
A
S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D at

St. MART's Radcliffe,

I N

B R I S T O L.

Price Six-pence ; or Two Guineas *per* Hundred
to those who give them away.

*The Nature and Necessity of our NEW
BIRTH in Christ Jesus, in order to
Salvation.*

A
S E R M O N

Preached in the CHURCH of

St. *M A R T* Radcliffe,

I N

B R I S T O L.

By GEORGE WHITFIELD, A. B.
of PEMBROKE College, Oxford.

Published at the Request of several of the Hearers,

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M D C C X X X V I I .



T H E
P R E F A C E.



THE Importunity of Friends, the Aspersions of Enemies, the great Scarcity of Sermons on this Subject among the Divines of our own Church, and not any overweening Conceit, I trust, of the Worth of the Performance, were, amongst divers others, the Reasons that induced me to permit
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the Publication of this very plain Discourse.

What Reception it may meet with from the Publick, it behoves me, for my own Sake, to be very little concerned about. But I humbly hope, that as God was pleas'd to give it surprizing Success, when delivered from the Pulpit, so the same Gracious Being will continue to co-operate with it from the Press: And then, if it be thereby made instrumental towards the Convicting any one Sinner, or Confirming any one Saint,

Saint, I shall not be solicitous about the Censures that may be passed, either on the Simplicity of the Style, or on the Youth of the Author.


I hope it will be permitted me to add my hearty Wishes, that my Reverend Brethren, the Ministers of the Church of England, (if such an one as I may be worthy to call them Brethren) would more frequently entertain their People with Discourses of this Nature, than they commonly do: And that they would not, out of a servile Fear of displeasing

pleasing some particular Persons, fail to declare the whole Will of GOD to their respective Congregations, nor suffer their People to rest satisfied with the Shell and Shadow of Religion, without acquainting them with the Nature and Necessity of that Inward Holiness, and Vital Purity of Heart, which their Profession obliges them to aspire after, and without which no Man living can comfortably see the LORD.



2 COR. V. 17.

*If any Man be in Christ, he
is a new Creature.*

 HE Doctrines of our REGENERATION, or NEW BIRTH in CHRIST JESUS, tho' one of the most fundamental Doctrines of our holy Religion ; though so plainly and often pressed on us in sacred Writ, “ that he that runs may “ read ;” nay, though it is the very Hinge on which the Salvation of each of us turns, and a Point too in which all *sincere* Christians, of whatever Denomination, agree ; yet is so seldom considered, and so little *experimentally* understood by the Generality of Professors, that were we to judge of the Truth of it by

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the *Experience* of most who call themselves *Christians*, we should be apt to imagine they had “not so much as heard” whether there be any such thing as Regeneration or no. It is true, Men, for the most part, are Orthodox in the common Articles of their Creed; they believe there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, even the Man CHRIST JESUS; and that there is no other Name given under Heaven, whereby they can be saved, besides His: But then tell them, They must be REGENERATE, they must be BORN AGAIN, they must be renewed in the very *Spirit*, *i. e.* in the *inmost* Faculties of their Minds, ere they can truly call Christ *Lord, Lord*, or have any Share in the Merits of his precious Blood; and they are ready to cry out with *Nicodemus*, “How can these things be?” Or with the *Athenians*, on another Occasion, “What will this Babler say? He seemeth to be a Setter-forth of strange Doctrines, because we preach unto them Christ, and the New Birth.”

THAT I may therefore contribute my Mite towards curing the fatal Mistake of such Persons, who would thus put asunder what God has inseparably joined together, and vainly expect

expect to be justified by Christ, *i. e.* have their Sins forgiven ; unless they are also sanctified, *i. e.* have their Natures changed, and made holy, I shall beg leave to inlarge on the Words of the Text in the following manner.

First, I shall endeavour to explain what is meant by *Being in Christ*, “ *If any Man
“ be in Christ.*”

Secondly, What we are to understand by being a *New Creature* : “ *If any Man
“ be in Christ*, says the Apostle, *he is a
“ new Creature.*”

Thirdly, I shall produce some Arguments to prove *Why* we must be *new Creatures* ere we can be *in Christ*.

Fourthly and *Lastly*, I shall draw some Inferences from what will have been delivered, and then conclude with a Word or two of Exhortation from the whole.

