished. In vain had *Joshua* received his commands for battle, if no man of *Israel* had ventured into the field to assist him ; had he went alone, perhaps he might have slain a few enemies, and then perished himself ; in vain would a magistrate attempt to suppress a nation of sinners if he had none to aid him ; but few, very few can come under the notice of his own eyes, and by the fear of numbers he might well be discouraged from punishing those few. If there were none to discover the enemies, or to guard himself, he could scarce fulfil the sentence of the law against them ; but when *Moses*, *Aaron* and *Hur*, *Joshua* and the chosen men, all stand firm and maintain their posts, then *Amalek* is discomfited, and a nation of sinners rooted out.

There was a time indeed when *Moses* upon the banks of the *Red-sea* said to the people, “ stand still and see the salvation of the Lord,” *Exod. xiv. 13.* And they stood still, and the salvation appeared : But God doth not always work miracles of deliverance without the use of instruments : Here *Joshua* and *Israel* are required to take up arms for their own defence ; and if the captains or the soldiers had fled from the battle, *Amalek* had prevailed as well as if *Moses* had ceased to lift up his hand. I may venture then to lay down this great truth as the foundation of my following discourse.

“ When a war with sin is begun in a nation, it must be carried on without ceasing, or iniquity will prevail.” Every one must stand to his post and fulfil his charge, lest the troops of the reformation be routed, and sin with all its legions overspread the country.

To render this proposition more evident to the mind, and more powerful over the will, I shall take this method.

I. Prove that sin will prevail, if the war be neglected which you have happily begun, and carried on thus far.

II. Set before you some of the dreadful consequents of prevailing iniquity.

III. Remove the discouragements that may be ready to make your hands hang down in this work.

IV. By a few encouraging hints, endeavour to raise any that are sinking, and to strengthen all your resolutions in this glorious service to God and your country.

FIRST, We may prove that iniquity will prevail if the war be neglected by these three considerations.

I. Consider that the nature of fallen man is turned aside from God, averse to all that is holy, and prone to wickedness : And if divine grace doth not renew the heart,

heart, the life will grow old in transgression, and abound in guilt. Where the root is bitterness, and the tree vice, every branch that is not cut off will encrease and multiply in fruits of poison and death; for "a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit," if we believe the words of our Saviour, *Luke vi. 43.* And *St. Paul* affirms, that "evil men wax worse and worse," *2 Tim. iii. 13.* "Conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity," is our original character, *Psal. li. 5.* And infants "go astray from the womb, as soon as they be born, speaking lies," *Psal. lviii. 3.* Sin enlarges itself with the stature, and gets strength with age; and where there are no methods of check or restraint, the children of *Adam* grow up to giants in wickedness. Our daily observation confirms the divine remark of *Solomon, Eccles. viii. 11.* "because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil:" The late discourse on these words demands my review, and I think it may deserve your's.

Besides, while man is unregenerate and under the full dominion of sin, he takes occasion from the blessings of heaven to increase in wantonness. Peace and plenty are abused to excite luxury and lust; and the mercies of God are turned into weapons of rebellion to fight against him. It is the nature of some serpents to turn the sweetest food they eat into venom; and where distempered humours reign in the body, the richest provisions nourish the disease, and advance the mischief. Such was the sin of *Sodom*; I mourn that in our nation we have any reason to say our sister *Sodom*. Let us read *Ezek. xvi. 48, 49, 50.* with fear and trembling. The Lord swears concerning a city that had as many outward characters of holiness upon it, as *London* can pretend to, that she had rivalled and exceeded that lewd and infamous people. "As I live, saith the Lord God, *Sodom* thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold this was the iniquity of thy sister *Sodom*, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her, and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy: And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me; therefore I took them away, as I saw good." O that the provinces of *Great Britain* may never follow the vile example! That *London* had never known her sins, or may root them out speedily, lest she be partaker of the same fiery vengeance!

II. Consider the abounding of iniquity before you began this work of reformation, and this will convince you that it will abound again, if the work cease. Though perhaps some particular sins were not so much talked of before, yet sinners of various kinds were much more numerous, more public and more shameless. The streets rung with oaths and blasphemy; the taverns were nightly witnesses of lust and drunkenness; open houses of abomination were maintained with many inhabitants, and the fields were polluted with lewdness in the very face of heaven, in the sight of the sun or stars. But those who have been engaged in cleansing this sink of sin, and driving impudent crimes into dark corners, those who have fought against the powers of darkness with so great success, can enlarge on this reflexion plentifully: You may most effectually convince yourselves, that crimes will grow numerous and shameless again, if you forbear the prosecution.

III. Consider that sinners are provoked and irritated by war proclaimed against them; their rage is double, and they will use their utmost efforts to revenge by augmenting their forces and their crimes; poor revenge, that rebounds against themselves with fiercer violence, and shoots the sting deeper into their own hearts; that treasures up more wrath for their own souls, and bigger measures of damnation! Praised be the Lord, that this their rage is impotent, while the men of reformation maintain

maintain the war; "Though the wicked join hand in hand, yet they are not unpunished," *Prov. xi. 21.* But you have awakened their malice, so that you may expect abounding villanies, if you cease to resist them.

Some foolish men indeed have unjustly made this your reproach, and cry out, "It is you have provoked them to break out into unknown and uncommon wickedness, by shutting up all the avenues of common sins." But this is a charge very hard to be proved; for it is possible that the same wickedness was practised before, though discovered but of late by your industry and courage. The rising sun must not be charged with the scenes of blood and murder, which it only reveals. Besides, were such sins seldom committed before, yet it does by no means follow that reformation is the cause of them now: I believe there were no reformers in *Sodom*; or if there were, surely *Lot* must be one: Now *Lot* through the prevalence of fear was once tempted to expose his daughters and permit a common sin, but this did not restrain the people from their mad pursuit of unnatural violence.

After all, if this accusation were true, yet I would ask these men who reproach you thus, whether they themselves would freely indulge and cherish the eggs of a cockatrice in their house, lest while they are crushing them, now and then a scorpion should creep out, or a fiery serpent fly abroad? Would they themselves willingly sleep with a nest of hornets in their bed, lest by rousing them they should stir up their rage, and make their stings more angry and venomous? Is it not far better to disturb the nest, that they may be unstung and destroyed for ever? But when the nest is disturbed, you must not sleep till you have destroyed them; remember they will give you no quarter, and therefore you must give them none.

The SECOND thing proposed, is to shew you what will be the dreadful consequences of prevailing iniquity: But what tongue can sufficiently describe them, or what ears endure the description? When sin reigns and triumphs over a nation, the consequences are fatal and infinite, ruinous and everlasting. The destruction extends far, it reaches to the flesh and spirit, it involves posterity with the present age, and has a terrible influence upon all the evils of the world to come; if we take but a little prospect of a few of them, it may serve to awaken our fear, and provoke our drowsy zeal to activity that we may prevent them.

I. Great dishonour to the name of God, and perpetual affronts to the divine majesty will abound amongst us. If *Amalek* prevail, the God of *Israel* will be blasphemed. If the authority of man and human punishments, which are visible and sensible, be not employed to restrain sinners, they will grow up to a contempt of the authority God who is unseen, and despise his most awful threatenings; and because their execution is delayed, his law will be hourly and impudently violated: If magistrates who behold wickedness will not punish it, the all-seeing eye of God will be called in question, and his judgment-seat disbelieved; "how doth God know, will the wicked say, can he judge through the dark cloud? Thick clouds are a covering to him that he seeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of the heavens," that is, afar off, above us, and takes no cognizance of our actions, *Job xxii. 13, 14.* "The fools will say in their hearts there is no God," *Psal. xiv. 1.* Then by degrees his providence will become a jest, and all his invisible terrors a matter of derision. Now who is there of us willing to have our ears filled with such language of hell, with public and loud curses against our heavenly Father, our redeemer, and our sanctifier? Can we bear to have all that is sacred and divinely dear to us, exposed to mockery? All that we infinitely value, named with contempt? All that we fear and worship treated with insult and ridicule? When God's holy name and attributes are



are made the song of the drunkards, our hearts may grieve within us, and our consciences will smite us inwardly with a sharp reproach, that we never assisted the reformation: While rivers of tears shall flow down your eyes, your lips will take up this doleful reflexion, "Alas! How much share have I in the guilt of these wild and open blasphemies of my God, because I never did any thing to prevent them!"

II. Universal difficulties and discouragements will attend the practice and profession of piety; for the more men improve in wickedness themselves, the more will they hate all appearance of religion in others; "and they that will live godly in *Christ Jesus* shall be sure to suffer persecution," *2 Tim.* iii. 12. When "the fools have said in their hearts there is no God, they will eat up his people as they eat bread," *Psal.* xiv. 4. All religious discourse shall be banished from conversation, and be put out of countenance with bitter raillery: This indeed is already too frequent, and pious conference is almost forbidden amongst us; but if sin further prevail, godliness will be afraid to appear in any of its forms; virtue must hide its head, and religion will be driven into corners. Profaneness has grown so bold these forty years and more, that a faint has been a word of scoff and reproach; in due time every thing that looks serious will become a scandal, and if there be any righteous *Lots* amongst us, their "souls will be vexed with the impure conversation of sinners," *2 Pet.* ii. 7, 8. A man shall hardly be able to attend upon the public worship of God, but he must receive abuses in his way thither; the high-way of holiness will be unoccupied, the travellers to *Zion* will be forced to walk in by-paths, and the frequenters of the house of God will "cease in our *Israel*," *Judg.* v. 6, 12, 13. but I hope our "*Deborah* is risen, she is risen a mother in *Israel*, to prevent it: Awake, awake, *Barak*," arise every son of courage and authority, every man of prudence and zeal, "arise, and lead this captivity captive; the Lord make you to have dominion over those mighty iniquities that would destroy all religion!"

