

## JOURNAL

FROM NOVEMBER 1, 1739, TO SEPTEMBER 3, 1741.

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*Thursday*, NOVEMBER 1, 1739.—I left Bristol, and, on Saturday, came to London. The first person I met with there, was one whom I had left strong in faith, and zealous of good works ; but she now told me, Mr. Molther had fully convinced her, she never had any faith at all ; and had advised her, till she received faith, to be still, ceasing from outward works ; which she had accordingly done, and did not doubt but in a short time she should find the advantage of it.

In the evening Mr. Bray, also, was highly commending the being still before the Lord. He likewise spoke largely of the great danger that attended the doing of outward works, and of the folly of people that keep running about to church and sacrament, “as I,” said he, “did till very lately.”

*Sun.* 4.—Our society met at seven in the morning, and continued silent till eight. One then spoke of looking unto Jesus, and exhorted us all to lie still in his hand.

In the evening I met the women of our society at Fetter-Lane ; where some of our brethren strongly intimated that none of them had any true faith ; and then asserted, in plain terms, 1. That, till they had true faith, they ought to be still ; that is, (as they explained themselves,) to abstain from the means of grace, as they are called ; the Lord’s Supper in particular. 2. That the ordinances are not means of grace, there being no other means than Christ.

*Wed.* 7.—Being greatly desirous to understand the ground of this matter, I had a long conference with Mr. Spangenberg. I agreed with all he said of the power of faith. I agreed, that “whosoever is” by faith “born of God doth not commit sin :” But I could not agree, either, that none has any faith, so long as he is liable to any doubt or fear ; or, that till we have it, we ought to abstain from the Lord’s Supper, or the other ordinances of God.

At eight, our society met at Fetter-Lane. We sat an hour without speaking. The rest of the time was spent in dispute; one having proposed a question concerning the Lord's Supper, which many warmly affirmed none ought to receive, till he had "the full assurance of faith."

I observed every day more and more, the advantage Satan had gained over us. Many of those who once knew in whom they had believed, were thrown into idle reasonings, and thereby filled with doubts and fears, from which they now found no way to escape. Many were induced to deny the gift of God, and affirm they never had any faith at all; especially those who had fallen again into sin, and, of consequence, into darkness; and almost all these had left off the means of grace, saying they must now cease from their own works; they must now trust in Christ alone; they were poor sinners, and had nothing to do but to lie at his feet.

Till *Saturday*, the 10th, I think I did not meet with one woman of the society who had not been upon the point of casting away her confidence in God. I then indeed found one, who, when many (according to their custom) laboured to persuade her she had no faith, replied, with a spirit they were not able to resist, "I know that the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me: And He has never left me one moment, since the hour He was made known to me in the breaking of bread."

What is to be inferred from this undeniable matter of fact, —one that had not faith received it in the Lord's Supper? Why, 1. That there are means of grace, that is, outward ordinances, whereby the inward grace of God is ordinarily conveyed to man; whereby the faith that brings salvation is conveyed to them who before had it not. 2. That one of these means is the Lord's Supper. And, 3. That he who has not this faith ought to wait for it, in the use both of this, and of the other means which God hath ordained.

*Fri.* 9.—I showed how we are to examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith; and afterwards recommended to all, though especially to them that believed, true stillness, that is, a patient waiting upon God, by lowliness, meekness, and resignation, in all the ways of his holy law, and the works of his commandments.

All this week I endeavoured also by private conversation to