AND *first* then, I am to endeavour to explain what is meant by this Expression in the Text, *If any Man be in Christ*.

Now a Person may be said to be *in Christ* two Ways. First, only by an outward Profession. And in this Sense, every one that is called a Christian, or baptized into Christ's Church, may be said to be *in Christ*. But that this is not the sole Meaning of the Apostle's Phrase now before us, is evident, because then "every one that names the Name of Christ," or is baptized into his visible Church, would be a *new Creature*. Which is notoriously false, it being too plain, beyond all Contradiction, that comparatively but few of those that are "*born of Water,*" are "*born of the Spirit*" likewise; or, to use another Scriptural way of speaking, Many are baptized with Water, which were never, effectually at least, baptized with the Holy Ghost.

To be *in CHRIST* therefore, in the full Import of the Word, must certainly mean something more than a bare outward Profession, or being called after his Name. For, as this same Apostle tells us, "All are not *Israelites* that are of *Israel,*" *i. e.* when applied to Christianity, all are not *real* Christians that are *nominally* such. Nay, that is so far from being the Case, that our Blessed LORD himself informs us, That many that have prophesied

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fied or preached in his Name; and in his Name cast out Devils, and done many wonderful Works, shall notwithstanding be dismissed at the last Day with a “ Depart from me, I know “ you not, ye Workers of Iniquity.”

It remains therefore, that this Expression, *If any Man be in Christ*, must be understood in a second and closer Signification, *viz.* to be *in him* so as to partake of the Benefits of his Sufferings. To be *in him* not only by an outward Profession, but by an inward Change and Purity of Heart, and Cohabitation of his Holy Spirit. To be *in him* so as to be mystically united to him by a true and lively Faith, and thereby to receive spiritual Virtue from him, as the Members of the natural Body do from the Head, or the Branches from the Vine. To be *in him* in such a manner as the Apostle, speaking of himself; acquaints us he knew a Person was, *I knew a Man in CHRIST*, says he, *i. e.* a true Christian; or, as he himself desires to be *in CHRIST*, when he wishes, in his Epistle to the *Philippians*, that he might be found *in him*.

THIS is undoubtedly the full Purport of the Apostle's Expression in the Words of the Text; so

so that what he says in his Epistle to the *Rōmans* about Circumcision, may very well be applied to the present Subject, *viz.* That he is not a *real* Christian, who is only one *outwardly*; nor is that true Baptism, which is only outward in the *Flesh*. But he is a true Christian, who is one *inwardly*, whose Baptism is that of the *Heart*, in the *Spirit*, and not merely in the *Water*, whose Praise is not of Man, but of GOD. Or, as he speaketh in another Place, Neither Circumcision or Uncircumcision availeth any thing of itself, but a *new Creature*. Which amounts to what he here declares in the Verse now under Consideration, that if any Man be truly and properly *in CHRIST*, he is a *new Creature*.

WHAT we are to understand by being a *New Creature*, was the next and *second* general Thing to be considered.

AND here it is evident at the first View, that this Expression is not to be so explained as tho' there was a Physical Change required to be made in us, *i. e.* as tho' we were to be reduced to our primitive *Nothings*, and then created and formed again. For supposing we were, as *Nicodemus* ignorantly imagined, to
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enter a “second time into our Mother’s “Womb, and be born,” alas! what would it contribute towards rendring us spiritually *new Creatures*? since that which was born of Flesh would be Flesh still, *i. e.* we should be the same carnal Persons as ever, being derived from carnal Parents, and consequently receiving the Seeds of all manner of Sin and Corruption from them. No, it only means, that we must be so altered as to the Qualities and Tempers of our Minds, that we must intirely forget what manner of Persons we once were. As it may be said of a Piece of Gold that was in the Ore, after it has been cleansed, purified and polished, that it is a new Piece of Gold: As it may be said of a bright Glass that has been covered over with Filth, when it is wiped, and so become transparent and clear, that it is a new Glass: Or, as it might be said of *Naaman*, when he recovered of his Leprosy, and his Flesh returned unto him like the Flesh of a young Child, that he was a new Man; so our Souls, tho’ still the same as to Essence, yet are so purged, purified and cleansed from their natural Dross, Filth and Leprosy, by the blessed Influences of the Holy Spirit, that they may properly be said to be *made anew*.