III. From the discouragements that will attend on the ways of God, a great decay of piety will ensue among some of the serious professors of it: Continual molestations will weary out the spirits of christians in a great degree, "and because iniquity abounds, the love of many will wax cold," *Matth.* xxiv. 12. Now who of us is willing to bear this reflexion, "religion is almost driven out of the land, and I have done little to keep it in: Godliness is baffled and lost, and I had not courage enough to stand up for God amongst the men of reformation: *Amalek* has beaten *Israel* out of the field, and I never drew sword against that cursed nation; or when I had struck a stroke or two I laid down my arms, and suffered *Amalek* to prevail."

IV. It will be a scandal to our country to suffer sin to grow rampant and sovereign in the midst of us; we shall bring a scandal upon the gospel that we profess, and a dishonour upon the holy name of christians that we bear: If the sins of heathenism multiply amongst us, we shall be a reproach to the christian faith. Have we no tenderness for the name of *Christ*? Shall we permit him to be accounted a minister of sin by suffering the works of the devil, which he destroyed, to be built up again by bold transgressors? Bold men indeed, that sin against the light of nature under the shining revelations of grace! In vain have we been famed for light and knowledge, in vain for piety and experimental godliness in the days of our fathers; but now we grow a by-word among the nations, and an impure proverb: He swears like a *Briton*, he is as drunk as an *English-man*, as lewd and profane as a *Londoner*: Surely it will not be very grateful to our ears, if such odious forms of speech should arise

arise in neighbour-kingdoms. "Righteousness indeed exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." *Prov. xiv. 34.*

V. Not reproaches only will attend us, but real and multiplied mischiefs will afflict our civil interest, public and private. The public affairs of a nation must suffer certain detriment where wickedness roves loose and unrestrained: If the flood-gates of sin are opened, confusion will rush into the government like a deluge. Men that break the bonds of natural religion and of morality without controul, will grow lawless and ungovernable: When the yoke of a God and of natural conscience is shaken off publicly, the gentlest yoke of man will not be long endured; they will stand at defiance with the best of governments, they are fit tinder to receive every spark of ambition, they are ready for insurrection and public tumult: It is not religion, but wild enthusiasm or immorality, that sow the seeds of treason, and turn subjects into rebels. If I might address any of the inferior governors of the nation, I would say, are you willing that your authority should be mocked, and your forms of power and justice be made a laughing-stock? Are you willing that your seats of judgment should be insulted and thrown down? If not, see that you maintain them, by pronouncing sentence upon the wicked, and take care that it be executed; let it be done with speed, lest the contagion of vice spread amongst numbers, and grow too mighty to be subdued: Wickedness burns as the fire, and sometimes it flies suddenly through a community, as a flame through the trees of the forest, or through the buildings of a city, if timely care be not taken to extinguish it; it spreads like a young gangrene, if the limb affected be not cut off, the vital powers will quickly be too weak to resist the growing mischief. Let justice be exercised toward bold transgressors, for justice sometimes "preserves the king as well as mercy and truth; and though his throne is said to be upholden by mercy, yet a wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them," *Prov. xx. 26, 28.*

Private families and particular persons will very sensibly suffer in their health, in their estates, and in other comforts of life, if iniquity abound. "Whoredom, wine and new wine take away the heart," *Hof. iv. 11.* that is, waste the understanding of men, and turn them into fools and idolaters, as the next words explain it; which in our language signifies, that lust and drunkenness weaken the minds of men, blind their consciences, and make atheists of them. I need not mention the "wound and the dishonour that such sinners shall get, and the reproach that shall not be wiped away," *Prov. vi. 33.* for the foregoing verses speak something more dreadful; "the adulterers will hunt for the precious life; he that practises this sin lacketh understanding, for he destroys his own soul," verses 26, 32. Fathers, what will you say when you see your children debauched in their principles, and ruined by uncleanness? When you find atheism prevail in their hearts, and irreligion in their lives? When they break the bars of paternal government and will no more be reproved? When they over-leap all the fences of restraining grace, and make haste to perdition? This they have learned of those evil companions whom you never endeavoured to reform by just punishment. What will you say, fathers, when you follow your sons to an untimely grave, and putrefaction enters into their bones before the season; you that never did any thing to stop this growing plague among those who have infected your own children? What will you say, fathers, when you see your young heirs, now grown up to the size of your hopes and wishes, seized and drawn away to execution and the gibbet, for crimes which you never took care to suppress in other men? Mothers, what will ye say — but I must forbear to address the tender sex in such accents of prophetic sorrow; to present your eyes with such prospects as these would touch your passions too sensibly; it would make the wound in your souls too deep,

deep, and melt you into tears; let a glimpse of such mournful scenes excite you to contribute something towards the general reformation. Ye wealthy citizens, the time may come when you shall be scarce secure in your own dwellings, but be robbed of your treasures by nightly villains that will satisfy their lusts by rapine, and make provision for their flesh by plunder and violence: You will confess the judgment of God is just in it, though the sin of man be great; for that you never gave one penny to carry on the wars of the Lord with *Amalek*. The *Amalekites* have now fallen upon you, and rifled you of many a pound.

VI. Fearful judgments from God will ensue; "For the wrath of God will be revealed from heaven, sooner or later, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, *Rom. i. 18.*" Fire and brimstone may come down upon an island as well as upon the cities of the plain; other countries are capable of burning eruptions, besides *Naples* and *Sicily*, and the dominions of *Anti-christ*; with the breath of his mouth the Lord can raise an earthquake that shall sink *Great-Britain* into the sea, and it shall be found no more. Perhaps God may be now, as it were, arguing the case as with *Ephraim* and with *Israel* of old, *Hos. xi. 8.* How shall I give thee up, *London*? How shall I deliver thee, *Westminster*? How shall I make thee as *Admah*? How shall I set thee as *Zeboim*? Which were twin sisters of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, and involved in the same vengeance, *Gen. xiv. and xix. 24, 25.* O that the heart of the Lord may be turned within him, and his repentings kindled together, that he may not execute the fierceness of his anger!" Yet let not us say peace to ourselves, if unrestrained villainies abound amongst us: Why should *England* be so fond and partial to itself, as to believe that it shall be privileged by heaven above all kingdoms in all ages? Why should we flatter ourselves that we only shall be indulged to sin with a high hand, and without punishment? We hate the doctrine of indulgences, and yet we act as under the influence of such a persuasion. Shall the countries around us drink of the cup of his indignation with various mixture, and we still be excused from tasting? The Lord of hosts has many armies of judgment and desolation at his command; the variety of plagues on *Egypt* is not a thousandth part of his artillery, nor of the kinds of terrors that are treasured in his magazines; he can draw his sword of pestilence, and give it this commission; "Go and slay a third part of men;" he can send the sword of our enemies amongst us, who will neither spare nor pity: he can let *France* in upon us like a flood, and *Lewis* the XIV. will be as zealous a servant of the Lord in such work, as *Nebuchadnezzar* was when God sent him to punish *Jerusalem* and the nations, *Jer. xxv. 9.* When the *french* dragoons insult us, and our necks are put under the feet of our enemies, we may then, perhaps, remember and repent, that we did not arise for the Lord against evil-doers, and tread down the enemies of his holiness.

Or, if the thunders of God lie still for a season, and his lightnings be not kindled; if plagues and famines, and foreign armies be restrained from our coasts, and peace and plenty dwell in our borders; God has judgments of a severer kind to inflict upon us, though they are more silent and less affect our senses. He can give us up to the lusts of our own heart, and send judicial blindness: He can consign us over to the power of *Satan*, to our beloved lethargy and spiritual death; He can suffer the devil to sear our consciences, and to inspire us from hell to work all uncleanness with greediness; *Ephes. iv. 19.* Our understandings may be sold into the hands of strong delusions, and the wisest of us be left to believe a lie; or God may continue the messengers of his gospel in the midst of us, but give them a new commission, even that which he gave to the prophet *Isaiab* for *Israel*, that a curse shall

attend our exercises of divine worship: A drop of this sort of vengeance lighting on us, will turn our eyes into darkness, and our hearts into nether mill-stones; and after all this, his full indignation may be poured out upon the land, in most sensible instances, nor his anger be turned away from us, but his hand stretched out still. Thus he dealt with the *Jews* his own people: let us read it and fear the parallel; *Isaiab.* vi. 10, 11. "Go, make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes: lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate." The foregoing chapters will inform us of the sins that procured this threatenings, it will be well if we do not find our names or characters there.

