

REMAINS

OF THE

REV. PHILIP HENRY, A.M.

EXTRACTED

From Unpublished Manuscripts:

BY

SIR JOHN BICKERTON WILLIAMS,
KNT., LL.D., F.S.A.,
AND A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY.

There are remains of great and good men which, like Elijah's mantle, ought to be gathered up and preserved.

Rev. Matth. Henry, on 2 Kings ii.13.

LONDON:
THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,

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PREFACE.

Those who are conversant with the "Life" of that eminent servant of God, the Rev. Philip Henry, are, probably, familiar with its tenth chapter, containing "A Miscellaneous Collection of his Sayings, Observations, Counsels, and Comforts out of his Sermons, Letters, and Discourses."

In the enlarged edition of the Life, published in 1825, that "Collection" was considerably increased.

Since then, one of Mr. Henry's descendants, John Lee, esq., made public an Exposition by his ancestor, with practical observations on the first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis; * and also "Selections" from some of his Diaries and Common Place Book.

* Mr. Henry's "Notes" on the whole book, in his own handwriting, are in my possession.

Miss Sarah Lawrence, author of "Stories from the History of Greece," another of the family, published, in the year 1844, "The Descendants of P. Henry, M.A.," with an Appendix containing an extract from one of his Letters, and very interesting transcripts from some of his interleaved Almanacs.

Besides the Memorials thus alluded to, eighteen of our author's Sermons were published by myself, A. D. 1816, from his own manuscripts; and since, as an "Appendix" to the octavo edition of the "Miscellaneous Works" of his son, the celebrated Commentator, a course of "Sermons on what Christ is made to Believers in Forty Beal Benefits."

In the year 1834, Mr. T. Auman, a London bookseller, put forth a volume of "Skeletons" by the same hand.

Others of them have been preserved in the Evangelical and Congregational Magazines.

Manuscripts, however, still remain; and the following attempt to rescue a portion of them from the oblivion to which writings are specially exposed, will, I trust, be approved. And the rather, because the good man, owing to an extreme modesty, published nothing.

The ensuing pages have been transcribed either from Mr. Henry's own handwriting; or his son's; or his eldest daughter's, Mrs. Savage; except in three instances only: and in those the copies were made from some manuscript sermons, "taken out of his own notes."

Mrs. Savage's life, which first appeared in the year 1818, specially notices her habit of preserving what she heard delivered from the pulpit; and likewise of copying not a few discourses from the originals borrowed for the purpose.

To the "last Exposition," with which the present collection closes, an explanatory statement is prefixed.

Although what is thus brought to light has been partially divested of a sermonic character, no freedoms have been taken with the manuscripts, except such as it is believed the venerated writer himself would have sanctioned with a view to the press: the omission too, occasionally, of familiarisms; the avoidance of redundant expressions; and the introduction of a word now and then, when necessary to make a sentence complete.

All, therefore, the reader may feel assured, is genuine, and, as exhibited, entire: "collected," in fact, after the fashion propounded by lord Bacon in his "Advancement of Learning;" and noticed in archdeacon Hakewill's elaborate Discourse on the Power and Providence of God, fol. 1630, p. 237.

Every part of the volume, while furnishing an instructive specimen of plain and practical preaching, is a valuable illustration of the favorite maxim of this admirable theologian— that a good textuary is a good divine. And the one and the other are the more impressive, because the display, after all, is merely that of his

ordinary doings.

Mr. Henry was born at Whitehall, Westminster, August 24, 1631. He was educated at Westminster School, under Dr. Busby, and then at Christ Church, Oxford. And, having made full proof "of his ministry," died at Broad Oak, near Whitchurch, in Shropshire, on the 24th of June, 1696, in his sixty-fifth year. He has ever been regarded as one of the best scholars, as one of the most judicious Christians, and as one of the most polished gentlemen, of his day.

John Bickebtoit Williams.

The Hall, Wem,

July 27, 1848.

DESPISERS OF THE GOSPEL.

"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh," etc.—Prov. i. 24—26.

This is a grievous threatening: as full of dread and terror to all impenitent despisers of gospel offers as we shall, ordinarily, meet with in the book of God. It is like a flash of lightning in their faces, or as a clap of thunder in their ears, to rouse and awaken them out of their desperate security.

And oh that I could tell how to speak of it, so that it might have that blessed effect accordingly!