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How this glorious Change is wrought in the Soul, cannot easily be explained. For no One knows the Ways of the Spirit, save the Spirit of GOD Himself. Not that this ought to be any Argument against this Doctrine; for, as our Blessed LORD observed to *Nicodemus*, when he was discoursing on this very Subject, *The Wind*, says he, *bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth*; and if we are told of natural Things, and we understand them not, how much less ought we to wonder, if we cannot immediately account for the invisible Workings of the Holy Spirit? The Truth of the Matter is this: The Doctrine of our *Regeneration*, or *New Birth* in CHRIST JESUS, is “dark, and hard to be understood” by the natural Man. But that there is really such a Thing, and that each of us must be spiritually born again, before we can enter into the Kingdom of GOD; or, to keep to the Terms made use of in the Text, must be *new Creatures* before we can be *in CHRIST*, I shall endeavour to shew under my

Third

Third general Head, in which I was to produce some Arguments to prove, *Why* we must be *new Creatures*, in order to qualify us for being savingly *in CHRIST*.

AND here one would think it sufficient to affirm, that GOD himself, in his holy Word, hath told us so. For, not to mention many Texts that might be produced out of the *Old Testament* to prove this Point, (and indeed, by the way, one would wonder how *Nicodemus*, who was a *Teacher in Israel*, and who was therefore to instruct the People in the spiritual Meaning of the Law, should be so ignorant of this grand Article, as we find he really was, by his asking our Blessed LORD, when he was pressing on him this Topick, “How can these things be?” Surely, he could not forget how often the Psalmist had begg’d of GOD, to make him a *new Heart*, and *renew a right Spirit* within him. As likewise, how frequently the Prophets had warned the People to make them *new Hearts* and *new Minds*, and so turn unto the LORD their GOD. But not to mention these and such like Texts out of the *Old Testament*) this Doctrine is so plainly and often repeated in the *New*, that, as I observed before, “He that runs may read.”

For what says the great Prophet and Instructor of the World himself? *Except a Man (i. e. every one that is naturally engendred of the Offspring of Adam) be born again of Water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* And lest we should be apt to slight this Assertion, and, *Nicodemus-like*, reject the Doctrine, because we cannot immediately explain, How this thing can be; our Blessed Master therefore affirms it, as it were, by an Oath, *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, or, as it may be read, *I the Amen*; I, who am Truth itself, say unto you, that it is the unalterable Appointment of my heavenly Father, *that unless a Man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*

AGREEABLE to this are those many Passages we meet with in the Epistles, where we are commanded to be *renewed in the Spirit, i. e.* as was before explained, in the inmost Faculties of our Minds. To put off the *Old Man*, which is corrupt; and to put on the *New Man*, which is created after God, in Righteousness and true Holiness. That *Old Things* must pass away, and that all Things must become *New*. That we are to be saved by the washing of *Regeneration*, and the *Renewing*
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of the HOLY GHOST. Or, methinks, was there no other Passage to be produced besides the Words of the Text, it would be full enough, since the Apostle therein positively affirms, that *If any Man be in CHRIST, he is a new Creature.*

Now what can be understood by all these different Terms of being *born again*, of *putting off the Old Man*, and *putting on the New*, of being *renewed in the Spirit* of our *Minds*, and becoming *new Creatures*; but that Christianity requires a *thorough, real, inward* Change of Heart? Do we think these, and such like Forms of speaking, are mere Metaphors, Words of a bare Sound, without any real solid Signification? Indeed, it is to be feared, some Men would have them interpreted so; but, alas! unhappy Men! they are not to be envied their Metaphorical Interpretation: It will be well, if they do not interpret themselves out of their Salvation.

MULTITUDES of other Texts might be produced to confirm this same Truth; but those already quoted are so plain and convincing, that one would imagine no One should deny it; were we not told, “ There are some, who

“ having Eyes, see not, and Ears, hear not,
 “ and that will not understand with their
 “ Hearts, or hear with their Ears, lest they
 “ should be converted, and CHRIST should
 “ heal them.”