I must not break off this part of my discourse without mention of the final consequence of prevailing iniquity, and that is, that the inhabitants of such a nation shall go down to hell by thousands; and *England* that hath been lifted up to heaven by divine favours, shall be thrust down to the bottomless pit for her aggravated abominations. Eternal "death is the wages of sin;" *Rom.* vi. 23. and can we bear this thought, that the place of torment shall be thronged with our neighbours and acquaintance, and the dominions of hell peopled out of the land of our nativity? "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision, when the heathens shall be awakened, when the Lord shall sit there to judge the nations round about," *Joel* iii. 12, 14. What a terrible forethought is it, if almost all *England* should be placed at the left hand of the judge in that day, and fall under the sentence, "Depart ye cursed?" And perhaps numbers of our own kindred, ruined by the growing vices of the nation, shall stand amongst the guilty, and expect the vengeance. Let a natural compassion touch our hearts here, and move us by proper methods to put a stop to spreading wickedness. Let us use our utmost efforts to quench that fire which will burn to the lowest hell.

The THIRD proposal was to mention the discouragements that attend this work of reformation, and try to remove them.

I. Reproaches and scandals have been cast plentifully upon the societies for reformation: These are ready to sink the spirits of such as are engaged in the work, and affright others from joining their assistance. But have you so learned *Christ*, as to shrink at his service, and retire because the world hates you, and gives you ill language? Consider the captain of your salvation, what a sea of malice and reproach he passed through, when he came down from heaven to take upon him the work of a reformer; the gentiles had wofully darkened and lost the light of nature, and the *Jews* wretchedly corrupted the law of God, when he came into the world: His business was to restore religion, to destroy the works of the devil, and repair the ruins of mankind: This was his blessed errand and design, yet wheresoever he went, slander with all her tongues stood ready to assault him; he was abused with the odious names of a glutton and a wine-bibber: His own nation cry out against him, "He hath a devil and is mad," *John* x. 20. Are ye not willing to follow so glorious a leader "through honour and dishonour, through good report and bad report," especially when he employs you in his own work too? "Consider him who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, and despised the shame, as well as endured the cross, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds," *Heb.* 12. 2, 3. And consider that most encouraging discourse which ye have heard on this text. The prophets, the apostles, the martyrs and confessors have even been the reformers of the age in which they lived: And are we ashamed to have our names inserted in this noble

noble catalogue? The reformers of doctrine since the days of popery are mentioned with everlasting honour; and why should a reformer of lives and manners be reckoned a scandalous title? But let us examine these scandals a little more particularly, that by discovering the injustice, the impudence and falsehood that is mingled with them, you may learn to despise them all.

1. They say, "Ye are busy-bodies, it is the magistrate's place to punish vice; it is his work to put the laws in execution, and not your's." Answer them, that ye are but assistants to the magistrate in that work; and all her majesty's subjects are required to assist persons in authority in the discharge of their office. How could a magistrate punish sin, or execute the penalties of the law, if no criminals were found out, and seized and brought before him? It becomes therefore every good subject of the queen, every lover of his country, and every servant of the living God, to lend his hand to this work: You are not called to the uncharitable and anti-christian task of afflicting tender consciences for different sentiments in religion. Prince and people are well agreed that violence is not the true method of promoting the gospel of peace. Conscience is not so much as pretended by the sinners which you prosecute; they are common nufances, and the reformation of them is a public benefit to mankind.

2. They cry out upon you as severe and cruel, and uncompassionate; that you deal hardly with your neighbours, by bringing them to public justice. Here I am bold to answer for you, that it is uneasy and self-denying work, and that you had rather be employed in propagating virtue by milder methods, if they might but obtain success. Here I must also ask liberty to say for myself, that is an unpleasing task to me to excite you to accuse even your vicious neighbours, and awaken the rod of the magistrate to punish them: But I am convinced of the necessity of carrying on this sort of war against sinners, lest the whole nation become a field of wickedness. I had rather, much rather preach the gospel of the grace of God, and that large forgiveness of his which hides a multitude of sins: I had rather be relating to you divine histories, how the accuser of the brethren has been overcome by the blood of the lamb. But when the dragon and his angels raise a war in a christian kingdom, *Michael* and his angels must fight too, and sometimes it is necessary to use the weapons of civil authority against them. I was constrained to this kind of discourse, after I had meditated a gentler subject, by several gentlemen of your number providentially assuring me, there was never more need of severe discipline than now; for that you had lately discovered many assemblies of unnatural lust, and the fatal contagion was spreading among multitudes. You desired me to excite you all to a vigorous and mortal pursuit of wickedness in all its private haunts and corners, that it might be brought to light, and be rooted out for ever.

But I return to answer the accusation brought against you of cruelty and unkindness: So may a surgeon be called unkind and cruel, whose design is to heal; but a dangerous tumor, or a latent ulcer first demands the incision-knife, or the actual cautery; cutting and burning must be the first and immediate work, that the dead flesh or the callus may be removed, and a way made for healing medicines. Punishment is to be inflicted on those on whom persuasion has no force. There are some sinners whose consciences are wrapped in scales of hardness, and the sword of the magistrate is the only instrument that can make way to the sensible and tender part, if any such remain within: Then perhaps the thoughts of a God or a hell may have some influence to reclaim, and the promises and graces of the gospel be successfully preached and administered to allure them to piety. This sort of cruelty is an instance of the

truest kindness. Our Lord *Christ* himself, who was love incarnate, and preached the gospel of peace, yet, once saw reason to practise punishing zeal, when "he overturned the tables of the money-changers, and scourged the profane sheep-merchants out of the temple," *John* ii. 15. Thus the God-man whose compassion to sinners was stronger than death, exercised his anger and resentment against the breakers of the laws of heaven and his country, and the transgressors were whipped and fined. Severe justice toward single sinners is sometimes made by divine grace a blessed method of their own salvation, and if it appear hard in some particular instances, and should not effectually reduce the transgressor, yet it is often found of necessary and happy use for the welfare of a whole community, by deterring others from the same crimes.

3. They complain that you are "partial, and have a respect of persons. Some you prosecute without mercy, and you indulge an escape to others who are equally criminal." Answer them that you pursue vice impartially, wheresoever you find it, and that you follow those methods that may most effectually reclaim mankind. Tell them that you make no distinction between transgressors of high or low degree; you put no difference between the guilty, whether they belong to your own party and profession, or to another. Assure them that in this case you are unwilling to know a friend or a brother, even as the sons of *Levi* when they girded on their swords in the camp of *Israel*, "and consecrated themselves that day to the Lord, every man upon his companion, his neighbour, his brother and his son," *Exod.* xxxii. 26, 27, 29. But the apostle *Jude* seems to direct you to make a difference in other respects with compassion and fear, treating those more severely "that are mockers and sensualists walking after their own ungodly lusts," *Jude* 18, 19, 22. The very design of the work of reformation seems to require that a distinction be made between young and old offenders, between the bashful and the impudent, the trembling transgressor and the obstinate wretch, that has no sense of guilt or shame. Some may be reclaimed for ever, by one admonition or reproof, others must be sharply chastised to make them feel conviction. Yet it needs divine prudence to practise these directions aright; and sometimes you must be forced to make no distinction at all where nature and virtue seem to desire one, lest the enemy should take occasion to revile your conduct. May the God of wisdom and counsel be ever near you, and direct you to pursue your glorious designs by the most successful and unrepachable methods!

4. You are charged with tempting others to sin that you may accuse them. But this slander is so malicious, and so inconsistent with your design, that your enemies can persuade but few to believe it. The standing rules of your societies bear witness against it, and your constant practice refutes the lie. It is easy to accuse in general, and sling impudent falsehoods in gross upon the fairest reputation; but you have made frequent and bold appeals to your reproachers, and none of them have been able to fasten the charge by any particular proof upon any of the members of your societies.

Affronts and railings you must sometimes expect to meet with; "blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely for the sake of *Christ* and his name; rejoice and be exceeding glad," *Matt.* v. 11. Bind the reproaches of *Christ* to you, as your ornament and glory. Go on dauntless against such oppositions. If you know how to encounter these I have mentioned with courage, you may contemn all the rest. Adore that God that has kept the honour of your societies hitherto; and so supported their credit, that the spite of all the powers

ers of darknes, and the smoke of hell hath not been able to sully your reputation, or sink your esteem amongst the men of wisdom and virtue.