In my entrance upon it I do profess unto you, my beloved brethren, that I do it with fear and trembling.

I am unwilling to it; choosing much rather to open the riches of free grace held forth in the promises, for the inviting, alluring poor sinners; But if not the threatening *also*, how shall we be found faithful? Some that will not be drawn must be driven. You will curse me hereafter if I should forbear.

I am afraid of two things; lest it should not be done as it ought, with all tenderness and compassion; and, lest there should be any sinful mixture of my own "wrath" whilst I am publishing God's; for I have learned that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;" and, lest it should prove to be "in vain." Some are in soul, as they are in body, easy to be wrought upon: others are hard and difficult, Acts ii. 37; vii. 54.

The doctrine in general is this—that all who live and die despising and slighting gospel offers, will most surely perish.

Is not this a serious, awakening subject? They are wisdom's

words, spoken in the same breath, at the same time, in the' same place with the rest that go before. See how " Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets," etc., Prov. i. 20, 21, etc. And when wisdom is thus earnest in speaking, should not we be so, in some measure, in hearing? I pray, brethren, "take heed how ye hear." Hear with attention; hear with application. Mix faith, and mix fear with what shall be spoken.

CLAIMS OF DIVINE LOVE.

Hearken, all ye whom "our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, hath loved"— loved with a singular, peculiar, special, distinguishing love. There are seven things which his love to you calls for.

1. That you love him again. We say love is the loadstone of love. It draws it out. "We love him because he first loved us." There is reason for us to love *him*: a good cause why: "I love the Lord," said the psalmist, "because he hath heard my voice and my supplications." Though there be none of his loving us: "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."

We should be often thinking what *cause* we have; and then say, O my soul, seeing there is all this cause, why dost thou *not* love God? He commands thee to love him. He is truly lovely; and, therefore, worthy thy love. And if these two will not do, behold he is loving also;—nay, so loving, that he is "love" itself. "God is love."

Our love to God and Jesus Christ should be, in our poor measure, like his to us.

Sincere, like his. His love to us is true love; unfeigned love. So should ours be to him: not in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth. There *are* flatterers of him; see Psa. lxxviii. 36. But "grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in *sincerity*."

We read of some that followed Christ for loaves, not for love. They do so who look awry at secular advantages in their embracing a profession.

Strong, like his. His to us is warm love. His heart is full of it. Such should ours be to him: "Thou whom *my soul* loves."

Fruitful, like his. Our Lord Jesus Christ loved us, and "gave himself" for us. God, even our Father, loved us, and gave his Son for us: loved us, and hath given "everlasting consolation." Here is the fruit of his love. Now, is ours to him fruitful? What fruit doth it bear? Care to please him? Fear to offend him? Desires after him? Joy in his presence? Grief in his absence?

Firm, like his. His love to us is not a sudden passion, but an abiding affection: "Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them *unto the end*." Such should ours be to him: "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." He complains of Ephesus; "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." "Love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," in immortality. There is nothing else wherein we can do to God as he doth to us, but in loving.

2. That out of love to him ye "hate evil." By evil is meant sin, the worst of evils: the evil of evils. We must *hate* it: not only chide it, and be angry with it; but hate it: hate it *as sin*. For this reason—because God hates it. And then it will reach all sin: little as well as great: secret as well as open.

Our hatred of sin will appear to be from love to God—when we,

therefore, shun it, and shun all occasions and appearances of it. For *this* reason, because we will not offend God: "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin *against God*?" When, in case we have sinned, we therefore grieve and are troubled because we have offended him: "Against *thee*, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." "They shall look upon *me whom they have pierced*, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." As Peter.

3. That out of love to him ye keep his commandments: "He that hath my commandments, and *keepeth* them, he it is that loveth me. Ye are my friends, if ye *do* whatsoever I command you."

Where love is there *will* be obedience: "The love of Christ constraineth."—As the spring in the watch constrains all the wheels to move, so doth the love of Christ the soul of the believer.

And where love constrains, the obedience will be sincere and upright—not selfish. For right ends, that we may please God, "as obedient children." It will be delightful and pleasant: "I delight to do thy will, O my God." "His commandments are not grievous." Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had to her. It will be boundless and unwearied. It will never think it can do enough. One being asked whom he labored most for, answered, for his friend. Oh, see to this, and never say thou lovest God till you labor for him: "Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Tea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, *Feed* my lambs. He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Tea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, *Feed* my sheep." Feed. Feed.