BUT I proceed to a second Argument to prove, *Why* we must be *new Creatures*, in order to be rightly *in* CHRIST. And that shall be taken from the Purity of GOD, and the present corrupt and polluted State of Man.

Now GOD is described in Holy Scripture (and I speak to those who profess to know the Scripture) as a *Spirit*; as a Being of such infinite Sanctity, as to be of *purser Eyes* than to *behold Iniquity*; as to be so transcendantly *Holy*, that it is said the *very Heavens are not clean in his Sight*; and the *Angels themselves* he chargeth with *Folly*. On the other hand, *Man* is described (and every *Regenerate* Person will find it true by his own Experience) as a Creature altogether *conceived* and *born in Sin*; as having no *good Thing* dwelling in him; as being *carnal, sold under Sin*; nay, as having a Mind which is *Enmity with* GOD, and such like. And since then there

is such an infinite Disparity, can any one conceive how such a filthy, corrupted, polluted Wretch can dwell with an infinitely pure and holy God, before he is changed and rendered, in some measure, like him? Can He, that is of purer Eyes than to *behold* Iniquity, dwell with it? Can He, in whose Sight the *Heavens* are not clean, delight to dwell with *Unclean-ness* itself? No; we might as well suppose *Light* to have Communion with *Darkness*, or CHRIST to have Concord with *Belial*. But I pass on to a

THIRD Argument to make good the Apostle's Assertion in the Text, which shall be founded on the Consideration of the Nature of that Happiness God has prepared for those that unfeignedly love him.

To enter indeed on a minute and particular Description of Heaven, would be vain and presumptuous, since we are told, that *Eye* hath not *seen*, nor *Ear* heard, neither hath it entered into the *Heart of Man* to conceive the Things that are there prepared for the *sincere Followers* of the Holy J E S U S. However, this we may venture to affirm in the general, that as God is a *Spirit*, so the Happiness

pinels he has laid up for his People is *spiritual* likewise ; and consequently, unless our *carnal* Minds are *changed* and become *spiritualized*, we can never be made meet to partake of that Inheritance with the Saints in Light.

It is true, we may flatter ourselves that, supposing we continue in our natural corrupt Estate, and carry all our Lusts along with us, that we should, notwithstanding, relish Heaven, was GOD to admit us therein. And so we might, was it a *Mahometan Paradise*, wherein we were to take our full Swing in sensual Delights. But since its Joys are only *spiritual*, and no unclean Thing can possibly enter those blessed Mansions, there is an absolute Necessity of our being *changed*, and undergoing a total *Renovation* of our depraved Natures, before we can have any Taste or Relish of those heavenly Pleasures.

It is, doubtless, for this Reason, that the Apostle declares it to be the irrevocable Decree of the Almighty, that *without Holiness, i. e. without being made pure by Regeneration*, and having the Image of God thereby reinstamped upon the Soul, *no Man living shall see the Lord*. And it is very observable, that
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our Divine Master, in the famous Passage before referred to, concerning the absolute Necessity of *Regeneration*, does not say, unless a Man be born again, he SHALL NOT, but unless a Man be born again, he CANNOT enter into the Kingdom of God. For it is founded in the very Nature of Things, that unless we have Dispositions wrought in us suitable and answerable to the Objects that are to entertain us, we can take no manner of Complacency or Satisfaction in them. For Instance ; What Delight can the most harmonious *Musick* afford a *Deaf*, or what Pleasure the most excellent *Picture* give a *Blind* Man ? Can a tasteless Palate relish the richest Dainties, or a filthy Swine be pleased with the finest Garden of Flowers ? No : And what Reason can be assigned for it ? An Answer is ready ; Because they have neither of them any Tempers of Mind correspondent or agreeable to what they are to be diverted with. And thus it is with the Soul hereafter. For Death makes no more Alteration in the Soul, than as it enlarges its Faculties, and makes it capable of receiving deeper Impressions either of Pleasure or Pain. If it delighted to converse with God here, it will be transported with the Sight of his glorious Majesty hereafter. If it was pleased

pleas'd with the Communion of Saints on Earth, it will be infinitely more so with the Communion and Society of holy Angels and the Spirits of just Men made perfect in Heaven. But if the Opposite of all this be true, we may assure ourselves, it could not be happy, was God himself to admit it (which he never will do) into the Regions of the Blessed. But it is Time for me to hasten to the

FOURTH and last Argument I shall offer to prove, that we must be *new Creatures* ere we can be *in CHRIST*, *viz.* because CHRIST'S Redemption will not be complete without it.