II. Another discouragement you meet with proceeds from the magistrates. Some of the inferior rank refuse to assist you in seizing the criminals whom you have discovered: And some in higher stations that should punish the vicious, rather brow-beat and discountenance the reformers. But our God be praised, that there are some of higher and lower rank that join their hearts and their hands with your's. Their zeal and power are engaged in the wars of the Lord against sin: May their names be honoured upon earth, and their reward be great in heaven! But let such as appear on the side of sin blush and be ashamed that they should use the authority which they receive from God, to countenance or favour the enemies of his holiness: Let them know that there is a higher than the highest on earth, that beholds the perverting of justice and judgment in a province," *Eccles. v. 8.* Let them be put in mind of that awful judgment-seat, before which all mankind must stand upon a level; where their commissions cease for ever, and their distinguishing ranks of place and power are known no more. Though it hath been said, "ye are gods, yet ye shall die as men." *Psal. lxxxii. 6.* Remember therefore the tribunal to which you must give up an account of your magistracy. What will you say to the judge, whose eyes are a flame of fire, when he shall demand of you, did "ye indeed speak righteousness on earth? Did ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?" *Psal. lviii. 1.* Have ye stood for the "praise of them that do well, and been a terror to evil-doers, or have you bore the sword in vain? Wherein have ye appeared the ministers of God, if ye have never executed wrath upon him that doth evil?" *Rom. xiii. 3, 4.* Then shall the sentence of the Lord go forth against those that have justified the wicked for cowardice or for covetousness. For to "justify the wicked is an equal abomination in the sight of God as to condemn the righteous," *Prov. xvii. 15.*

III. The loss of time and the expence of money in the prosecution of vice through the courts of justice, is more than your private circumstances will bear. This I confess is a discouragement to some, but we may find some relief for it. It is true you are not to neglect the necessary duties that you owe to your families, and let your own household starve, while you are endeavouring to ruin the household of *Satan*. But there are many leisure hours of life that may be employed in this holy warfare; and the time spent in this service will turn to good account in the days of eternity. As for the expence of money which is necessary to carry on this war, there are some hundreds of gentlemen and ladies in the present assembly, that can answer this objection much better than I. My best method of answering it, is but to persuade you, my honoured friends, to attempt and try what you can do towards it. One line under your hands, or a single item in your will, is an answer more to the purpose than whole sheets of my writing, or than if I should continue my discourse till the sun go down. The charge of the prosecution of lewd houses is very great, as I am informed, and had the societies more assistance of this kind the reformation would be carried on more sensibly. Let me address the richer part of this audience: Will it not be a joyful prospect on your dying bed to think that the battle grows strong against sin when your heads lie low in the dust, and that by means of the sinews you have added to the war in your last testament? Will it not be a hopeful evidence of your hatred of sin, that you contend against it, even in the grave, and maintain an everlasting fight?

IV. The danger and risk of life in this cause is another discouragement: But was there ever any war without danger, or victory without courage? Besides, the perils  
you

you run here are almost infinitely less than those which attend the wars of nations, where the cause is not half so divine. The fields of battle in *Flanders*, and almost all over *Europe*, have drunk up the blood of millions, and have furnished graves for large armies; but it can hardly be said that you have hitherto "resisted unto blood striving against sin," *Heb. xii. 4.* In a war of more than twelve years continuance there has but one man fallen. The providence of God has put helmets of salvation upon your heads. Some of you can relate wonders of deliverance and safety, when you have been beset by numbers, and their rage has kindled into resolutions of revenge: the Lord has taken away their courage in a moment, the "men of might have not found their hands; thus he has caused even the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of wrath he hath restrained," *Psal. lxxvi. 5, 10.* Read over this psalm, and with divine valour pursue the fight. But if your life should be lost in such a cause as this, it will esteemed martyrdom in the sight of God, and shall be thus written down in the book of the wars of the Lord. Believe me, these red lines will look well in the records of heaven, when the judgment shall be set, and the books opened in the face of men and angels.

The **FOURTH** head of my discourse shall address you with some hints of encouragement, and I shall not much enlarge upon them, since a review of the excellent sermons that have been published on this occasion may administer to you more spirits and vigor to promote this reforming work, this war with national iniquities. Consider,

First, What abundant success you have already had in these pious labours; you have seen part of your hopes already accomplished. Wickedness is put out of countenance: Impiety is not so public as once it was, nor religion so much affronted: We may now walk the whole length of the city, and our ears not be afflicted with one oath or blasphemy. There are not so many violations of decency in the streets, nor inroads upon modesty and honour. Virtue is not so much ashamed to appear as once it was, nor afraid to wear its own colours. The remainder of your work is attended with greater ease: You have been successful in the first onset, proceed then with pleasure, and finish the glorious war. Let others be encouraged to list themselves in this service, which is now grown more tolerable since the forerunners have broke down the strongest bars of difficulty, have made rough ways plain for those that follow, and have born the burden and heat of the day. Consider again,

Secondly, What an influence you have had to save the nation from overflowing iniquities, and perhaps also from overflowing scourges. Surely you have been some of those that have mourned in secret for all the abominations that were done in former years in the midst of the land, and no doubt there is a divine mark set upon your foreheads, which the destroying angel shall read, if ever he be sent "through the midst of the city to slay utterly the old and the young," *Ezek. ix. 4.* But ye have been some of those that hitherto have stood in the breach, as *Phineas* did, when the anger of the Lord has been breaking in upon the camp of our *Israel*. "Ye have been zealous for his name sake. Ye have executed judgment, and turned away the wrath of the Lord," *Numb. xxv. 11.* And as we have reason to believe your interest in the court of heaven has been considerable on the peace of the nation; so it is unknown what valuable service ye have done for particular souls. Perhaps, there are some that bless God at this day for the first inward convictions of sin which they received by your providential discovery of their vices. Perhaps, there are some now in heaven, whose stupid consciences you first awakened, and made them more susceptible of the impressions of the gospel. Go on then according to the advice of *Salomon*,  
*Prov.*



*Prov.* xxiii. 13, 14. "With-hold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell. Go on with this design to convert the sinner from the error of his way. Thus shall ye save his soul from death, and by the discovery of a few, ye shall hide a multitude of sins," *James* v. 20. Consider,

Thirdly, That you are engaged on the side of God, you are fighting his battles, and the inscription of your banner is *Jehovah nissi*. Think on the high honour that he hath bestowed upon you by translating you out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son, and employing you in this service. Remember that ye were once on the side of sin, and rebels against heaven, "alienated from the life of God, and the enemies in your minds by wicked works," *Colos.* i. 21. O give him the glory of his reconciling and renewing grace; and when you behold sinners wallowing in their pollutions, let each of you cry out with wonder and thankfulness, "Lord, who or what am I, that thou shouldst draw me out of that sink of sin in which the world dwells! That thou shouldst pluck me as a brand out of the fire! That thou shouldst make so sweet a difference betwixt me and others, who am by nature a child of wrath, even as they! O why was not I suffered to run to the same excess of riot, and be exposed to the same punishment and shame!" While you are endeavouring to reclaim others, let your hearts offer up many a grateful sacrifice of praise to God for yourselves: Adore his restraining mercy and recovering love. This will maintain a right frame of spirit within you, and a true tenderness for the souls of those whom you punish: Rest not till you enjoy the brightest and most delightful evidences of regenerating grace in your own souls; this will make all your future labours for God more abundantly pleasant and easy. Consider also,

Fourthly, That God is engaged on your side. He manages his providence, he sends his ministers, his gospel and his Spirit to reform the nature of men, and to destroy sin from the earth. Be often upon your knees with your hands lifted up to heaven, and engage the continuance of divine presence with you: Proceed and pray heartily for your own success: Wrestle with God by supplication, that sin his enemy may be overcome, and the sinner whom you prosecute may be reduced to piety, and saved in the day of the Lord. Let the hand of prayer never hang down while the rod of battle is lifted up against *Amalek*, for it is only by divine assistance that ye can prevail. Ye have the blessing of the Lord upon you for your encouragement, and the hearts and prayers of all good men with you, though you have not all their hands. There was a bitter curse of old pronounced by an angel against *Meroz*, merely for a neglect of the divine warfare, I pray heartily that it may light on none of our heads: *Judg.* v. 23. "Curse ye *Meroz*, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." It is much more pleasant to me to read the blessing and follows, and apply it with a little variation to our present purpose, verses 24, 26. "Blessed above women shall ANNE our sovereign be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent," or on the throne. She puts her hand to the work of reformation, and her right-hand lifts up the rod of God against profaneness and immorality. Blessed are all those that assist her in this work, according to their several ranks and capacities. "My heart and the hearts of all my fathers and brethren in the ministry, are towards the governors of this city that offer themselves willingly amongst the people for this service. Bless ye the Lord." verse 9. Consider,

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In the last place for your encouragement, that ye are engaged on the side of certain victory; for sin must be destroyed for ever. The old serpent that deceives the nations must be cast out. The new heavens and the new earth must appear, wherein dwelleth righteousness. It was doubtless an encouraging word to the *Israelites* in all the troubles that ever they met with from *Amalek* in following ages, that the "Lord himself would have war with that people from generation to generation, and that the name of *Amalek* should be blotted out from under heaven. Though *Amalek* be the first of the nations, yet his latter end shall be that he perish for ever," *Numb. xxiv. 20.* Therefore the commission of the Lord to *Saul* ran thus, *1 Sam. xv. 18, 19.* "Go, and utterly destroy the sinners the *Amalekites*, and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore then do we not arise and obey the voice of the Lord," and contend against obstinate sinners under the banner of our blessed redeemer? Assurance of conquest should give spirits and courage for the battle. Whosoever "make war with the lamb, the lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and king of kings," *Rev. xvii. 14.* "Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword to smite the nations of the ungodly, and on his head are many crowns," *Rev. xix. 12, 15.* Cease not then to lift up your hands against iniquity till it be blotted out from under heaven. Be ye faithful to the death in maintaining the war with sin, and ye shall receive a crown of life and righteousness. *Rev. ii. 10.* Amen.

A S E R M O N

The religious improvement of public events.

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A  
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT  
B E R R Y - S T R E E T,  
J U N E 18. 1727.

On occasion of the DEATH of our late Gracious Sovereign

G E O R G E I.

And the peaceful SUCCESSION of his present MAJESTY

G E O R G E II.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

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MICROSCOPY

BY

W. H. BRADY

PH.D.