4. That out of love to him ye love all that is his, for his sake. Love his name. Dare not to take it in vain: "Thine enemies take thy

name in vain." Desire above all things to have it hallowed, and lifted up, and sanctified. Love his people: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." The more like they are to him the more we should love them; espouse their interests; delight in their communion. Love his word. "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." Love it for its purity's sake: "Thy word is very pure, *therefore* thy servant loveth it." Love his day, because his: "This is the day *which the Lord hath made*; we will rejoice and be glad in it." "Call the sabbath a delight."

5. Out of love to him we must put a good construction upon all he doth. Love "thinketh no evil" of the person loved. It takes every thing in good part. So that whatever providences occur, it is satisfied: "What I do thou knowest not now: but thou shalt know hereafter."

6. Out of love to him we must be willing to venture all for him, if he call us thereto. He not only ventured all for us because he loved us, but parted with all, even life itself: giving us an example. And, alas! what is our poor all to his? If we love father or mother, wife, children, houses, lands, nay life more than Christ, we are not worthy of him.

7. We must love and long for his appearance and kingdom: "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." There is certainly a day coming when "Christ, who is our life, shall appear." He is hid now, as it were; but then he will *appear*. How stand we affected to that day? Do we desire and pray for the hastening of it—for *his* sake? as it will be for his honour when he shall come like himself—for *our own* sake? as it will be for the completing of our own happiness: as the loving wife for the absent husband. "Surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come,

Lord Jesus."

CHRISTIAN ESTABLISHMENT.

The apostle prayed for the Thessalonians that they may be established "in every good word and work."

By establishing is meant fixing, settling, confirming; in opposition to wavering, sitting loose, drawing back.

In every good *word* may be understood—of God's good word to us, contained in the Holy Scriptures: to be rooted and grounded in the knowledge of things to be known, in the belief of things to be believed, in the practice of things to be done; and, of our good words to one another. Establish you in good discourses about the things of God, and of your souls. Keep you steady, and constant to it, and in it upon all occasions.

In every good *work*; that is, in all holy obedience: that you may walk in all the commandments of the Lord blameless. Note—good words will not do without good works. Talking without walking is not enough: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Though the voice be Jacob's voice, if the hands be Esau's hands, we must look for no blessing from our heavenly Father.

Now, to be *established* in every good word and work is a choice mercy, to be earnestly asked of God for ourselves, and others: "It is a *good* thing that the heart be established with grace." "The God of all grace make you perfect, *stablish*, strengthen, settle you."

And this establishment is threefold. There is the establishment of the judgment in the truths of God. Of the thoughts and affections in the things of God. Of the conversation and practice in the ways of God. All of which are choice mercies, and to be asked of God.

Established in every good *work*. There is repenting work, which is for certain a good work. Good, because required and commanded. God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Good, because a means in order to peace and pardon: "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Now to be established in it is to be in the daily exercise of it as there is occasion. We must repent every day, for we sin every day. The pump of repentance must continually be going as guilt leaks in. There are few that have not sometimes their penitent qualms, but it is *only* sometimes: when under the rod—as Pharaoh, Ahab. They pass off, and the heart is harder than before. But to be established in it is quite another thing. It is to have a spring of godly sorrow opened in the heart; not but that sometimes there may be occasions extraordinary—as David, Peter.

There is believing work: which is another good work: "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." Good reason, therefore, why we should, in a special manner, be established in it. It should be so in the *great work* of faith, which is closing with Christ, upon gospel terms, for righteousness and strength: "The just shall live by faith." "The life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Besides this, there are other acts of faith in reference to particular promises, wherein we ought to be established, settled, rooted, fixed: "Not tossed to and fro:" not wavering, doubting, distrusting. Abraham was established: "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." The disciples wavering were rebuked: "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" See the direction—" Let him ask *in faith*, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed."