IF we reflect indeed on the first and chief End of our Blessed LORD'S Coming, we shall find it was to save us from our Sins, to be a Propitiation for our Sins, to give his Life a Ransom for many. But then, if the Benefits of our Dear Redeemer's Death were to extend no further than barely to procure Forgiveness of our Sins, we should have as little Reason to rejoice in it, as a poor condemned Criminal that is ready to perish by some fatal Disease, would have in receiving a Pardon from his Judge. For Christians would do well to consider, that there is not only a legal Hindrance

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drance to our Happiness, as we are Breakers of GOD's Law, but also a moral Impurity in our Natures, which renders us incapable of enjoying Heaven, (as hath been already prov'd) till some mighty Change hath been wrought in us. It is necessary therefore, in order to make CHRIST's Redemption complete, that we should have a Grant of GOD's Holy Spirit to change our Natures, and so prepare us for the Enjoyment of that Happiness our Saviour has purchased by his precious Blood.

ACCORDINGLY the holy Scriptures inform us, that whom CHRIST *justifies*, *i. e.* (as we said before) whose Sins he *forgives*, those he also *sanctifies*, *i. e.* purifies and cleanses, and totally changeth their corrupted Natures. Nay, in one Place of Scripture, *Sanctification* is put before *Justification*, on purpose, as it were, to convince us that there is no Salvation to be had without it. But ye are *washed*, says the Apostle, but ye are *sanctified*; and *then* follows, but ye are *justified*. As the Scripture also speaketh in another Place, "CHRIST is to us Justification, Sanctification, and *then* Redemption." Let this therefore be admitted as another indisputable Argument why we *must* be new Creatures ere we

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can be *in* CHRIST, because without it CHRIST is dead in vain.

PROCEED we now to the next general Thing proposed, *viz.* To draw some Inferences from what has been delivered.

AND First then, If he that is *in* CHRIST must be a *new Creature*, this may serve as a Reproof for some, who rest in a bare Performance of *outward* Duties, without perceiving any real *inward* Change of Heart.

WE may observe a great many Persons to be very punctual in the regular Returns of publick and private Prayer, as likewise of receiving the Holy Communion, and perhaps, now and then too, in keeping a Fast. And so far we grant they do well. But then here is the Misfortune, they rest barely in the Use of the Means, and think all is over, when they have just complied with these sacred Institutions: Whereas, were they rightly informed, they would consider, that all the instituted Means of Grace, as Prayer, Fasting, Hearing and Reading the Word of God, Receiving the Blessed Sacrament, and such like, are no further serviceable to us, than as they
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are found to make us *inwardly* better, and to carry on the spiritual Life in the Soul.

It is true, they are *Means*, and *Essential* ones too ; but then they are *only* Means; they are *Part*, but not the *Whole* of Religion : For if so, Who more religious than the *Pharisee* ? who fasted twice in the Week, and gave Tythes of all that he possessed, and yet was not justified, as our Saviour himself informs us, in the Sight of God.

You perhaps, like the *Pharisee*, may fast often, and make long Prayers ; you may, with *Herod*, hear good Sermons gladly ; or, as *Judas* himself, in all Probability, did, receive the Blessed Sacrament. But yet, if you continue vain and trifling, immoral or worldly-minded in your Conversations, and differ from the rest of your Neighbours barely in going to Church, or in complying with some outward Performances, are you better than they ? No, in no wise : You are by far much worse, because those that wholly neglect the Means, are answerable only for omitting the Use of God's Ordinances ; whereas if you use them, and at the same time abuse them, by not letting them produce their intended

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Effect, you thereby encourage others to think there is nothing in them, and therefore must expect to “ receive the greater Damnation.”

But, Secondly, If he that is *in* CHRIST must be a *new Creature*, then this may check the groundless Presumption of another Class of Professors, who rest in the Attainment of some Moral Virtues, and falsely imagine they are good Christians, if they are just in their Dealings, are temperate in their Diet, and do Hurt or Violence to no Man.