1954

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

WHEN I had just delivered this plain sermon from the pulpit, it was a great surprize to me to find myself surrounded with importunities to make it more public. Nor can I impute this to any thing but to the affectionate zeal and concern of my auditors about all events that relate to the royal house of *Great Britain*, and to a mind well prepared by the late important occurrences to receive instructions of piety from a common discourse without art or ornament.

I must acknowledge, that when any great and momentous changes arise in the world, it is my custom, in the course of my ministry, to excite my hearers to a pious notice and improvement of them. And when upon the death of our late gracious sovereign, I observed among my acquaintance so just and sincere a joy for the peaceful succession of a protestant prince to the *British* throne, I was desirous to turn the stream of it into a religious channel, and to awaken their thoughts to a more solemn and distinct observation of the hand of God, both in putting a sudden period to the reign of one excellent king, and the immediate advancement of another: But I have always had an aversion to send any of these composures to the press. I know several of my brethren are much better qualified for such services; and after almost thirty years spent in the ministry I have never yet published one sermon on such political occasions.

But the requests of many persons multiplied so fast upon me at this time, that I found myself constrained to submit my own inclinations, and resign them up to the power which my friends have over me. Perhaps the voice of the people in this respect may be the voice of God.

Had I designed to present the world with a discourse relating to this great event, I think I should have chosen a different text, and taken much more time in the composition. But such as it is, I must now commit it to the candor of my readers; and humbly ask of God to bless my first essay of this kind to the service of the souls of men, that in all occurrences they may learn first to pay a religious veneration to the hand of God, the supreme and eternal king, and then that they may give all due honour to the memory of our deceased royal benefactors, and may yield all affectionate duty and submission to those whom the kind providence of God has been long preparing for the throne, and has now exalted to that sublime dignity and important station. May divine wisdom and mercy ever guide and defend them! May the almighty God pour out his richest blessings on their royal persons and their issue, in a long and glorious succession, and render them the guards and honours of christianity and *Great Britain*, so long as the sun and moon endure! Amen.

June 23. 1727.

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S E R M O N, &c.

**T**HE solemn and important occurrences of the last week call us to a serious notice of the hand of God in them: The death of our late gracious sovereign, and the happy accession of his present majesty, have diverted my thoughts from the subject which I lately proposed, and have determined me to entertain you this day with the words of the holy prophet.

I S A I A H V. 12.

*And the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine are in their feasts:  
But they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of  
his hands.*

**I**N the reigns of several of our former princes, we had a just and melancholy apprehension of popish darkness and tyranny breaking in upon us at their death. The peaceful and regular succession of a protestant heir to his father's throne, is such a blessing as hath not been known in *Great Britain* for a hundred years past\*: It might well be expected then that it should be received with universal joy and gladness of heart. The occasion for it is proper and glorious: Nor will I censure the moderate use of a feast, and a song, and instruments of music, to express this inward and becoming joy: Nor doth the prophet in my text forbid them as unlawful things; but he gives it as the character of the profane part of mankind, that upon all occasions they give up themselves to sensual merriment, with an utter neglect of the providence of God.

In such events as we behold this day, the man of wisdom and piety looks all around him: He takes a religious notice of the death of a preceding prince, which makes

\* The last instance of this kind was when *Charles* the first succeeded his father *James* the first, in the year 1625. and indeed this was the only one, except when *Edward* the sixth came to the crown in the room of *Henry* the eighth, his father.

makes way for the introduction of his successor, and he points his eye to the hand of God in the sudden change of our rulers. The true christian assumes the language of the prophet *Daniel* with a devout temper of mind, "Blessed be the name of God for ever, for wisdom and might are his: He changeth the times and the seasons, he removeth kings, and he setteth up kings," *Daniel* ii. 21. Whereas the formal professors of christianity, or the vicious part of the people, shew their mirth by "enflaming themselves with strong drink;" "and the harp and the viol are in their feasts, but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands." This is the crime which the prophet severely reproveth, and for which he pronounces divine threatenings in the following verses.

To make a right improvement of the present providence, and the text, I shall enquire,

- I. What sort of notice we ought to take of the dispensations of God, and especially in the affairs of nations.
- II. I shall consider, What is the guilt and danger of disregarding the hand of God herein.
- III. I will apply these things particularly to the present events in our nation.

First, "What sort of notice ought we to take of the dispensations of God?" I answer briefly under three general heads.

1. "We should make a solemn observation of what is lawful and afflictive in the events of divine providence, and learn some instructive lessons thereby." If the life of a sparrow be the object of divine superintendency, "if a sparrow fall not to the ground without our heavenly Father," *Matth.*x. 29. much more should we direct our thoughts to the operation and influence of God in the greater incidents of the life and death of man, and the important changes that depend upon them. "When the judgments of God are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness," or at least they ought to do it, *Ijai.* xxvi. 8, 9. "Is there any evil in the city, any sorrow attends a nation, but the Lord hath a hand in it?" *Amos* iii. 6. "The voice of the Lord hath spoken, and the man of wisdom will see his name, will hear the rod and him that hath appointed it," *Micab.* vi. 9. The man of religion will enquire, "What have I done to provoke the almighty to send down his judgments from heaven. What abuse of mercies have I been guilty of, to provoke the great God to remove them from me? What share have I had in the common guilt of a nation, that may have awakened the anger of God against it in any instances of public sorrow."

2. "We should raise our hearts to a delightful notice and a grateful sense of the mercy of God in his providences." The business of religion is not all sadness and mourning. We are bound to take notice of public joys, as well as of common and extensive calamities. A christian may rejoice in the light of heaven and the sunbeams, as well as observe the clouds, and thunder and storms; but he must remember they all come from above. The wicked of the earth make themselves merry amidst the comforts of life without any notice of the God that gives them, or any thank-offerings to his name: But a sincere christian loves to receive his blessings from the hand of his heavenly Father: He looks on them as the distributions of divine love, he beholds them sanctified by the covenant of rich grace, and thereby he tastes a double relish of sweetness in them. Common and public blessings afford him a private and delicious sensation beyond what the thoughtless herd

herd of mankind partake of: "The stranger intermeddles not with this joy." *Prov. xiv. 10.* When he drinks of the sweet streams of delight here on earth, he traces them to the fountain head in heaven, and as it were bathes himself in the immense ocean of goodness. "This God is my God, my heavenly friend, and he will be my God for ever and ever." *Psal. xlviii. 14.*

3. "We should make a humble enquiry into the various duties, both toward God and man, which divine providence calls us to, at special seasons, and under special circumstances." It is the language of a soul that walks with God, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" *Acts ix. 6.* There is not a day nor a hour but brings a duty with it; not a change of providence but calls for peculiar practices of piety.

We are placed here in a state of service, and God requires that our eye be directed to him hourly, "as the eye of a servant to his master, or a handmaid to her mistress;" so speaks the royal *Psalmist*, *Psal. cxxiii. 2.* We should watch every motion of the right hand of our God, and all the progress of his footsteps in his government of the world, that we may learn our proper business thence; "that in the time of prosperity we may rejoice in the Lord, and in the hour of adversity we may set ourselves to consider our ways and humble ourselves before him," *Eccles. vii. 14.* It is the word of God that appoints us the general rules of duty and religion; but it is providence that leads us to apply these rules, and to put them into daily practice.

Thus having enquired what sort of notice a christian ought to take of the hand of God in the events of life, we proceed to shew

In the second place, "what is the guilt and danger of neglecting this pious practice: And that may be comprized chiefly under the four following heads.

1. Those who take no notice of the operations of God in the affairs of human life, "abuse their reason and their better powers, both as men and as christians." Our eyes and our ears and other senses of the body are given us to take notice of the outward objects that surround us which are the springs of pain or pleasure; and these we enjoy in common with the beasts of the earth: The birds and the fishes, the creeping things, and every little insect employ their corporeal powers for the same purposes; but man was made with nobler principles, and capacitated to discover and discern the hand of God his creator, and to observe his supreme direction of all the affairs of mankind: And if we consider ourselves as christians, we profess still a diviner principle of converse with God. How mean, how ignoble and degenerate a thing is it then, for men who profess christianity, to look no further than the objects of sense, and sink themselves to the rank of the brute creation? Man, though he be raised by the station of his nature, to a more honourable character than the rest of the animals; yet if he remain without understanding, and thoughtless of his God, "he becomes like the beasts that perish: *Psal. xlix. 20.* "Brute beasts, which, as the apostle says, are made to be destroyed," *2 Pet. ii. 12.* So men that "regard not the operation of the Lord, nor consider the work of his hands, the Lord will destroy them and not build them up." *Psal. xxviii. 5.*

2. Those who disregard the work of God in the events of human life, "they deprive the great God himself of that honour which he demands and expects, especially from his more important providences." Do not his sublime wisdom, his extensive goodness, and his almighty power, display themselves gloriously in his providential government of mankind? And is it not with this design, that his intelligent creature man should take notice of this display of his glories? To what purpose are all the manifestations of his mercy and of his judgment among men, if the sons of *Adam* disregard them all? Will not the supreme governor of the world resent such a stupid



stupid and sottish conduct? Does the great God write his own name in every leaf of his two great volumes of nature and providence, and shall his creature man take no notice of it, and refuse to read it? Will he for ever bear with creatures that neglect to take notice of the name and works of their almighty maker?