BUT if this was all that is requisite to make us Christians, Why might not the Heathens of old be good Christians, who were remarkable for these Virtues? Or *St. Paul*, before his Conversion, who tells us, That then he lived in all good Conscience, and was, touching the Law, blameless? And yet, after his Conversion, we find he renounces all Dependence on Works of this Nature, and only desires to be found *in* CHRIST, and to know the Power of his Resurrection, *i. e.* to have an experimental Proof of receiving the HOLY GHOST, purchased for him by the Death, and infused and applied to him by the Resurrection, of JESUS CHRIST.

THE Sum of the Matter is this : Christianity includes Morality, as Grace does Reason ; but if we are only mere *Moralists*, if we are not *inwardly* wrought upon, and changed by the powerful Operations of the *Holy Spirit*, and our Moral Actions proceed from a Principle of a *new Nature*, however we may call ourselves Christians, it is to be feared we shall be found naked at the Great Day, and in the Number of those, who vainly depend on their own Righteousness, and not on the Righteousness of JESUS CHRIST, imputed to and inherent in them, as necessary to their eternal Salvation.

NOR, Thirdly, will this Doctrine less condemn those, who rest in a Partial Amendment of themselves, without going on to Perfection, and experiencing a thorough, real, inward Change of Heart.

A little Acquaintance with the World will furnish us with Instances of no small Number of Persons, who, perhaps, were before openly profane ; but seeing the ill Consequences of their Vice, and the many worldly Inconveniencies it has reduced them to, on a sudden, as it were, grow civilized ; and thereupon
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flatter themselves that they are very religious, because they differ a little from their former selves, and are not so scandalously wicked as once they were: Whereas at the same time they shall have some secret darling Sin or other, some beloved *Dalilah* or *Herodias*, which they will not part with; some hidden Lust, which they will not mortify; some vicious Habit, which they will not take pains to root out. But wouldst thou know, O vain Man! whoever thou art, what the LORD thy GOD requires of thee? thou must be inform'd, that nothing short of a *thorough, sound* Conversion will avail for the Salvation of thy Soul. It is not enough to turn from *Profaneness* to *Civility*; but thou must turn from *Civility* to *Godliness*. Not only *some*, but *all Things* must become *new* in thy Soul. It will profit thee but little to do many Things, if yet some *one Thing* thou lackest. In short, thou must not be only an *almost*, but *altogether* a *new Creature*, or in vain thou hopest for a saving Interest *in* CHRIST.

Fourthly and Lastly, IF he that is *in* CHRIST must be a *new Creature*, then this may be prescribed as an infallible Rule for every Person of whatever Denomination, Age, Degree
or

or Quality to judge himself by. This being the only solid Foundation whereon we can build a well-grounded Assurance of Pardon, Peace and Happiness.

WE may indeed depend on the broken Reed of an external Profession; we may think we have done enough, if we lead such sober, honest, moral Lives, as many Heathens did. We may imagine we are in a safe Condition, if we attend on the publick Offices of Religion, and are constant in the Duties of our Closets. But unless all these tend to reform our Lives, and change our Hearts, and are only used as so many Channels of Divine Grace; as I told you before, so I tell you again, Christianity will profit us nothing.

LET each of us therefore seriously put this Question to our Hearts: Have we received the HOLY GHOST since we believed? Are we *new Creatures* in CHRIST, or no? At least, if we are not so *yet*, is it our daily Endeavour to *become* such? Do we make a constant and conscientious Use of all the Means of Grace required thereto? Do we fast, watch, and pray? Do we not only lazily seek, but laboriously strive to enter in at the strait Gate? In short,

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Do we *renounce* ourselves, take up our Crosses and follow CHRIST? If so, we are in that narrow Way which leads to Life: We are, at least shall in Time, become *new Creatures in CHRIST*. The good Seed is sown in our Hearts, and will, if duly water'd and nourish'd by a regular persevering Use of *all* the Means of Grace, grow up to eternal Life. But, on the contrary, if we have only *heard*, and know not *experimentally*, whether there be any HOLY GHOST; if we are Strangers to Fasting, Watching and Prayer, and all the other spiritual Exercises of Devotion; if we are content to go in the broad Way merely because we see most other People do so, without once reflecting whether it be the right one or not; in short, if we are Strangers, nay, Enemies to the Cross of CHRIST, by leading Lives of Softness, Worldly-mindedness, and sensual Pleasure, and thereby make others think that Christianity is but an empty Name, a bare formal Profession; if this be the Case, I say, then CHRIST is as yet dead in vain as to *us*; we are yet under the Guilt of our Sins; we are unacquainted with that true and thorough Conversion, which alone can intitle us to the Salvation of our Souls.