3. "They bereave themselves of the rich advantages that may be derived from such converse with God about the events of human life." If we were but wise and curious observers of the conduct of providence, what divine experiments might we obtain of the wisdom and of the grace of God? And lay up a treasure of sweet and solid foundations for encouragement and hope in days to come? The royal *Psalmist* assures us of blessed advantages to be derived from a skilful notice of divine providences, *Psal.* cvii. 43. "Who is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord." "They who learn to know his name, by a wise attendance to his works, will put their trust in him." *Psal.* ix. 10.

If we overlook the hand of the almighty in the events of human life, we lose much of the spiritual profit of awful and afflictive providences, and much of the sweetness of temporal mercies. Such a sinful neglect will also lead us by degrees to a woful omission of our daily duties, and bring us into great danger of degeneracy, and backsliding into a carnal and wordly frame of spirit: Whereas if we make it our business to watch the hand of God in the occurrences of the world, this is indeed living by faith, "as seeing him that is invisible;" *Heb.* xi. 27. and we are much better prepared by such a converse with God on earth for a more intimate blessed converse with him in the world of light and enjoyment.

4. Those who regard not the works of the Lord "provoke him to deprive them of all the blessings of life, and to abandon them to utter ruin." How can they ever hope that the Lord will bestow repeated mercies upon them, when they take no notice of his power and his hand in the blessings they have already received? How can they expect to enjoy the continuance of present comforts? "*Israel* did not know that I gave them corn, and wine, and oyl, therefore I will return and take away my corn in the season thereof, and my wine in it's season and I will recover my wool which was given to cover their nakedness," *Hos.* ii. 8, 9. If this be our practice, we may justly expect to be left of God, and bereaved of the mercies that relate to this life and the life to come. If we like not to retain God in our knowledge, and to glorify him as God, we may justly fear to be given up to a reprobate mind and to final destruction. *Rom.* i. 21, 28. Let such stupid and regardless sinners read the threatenings of the Lord against such brutish people in the words that follow my text. "Therefore my people shall go into captivity, because they have no knowledge; their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst: Therefore hell hath enlarged itself, and opened it's mouth without measure, and their glory and their multitude and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth shall descend into it." — A just vengeance on such impiety! I proceed now to

The third general head which I proposed, and that is to "apply the sense of my text to the particular event of the last week." And I shall divide the circumstances of this great event, viz. the death of one king, and the succession of another, together with the notices we should take of it, under the three particulars before mentioned, viz. We are called to consider what there is in it of an awful and afflictive kind; what blessed mixtures of mercy attend the afflictive providence, and what are our present duties, both to God and man, which are derived thence.

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I. Let us consider what there is in this providence that is awful and afflictive, and what lessons of serious instruction we may draw from it.

1. Here is the death of one of the greatest men upon earth : A king whose dominion was spread from sea to sea, and who reigned over several nations : A prince who held the balance of *Europe*, and determined the superiority to which side soever he inclined : One that was arbiter of peace and war among the potentates of the world. Yet behold he is subject to mortality and the common stroke of death, *Psalms* lxxxii. 6, 7. "I have said ye are gods," because the power of magistrates bears some resemblance to that of the God of heaven : Therefore they are called "the children of the most high ; but they must die like other men. It is the hand of the Lord hath wrought this, in whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind," *Job* xii. 9, 10.

The lesson that we derive from this view of things, is, to "take heed lest we depend too much on the life of the best of princes." Though we derive many blessings through their influence, yet we must remember they are not immortal. Let God alone be the solid and everlasting rest and refuge of our souls, whose life is eternity, whose kingdom reigns over all, and his dominion is for ever and ever. *Psalms* cxlvi. 3, 4, 5. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help ; his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish," and all our dependences are vain and frustrate. "Happy is he that hath the God of *Jacob* for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, who made heaven, and earth, and sea, and keepeth the truth for ever." verse 6. *Isai.* ii. 22. "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" God alone is our immortal hope.

2. We may remark in this event, the sudden death of this great man in a journey to his native land. He set out from his palace in *Great Britain* in a state of health and vigor, with a firm constitution and strength above the proportion of his years : But ere he arrived at the place which he designed, he was smitten with a mortal faintness, and hurried away from the earth in an unexpected hour : He was arrested in his journey by a fatal messenger from the king of kings, a messenger whose name is death, and whose commission admits of no delay ; a messenger who lays his cold hand on princes, and bears them away resistless through the midst of their guards, to their long home, and the unseen world. Vain was the skill of physicians in that mournful hour ; the zeal and fondness of a brother's love was vain. He arrived at the palace of *Osnabrug*, the habitation of his dearest brother, and only gave him the sad opportunity to see a dying monarch, and take his last long leave of so near and so desirable a relative.

What lesson shall we learn now from the suddenness of this great event, but to "awaken our own souls to a constant readiness for a removal." "Be ye always ready, says our blessed Lord, for ye know not when ye shall be called, whether at even, or at midnight, or when the cock crows in the morning:" *Mark* xiii. 35. Whether we shall be summoned away at once from our own homes, or when we are travelling in distant lands. Let us remember we are still borderers on the grave, and the eternal world, and we are always within a moment's reach of the invisible state and the region of spirits. It is but the wink of an eye, the cessation of the pulse, the stoppage of our breath, and we are gone beyond the power of medicines, and the art of man to recall us. Who would venture upon a journey without having his soul insured in the hands of *Jesus*, the Saviour ?

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There is another reflexion that we may derive from this circumstance of the death of our late sovereign, and that is, how often have we ourselves been preserved in journies, when our gracious monarch died in the midst of his travels? How have we left our habitations in peace, visited our friends in distant parts, and returned to our dwellings in peace again? But this great man was cut off on a sudden, before he reached the place designed? How often have our friends gone forth from the midst of us, and been brought back with safety and joy? Our king went from us and returns no more; here is the sovereignty of divine providence; here is the interposing will of the almighty. Let us remember then to take the will and providence of the great God into our consultations, "when we say, to day, or to morrow, we will go into such a city, and continue there a season and return again; whereas we know not what shall be on the morrow: What is your life, it is even a vapour that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away; we ought therefore to say, if the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that," according to our purpose, *Jam. iv. 14.*

3. Let us remember that this great event carries in it the appearance of a huge affliction to *Great Britain*, for it is the death of a king whose happy accession was a glorious deliverance of our nation from slavery, and a defence of our religion from popish superstition, tyranny, and blood: We have lost a great and glorious benefactor, under whose government we had enjoyed the blessings of peace and plenty for so many years together. At his accession to the crown he scattered our fears, and filled every soul with gladness: He crushed a dangerous rebellion in our land in the beginning of his reign; and by the wisdom of his counsels at home, and the terror of his arms abroad, he maintained peace among the nations. This is he concerning whom we were ready to say, that we shall sit many years under his shadow in our native land, enjoying the comforts of life, and the privileges of the house of God. But he is smitten, his life is vanished, and he is gone from the earth: Our deliverer and our guardian is removed from the midst of us, he will deliver and defend us no more.

The lesson of instruction which we derive hence is this, "The great God doth not stand in need of the greatest of men to carry on his own work." O! the divine magnificence of the government of God, who can prepare and qualify instruments for his own service, and employ them for a season for blessed purposes, and lay them aside again at pleasure, without the least interruption to his important designs! If the blessed God had stood in need of a man, for the support of his interest in the world, and for the guard of our nation, one would be ready to say, surely our gracious departed sovereign would have been continued in the midst of us, and would have been preserved yet many years on the *british* throne. "But the Lord seeth not as man sees:" *1 Sam. xvi. 7.* "His thoughts are above our thoughts, and his ways are above our's, as the heavens are above the earth," *Isaiab lvii. 7.* He hath seen fit to cut short the life of our king, the guardian of our liberties, and the defender of our faith, and yet we trust he intends to save *Great-Britain*, and to preserve his churches in the midst of her: He can do it while king *GEORGE* our deliverer lies asleep in the dust and silence.

4. When we consider the many personal excellencies and royal virtues that adorned the character of our late sovereign, it is an awful and afflictive thing to think of so much excellency removed from the earth. The world is bereaved of one of the best of princes. Should we take a survey of his excellent qualifications for government, it would entertain us beyond the measure of our present time; but in grati-

tude to the memory of such a prince, and to awaken a due sense of our loss, we cannot pass away to the next head, without the short mention of a few of these royal virtues.

1. He was a prince of a wise heart, and excellent in counsel; sagacious to foresee threatening dangers at a distance, and to penetrate into future events, as far as human foresight is permitted to do it. Consummate wisdom makes an approach to a prophetic spirit. How just and happy were his sentiments of the tendency of things in the former reign? How true his presages? And how dreadful had the final event been, if a merciful providence had not brought him to the throne, to prevent the dangers which he foresaw? With how successful a penetration did he enter into the projects of foreign princes, and by a prudent precaution guard us from the mischievous influence of them? *Great-Britain*, and the nations in alliance therewith, find the present happy effects of his wisdom in this respect.

2. He was a prince of great firmness of soul; his heart was all courage; resolution and a steady conduct ran through the whole of his affairs: And in many instances those that were near the throne have observed a remarkable constancy of spirit in his government, the happy effects whereof have been very discernable to those at a greater distance. We have had no weak, fickle management, and changing scenes of things since he wore the crown: This made him the more beloved by his friends, and his enemies stood the more in awe of him.

3. Mercy, goodness, and love were wrought into his very constitution; they discovered themselves even to the eyes of strangers, in the very features of his countenance: Every one that saw his face, declared they saw the evident traces and signatures of benignity and goodness there: And these virtues shone so much the brighter, by how much the higher station they were placed in. Gentleness and love to mankind, and friendly benevolence, are excellent dispositions in any man, but when they are joined with majesty, they imitate the glories of God himself, and carry an illustrious resemblance of our maker. The death of such a sovereign, who sat on the throne with meekness, and love, and compassion attending on each side of him, is a great and heavy loss to a freeborn nation.

4. He was a prince without pride. His whole conduct made it appear, that he regarded the good of his subjects more than his own grandeur. He seemed to have no superior airs about him; no supercilious looks; but was affable in his whole deportment towards those who were so much beneath him. He had nothing of that restless and mischievous quality of ambition, that takes every opportunity to grasp at more power, and to seize on the ancient rights and the freedoms even of a loyal and obedient people. The happiness of his subjects seemed to be his constant wish and highest joy.

5. He was a prince who delighted to reward his friends, and would never forget past services: Of this we are witnesses in a special manner who worship God according to our consciences in a way somewhat different from the national establishment: he knew the heartiness of our zeal for the protestant succession, and our activity for his interest according to our limited and narrow powers before he yet arrived at the throne; and the repeal of some hard and severe laws which stood in force against us, and the increase of our liberties, must be ascribed in some measure to this generous principle which reigned in the heart of our deceased sovereign. And it must be said to the immortal honour of king GEORGE, that this is no very common character among the princes of the earth.

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6. Among his other excellent dispositions it ought never to be forgotten, that he had the common welfare of protestants much at heart, and upon every occasion interposed in their behalf. He could not bear to see his brethren in the profession of the same faith, ill treated by popish princes, and unjustly burdened by the persecuting powers of this world. He knew conscience was a sacred thing, and that the empire of it belonged only to God; and as he would not assume a power over it at home, nor impose yokes of bondage on any of his subjects, so neither was he patient to see this antichristian spirit prevail over mankind abroad, wheresoever it was possible for him to procure a redress of such grievances. His own counsels, his wise orders to his ministers, and his royal letters to foreign princes bear a glorious witness to this part of his character.

It must be told also to the immortal honour of his name and memory with what zeal he sought the union of protestants among themselves. How readily he employed his good offices to relax the bonds of imposition and severity in some of the reformed cantons of *Switzerland*, that conscience might have a larger liberty in the modes of professing the same faith and worship. Surely the man who laboured so gloriously to procure this freedom for christians abroad, must be influenced by higher views than those which are merely political, to maintain and promote a just liberty of conscience among his own subjects.

To conclude, he was a prince who sought to oblige all that he had to do with and to make them easy and happy; but for those who would not be wrought upon by the condescensions of his love, he knew how to keep them in subjection. The church of God in the world, the protestant kingdoms, and the nation of *Great-Britain* have sustained a great and certain loss, when such a governor, such a benefactor, such an extensive blessing is taken from the earth.

II. We proceed now to the second thing remarkable in the late event of providence, and that is to consider "What mercies are mingled with this awful dispensation, that we may raise our souls to a delightful and grateful sense of them."

1. That a prince of so many excellent qualifications reigned so long over us, and that we enjoyed the blessing of his wise and peaceful government for such a number of years.

And here it becomes us on this occasion to call to mind the former years of our distress and danger, and the surprising pleasure of our first deliverance. Blessed be the name of our God that he raised up such a successor to the *british* throne, such a defender of the faith; such a glorious deliverer of the nation from the imminent perils under which we lay, wherein property and religion, liberty and life were all exposed. Blessed be the hand of our God that interposed in so signal a season, and confounded all the devices of our enemies; he blasted their presumptuous hopes at once, and overwhelmed them with a huge and fatal disappointment: "The snare was broken and we escaped;" *Psalms* cxxiv. 7. The protestant succession obtained, and king *GEORGE* was raised to his appointed throne, and all that is dear to us was rescued from the hands of popish tyranny, which was ready to invade us.

Let us recollect with pleasure the mercy of our God who inspired his predecessor king *William* of glorious memory to lay the foundation of the protestant succession to the crown of these kingdoms. Then he prepared a healing balm for the wound which we received at the death of our late sovereign, and made a happy provision against a thousand distant dangers.

Let us give glory to our God who prolonged the life of our late king, and made him the author of numerous blessings for almost thirteen years together: A large

space of the life of man, wherein we enjoyed our civil properties in peace, and our religious privileges were confirmed to us by the constant favour of our prince! Though in the beginning of his reign, the enemy made their utmost efforts against us by lifting up axes and hammers against our places of worship, because of our inviolable attachment to his interest, yet his wise and steady conduct soon suppressed those riots, and the law secured us against future fears.

2. It must be acknowledged as an instance of divine mercy, that our king was not taken from the earth by the hands of violence. A bloody death had been a much more formidable appearance. This would have filled our hearts with dismay, lest a secret train of mischiefs should have been contrived and broken out to our great confusion. Blessed be the name of our God that guarded his precious life from day to day, and continued him to a good old age, though he had such a multitude of enemies on earth and in hell. The agents of *Rome* are never wanting to contrive the destruction of all those that support what they call the northern heresy, and the powers of darkness are engaged on their side. Yet this great man came to his grave in peace, and died as *David* did, at a comfortable length of years, full of days, riches and honour.

3. It is to be reckoned among our mercies, since he lived so long as to see the seeds of discord sown among the nations in *Europe*, and the first efforts of a war in *Spain*, that he lived also long enough to lay the foundations of an extensive peace.

It is worthy our notice that the empress of *Muscovy*, who was known to be in a contrary interest, died but a few weeks ago, whereby it is supposed some of the foreign potentates were more powerfully and speedily induced to accept the preliminaries of a treaty of peace. Blessed be the God of peace that our sovereign lived to see these preliminaries signed: Had he been taken off from the stage of action but a few weeks sooner, perhaps the peace and the treaty had been greatly retarded, and our enemies might have prosecuted the war with double vigor. Times and seasons, life and death are in the hands of God, and we have often seen that he hath marked out and limited the extent of the life of princes, to answer wise purposes in his own government of the world, and his gracious designs towards *Great-Britain* and the churches of *Christ*.

4. It is an instance of divine mercy beyond all expression, that we have such an illustrious prince for a successor: One who is not only a firm protestant by the influence of his education under such a father, but from his own knowledge and choice infinitely prefers the reformed religion, and is a constant professor of it.

Blessed art thou, O *Britain*, for "thy king is the son of nobles," descended from a race of sovereign princes; trained up from his youngest years to the sublime art of government. Nor do we come under the woe pronounced upon "the land, whose king is a child," a minor under age, that wants a ruler to be set over him. Our present sovereign hath attained to a sufficient number of years, and a large share of experience of human affairs, and has made wise observations of the various occurrences among states and nations, that he may sway the scepter of our land with greater prudence and success.

It is to be numbered also among our mercies, that king *GEORGE* the second is no stranger to our nation, having lived many years in the midst of us, and in this he hath a rich advantage beyond his immediate predecessor. Now if our late excellent monarch, who was at first so much a stranger to us, became through the mercy of our God so wise and happy a ruler, how hopeful a prospect may we have of the present and future government under the administration of his royal son and successor  
who

who has studied our laws, has given diligence to understand the customs of the land, and acknowledges the excellency of our constitution.

How happy are we in a prince who has professed in his royal declaration, that "our laws, our liberties and religion are most dear to him:" And whose affection to his people is so conspicuous, that he hath gained the hearts of some of his subjects, who could scarce conceal their enmity to his predecessor.

Nor should I be just to my text on this occasion, if I should not take notice of that religious sense which our present sovereign hath expressed many years ago, of the interposing providence of God in counterworking all the mischievous devices of Rome and hell, and bringing the protestant succession in the illustrious house of *Brunswick* to take effect in the person of his royal father \*. He is not one of those that attribute the revolution of kingdoms to chance, but he regards the work of the Lord therein, and the operation of his hands.

5. It should be added to the rank of our mercies also in this event of providence, that the king succeeds to the throne of his father in so much tranquillity and peace. No tumults nor insurrections, no rising sedition, no clashing of arms. The rebellious party are discouraged and broken, their hearts sink within them, and their men of might have not found their hands: We trust their number is greatly diminished, and will decrease continually. *GEORGE* the second succeeds to the *british* throne with so generally a satisfaction and applause, that we hope it will shortly become universal. May the God of heaven fulfil our hopes!

6. It is a very remarkable part of our joy, that we are also blessed with a queen of an excellent character, and a spirit of uncommon goodness. One who hath been trained up not only to practise religion, but to understand it too. One who hath not wasted her life in the gaieties and softnesses of a court, but hath pursued solid knowledge in the things of nature, and the affairs of morality: One who hath learned the rules of virtue sufficient to teach them as a science, but who teaches them with more honour and success by her own daily practice; and is not diverted by the splendid temptations of a palace from the richer improvements of the mind.

Blessed be God for a *british* queen who hath shewn such a sincere zeal and love to the protestant religion, as to refuse the imperial crown of *Germany*, lest she should be entangled or defiled with popish superstition; and who takes a peculiar pleasure to train up her royal offspring in all the paths of virtue and piety. May divine mercy succeed her care!