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BUT, Beloved, I am persuaded better Things of you, and Things that accompany Salvation, tho' we thus speak ; and humbly hope, that you are fully and heartily convinced, that nothing but the Wedding Garment of a *new Nature*, can gain Admission for you at the Marriage Feast of the Supper of the Lamb ; that you are sincerely persuaded, that he that hath not the Spirit of CHRIST, is none of his ; and that unless the Spirit, which raised JESUS from the Dead, dwell in you here, neither will your mortal Bodies be quickened by the same Spirit to dwell with him hereafter.

LET me therefore (as was proposed in the last Place) earnestly exhort you, in the Name of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, to act suitable to those Convictions, and to live as Christians, that are commanded in Holy Writ, to put off their former Conversation concerning the *Old Man*, and to put on the *New Man*, which is created after GOD, in Righteousness and true Holiness.

IT must be owned indeed, that this is a great and difficult Work ; but, blessed be GOD, it is not impossible. Many Thousands of happy Souls have been assisted by a Divine Power

to bring it about, and why should *We* despair of Success? Is GOD's Hand shortened, that it cannot save? Was He the GOD of our *Fathers*, is He not the GOD of their *Children* also? Yes, doubtless, of their *Children* also. It is a Task likewise that will put us to some Pain; it will oblige us to part with some Lust, to break with some Friend, to mortify some beloved Passion, which may be exceeding dear to us, and perhaps as hard to leave, as to cut off a right Hand, or pluck out a right Eye. But what of all this? Will not the being made a real living Member of CHRIST, a Child of GOD, and an Inheritor of the *Kingdom* of *Heaven*, abundantly make amends for all this Trouble? Undoubtedly it will. Lastly, Setting about and carrying on this great and necessary Work, perhaps may, nay, assuredly will, expose us to the Ridicule of the unthinking Part of Mankind, who will wonder that we run not into the same Excess of Riot with themselves; and because we may deny our sinful Appetites, and are not conformed to this World, being commanded in Scripture to do the one, and to have our Conversation in Heaven in Opposition to the other, they may count our Lives Folly, and our End to be without Honour. But will not the being

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numbered among the Saints, and shining as the Stars for ever and ever, be a more than sufficient Recompence for all the Ridicule, Calumny or Reproach we can possibly meet with here ?

INDEED, was there no other Reward attended a thorough Conversion, but that Peace of GOD, which is the unavoidable Consequence of it, and which, even in this Life, passeth all Understanding, we should have great Reason to rejoice. But when we consider this is the least of those Mercies GOD has prepared for those that are in CHRIST *new Creatures*; that this is but the Beginning of an eternal Succession of Pleasures; that the Day of our Deaths, which the unconverted, unrenewed Sinner must so much dread, will be, as it were, but the *first* Day of our *new Births*, and open to us an everlasting Scene of Happiness and Comfort; in short, if we remember that they who are regenerate and born again, have a real Title to all the glorious Promises of the Gospel, and are infallibly certain of being as happy, both here and hereafter, as an All-wise, All-gracious, All-powerful GOD can make them, methinks, every one that has but the least Concern for

the Salvation of his precious, his immortal Soul, having such Promises, such an Hope, such an Eternity of Happiness set before him, should never cease watching, praying and striving, till he find a real, inward, saving Change wrought in his Heart; and thereby knoweth of a Truth, that he dwells in CHRIST, and CHRIST in him; that he is a *new Creature* in CHRIST; that he is therefore a Child of GOD; that he is already an Inheritor, and will ere long, if he endure to the End, be an actual Possessor of the Kingdom of Heaven.

WHICH GOD of his Infinite Mercy grant,
through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

To whom, &c.

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