She is a princess whom we hope the providence of God hath raised up to the royal dignity, that she may become a more powerful and extensive pattern of every virtue and every grace, and may help to correct the manners of the nation, and the degenerate customs of the times by her illustrious example.

7. Among the blessings of this day we must not forget the numerous race of young princes which, we trust, are born to secure and perpetuate our happiness. Children in a more general sense are the blessing of the Lord; but a numerous progeny in a royal house, who shall be all trained up in the protestant faith, are a peculiar favour of heaven to *Great-Britain*. What a happy prospect is it, that our late sovereign left such a large posterity behind him! Had his life been single, or like that of king *William*, not blessed with royal issue, how dreadful would our present case have been? In what dangers and contests had he left the succession to his throne? And our nation might have felt the fatal effects of it, groaning under popish darkness, and wallowing in blood.

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\* See Mr. *Derham's* dedication of his "Astro-Theology."

Who can review such a multitude of mercies as these are, but must have his heart filled with joy and thankfulness to God the ruler of the world? And how happily are our deepest sorrows for the death of our late king alleviated by such a view of blessings in a glorious succession? Blessings for present and future ages! I am come now to

The last general head of my discourse, and that is a humble enquiry into the various duties that naturally arise from the present event: Most of them may be summed up under the following particulars.

1. "A proper and becoming sense of our loss." Shall so great a prince be taken away from this earth, and so valuable a blessing from our nation, without an awful and solemn sense of the hand of God? Though he had arrived at the age of sixty seven years, which is almost the term of the life of man, yet the vigor of his constitution, and his healthy frame of nature, seemed to promise us several more years of protection and peace under his government: But the all-wise God hath cut off the thread of his valuable life, and disappointed our hopes. And while we stand in awe, and adore the sovereign hand of providence, that he hath deprived us of so excellent a prince, it becomes us to pay all due honours to his memory, even though his throne be supplied with so excellent a successor. All "*Israel* mourned thirty days for *Moses* their leader in the plains of *Moab*, though they had a *Jeshua* to succeed him, who was full of the spirit of wisdom," *Deut.* xxxiv. 8, 9.

2. "Such a providence as this should shake us off from our dependence on any creatures," and fix our hope more entirely on God: He only is the "king eternal, immortal, and invisible." *1 Tim.* vi. 13. He is the king of kings, who disposes of their breath, and their scepter, and their dominions as he pleases; but he reigns for ever and ever, and his kingdom stands to all generations. This duty was hinted before: I add therefore,

As christians, it becomes us on such occasions to remember *Jesus*, the Son of God, whose title also is the "Lord of lords, and the king of kings:" Into his hands are committed all the reins of government in the upper and the lower worlds. "He hath the keys of death and the grave." *Rev.* i. 18. In his hand is the life of princes; they reign but under him, and according to his pleasure. He numbers the days of their life, and the years of their dominion; and he dismisses them from this world when they have finished the work to which he ordained them, and raises up others in their stead, to carry on his own and his Father's wise and eternal scheme of councils. "He is the same yesterday, to day and for ever;" *Heb.* xiii. 8. "and of his kingdom there is no end." *Luke* i. 33. Though he be the child that was born of the virgin, the Son that was promised to *Abraham*, and given in mercy to the world, yet he is also the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the prince of peace," *Isaiab* ix. 6. Let our eye be directed to him. Let us live upon him as the king of saints, and the king of nations. And amidst all the changes and revolutions of this lower world, let us remember that *Sion* is still safe under the eye and care of *Jesus* her king.

3. "Let us manifest our gratitude to God for these great and important blessings which are mingled with the present awful event," and let our thankfulness be expressed in such a manner as becomes the professors of piety and strict religion. It is God that has ordained all things so well for us in this nation, who established the protestant succession at first, and hath made it to take effect once and again: It is he hath placed all things in so happy a situation to dry up our tears, and to allay our sorrows.



forrows. To him be a thousand thanks and honours offered by the nation and all the churches.

And in order to manifest our thankfulness in a more eminent degree, let us enquire wherein we have mis-improved the peace, liberty, and other numerous blessings of the former reign, and awaken ourselves to all holy diligence in a wise improvement of our present mercies. O! let us not indulge riot, luxury, and vanity, nor waste the blessings of heaven in the follies and iniquities of life. Let us not practise the crimes which my text severely reproveth, nor indulge sensual merriment with the neglect of God and religion: But as temporal mercies surround us in a sweet succession, let our love to God our supreme benefactor be perpetually increased, and our duties of piety be ever multiplied.

4. That divine providence which has called our present monarch to the throne, "demands all dutiful affection and obedience to be paid him with our hearts and hands." As we fear God, and love our brethren, so let us honour the king, for these three commands are joined together in the new testament, 1 *Pet.* ii. 17. Reason and scripture unite them all.

Let us submit ourselves to him with all cheerfulness, as one whom God has appointed to be the guardian of our religion, and our liberties, and all that is dear to us, Let us ever speak of him with honour, and not mention his name without a becoming respect. With a just impatience let us frown upon all tale-bearers, and discourage every whisperer, those secret and vile instruments of public mischief. Nor let us give countenance to sly and private insinuations against the dignity and honour of our sovereign.

Let us reverence and love him as one that is exalted to be "the minister of God for our good." *Rom.* xiii. 4. It is on him, under God, that our eyes are fixed. It is in him that our hopes of happiness center. Under *Christ Jesus*, who is the Lord of glory, we must look upon *GEORGE* the second of *Great Britain*, as the chief guardian and support of the protestant religion in the world.

5. "Let us offer our daily and ardent prayers to God for his long life, prosperity and peace." Addresses to heaven for the divine presence with him, should be joined with all our vows of allegiance. We read in *Joshua* chapter i. 17. that when the tribes of *Reuben*, *Gad* and *Manasseh* surrendered themselves to the conduct of *Joshua* in the room of *Moses*, they joined a hearty petition to the Lord for him; "According as we hearkened unto *Moses* in all things, so will we hearken unto thee, and all that thou commandest us we will do: Only the Lord thy God be with thee, as he was with *Moses*."

When *Solomon* was placed on the throne of his father *David* before he died, *David* is supposed to write the *lxxii. Psalm*, which may be a proper pattern for our present petitions in this manner: As thou gavest our late king "thy judgments, O God, so give thy righteousness to the king's son: Let him judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. Let him save the children of the needy, and break in pieces the oppressor: Let him come down like rain upon the new mown grass, as showers that water the earth: In his days let the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace be derived from his posterity so long as the moon endureth;" as his dominions are extended from sea to sea, so let him have a spreading influence from the rivers of *Great Britain* unto the ends of the earth; let those that dwell in distant lands, bow before him, and let his enemies lick the dust; let him live and reign a length of years, and all due tribute be given him; let prayer be  
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made for him continually, and may he be ever engaged in works of blessing to the world, that he may receive daily and perpetual praises.

And as the Spirit of God eminently designed *Solomon* in this *Pſalm*, as a type of *Chriſt*, ſo let us pray that our ſovereign may imitate our bleſſed *Jeſus* in all divine virtues, and in the ſacred qualifications of a ruler; that his throne may be ſurrounded with wiſdom and eſtabliſhed in juſtice: “In his majeſty let him ride proſperouſly with truth, meekneſs and righteouſneſs attending him;” *Pſal.* xlv. 5. may every princely virtue and grace dwell in his heart and ſhine through all his actions. May his authority and his royal example join together to work wonders of reformation among the higher and the lower ranks of mankind: And may probity of manners be always a neceſſary ſtep of acceſs to the king’s favour.

O may he be wiſe as an angel of God, to diſcern between good and evil, between his ſincere friends and fawning flatterers! Grant, O Lord, that he may daily encrease in ſagacity and happy penetration to diſcover the true intereſt of the land, and be ever ſteady and reſolute in the purſuit of it. Let him ſee his own intereſt inſeparably connected with the intereſt of his people; and purſue them together with glorious ſucceſs. May the proteſtant powers abroad acknowledge him as their common father, and their ſuperior friend; and may even the diſtant poſterity of our nation join with the generations to come in foreign lands in paying honour to his memory, as the chief ſupport of religion and liberty in this lower world.

And ſince God hath bleſſed us with a queen conſort, let her alſo have a large ſhare in our beſt wiſhes and our pious addreſſes to heaven. Long may ſhe live a tranſcendent bleſſing to the nation and the world; and fulfil with honour all the promiſing proſpects that her ſublime character and virtue in a leſs-exalted ſtation have given us. Let the prophecy of *Iſaiab* be eminently fulfilled in our day, that a king is become our nurſing father and a queen our nurſing mother, *Iſai.* xlix. 23.

The various branches of the royal family demand a ſhare alſo in our prayers; that plentiful influences from heaven may deſcend on them all, and that they may be trained up under ſuch parents, for all the high ſtations to which providence may deſign them in future times; that bleſſings derived from the moſt ſerene family of *Brunſwick* may be diſſuſed through the nations of the earth; and eſpecially that the heirs of the crown deſcended from this illuſtrious houſe may ſit on the throne of *Great Britain* in a long and perpetual ſucceſſion, may gloriouſly maintain religion and virtue in the land, and promote the kingdom of our bleſſed redeemer from age to age, till time ſhall be no more. Amen.

The END of the Second VOLUME.