There is the work of God's worship—a good work. And are we established in *it*? I mean not only as to the manner of doing it, but as to the thing itself. Are we established in secret worship between God

and our own souls? See that ye be so, for the great work of a Christian lies in the closet. Yet how many are loose, and careless, and slighty, and inconstant in it, as to reading, meditation, prayer, self-examination, communing with their own hearts! Cannot you better spare a meal for the body, than praying times for the soul?" Evening, and morning, and at noon," said David, "will I pray, and cry aloud." This is one meaning of praying continually; as Mephibosheth ate bread continually at David's table; and as the continual burnt offering. Cornelius "prayed to God alway." "Peter went up upon the housetop to pray." As this habit is kept or neglected, the soul prospers. Then, are we established in family worship? How many, for a spurt, are diligent in it, but soon weary. Such are *not* established. If not a good work, why do it at all? If good, why not established in it? Several objections men have against it, but an established soul will break through them all, and say, it must be done. As Joshua—"As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord." Are we established in public worship, in the solemn assemblies? God expects to see us there: "In season, out of season." And are we diligent? and serious? and constant herein, as we - have opportunity? Omissions in each of these are sins. They show the same contempt of the law, and Lawgiver.

There is the work of our particular calling. Whatever it is, we must be established in it. It is good work provided the calling be lawful, and warrantable, and not sinful and wicked: "Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God;" that is, set him always before you. Do every thing as in his sight: to be approved of him.

There is the work of our particular relations. As husbands and wives; parents and children; masters and servants; brothers and sisters; neighbours and friends. There is work cut out for each of these. Are we established in it?

There is watching work: "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." This is to be done continually, not now and then; because

we are always in danger. The heart must be watched: "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life:" as the castle: keep the senses lest the enemy get in. Job made a covenant with his *eyes*.

There is mortifying work: "Mortify your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." To be established in this work is to be daily at it. Not lopping the branches; stopping the streams: but laying at the root; damming up the fountain.

There is suffering work. Bearing the cross patiently, whatever cross it be, when God calls us thereunto. This is a good work; a work pleasing to God; comfortable in the reflection. The contrary is provoking. To be *established* in it is to be continual in patience, even unto longsuffering, if God lengthen out the affliction: "Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness."

There is charity work. In giving: "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of "faith." "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Each one should give according to his ability, as God prospers him. And this is to be constantly done: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." "Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth." There is charity work in *forgiving*; in passing by wrongs and injuries even unto "seventy times seven;" see Matt, xviii. 21, 22.

There is dying daily. In expectation. In preparation. This is a good work. And we should be established in it; that is, we should be constant, and serious in it.

THINGS WHICH LOOK LIKE GRACE, BUT ARE NOT GRACE.

Good nature. Many people are naturally ingenuous, kind, free, bountiful. But this is not grace. It is said of Rehoboam that he was "tender-hearted;" therefore led by the counsel of the "young men" to his ruin. Good nature is born with us, which grace is not.

Civil behaviour. We may be easily mistaken in taking this for grace.

External profession. Such as worship God with his people in all ordinances we judge with charity; God only with infallibility.

To be of a party. This is not grace. Some of old said, "I am of Paul: I of Apollos," etc. But Paul calls them all "carnal."

Knowledge in the things of God, and of our souls, and of the Scriptures. A man may have his head full of knowledge, and not have a grain of grace. The devils have a great deal of knowledge, and are devils still. Our Lord told one of the scribes who answered discreetly, he was "not far from the kingdom of God." But he was not *in* it.

Conviction. A man may have a convinced conscience, and yet no grace. Ahab humbled himself. Judas repented. A man may go to hell loaded with convictions.

Good purposes and promises. These are like buds and blossoms, which, oftentimes, a frosty night nips, and they die.

Reformation is not grace. A man may leave off old sins, and do some duties, and yet be a stranger to the good work. Herod heard John "gladly," and did many things. Yet a Herod still.

These are all good things—except being of a party—but not *the* good thing.

POSSESSORS OF TRUE GRACE.

They are enlightened. All that have grace have knowledge; though all that have knowledge have not grace: "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."

They have their hearts of stone taken away, and have a heart of flesh. Not *all* the stone taken away, but a change: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Every gracious soul is *willing*, begins to be reconciled to duty. He has the law written in the heart.

They have repented of their sins, and do daily repent: "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."

They have been with Jesus. They have seen their need of him. They have closed with him: "This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Whatever attainments we have that leave us short of Jesus are not grace.

They are alive to God: "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Try your spiritual life. Thou *hast* corruption. Art thou sensible of it?

They have learned to pray. There is no soul truly gracious that does not pray: "Behold, he prayeth." This was the evidence of Paul's conversion. "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications." It is true, all cannot express themselves alike in prayer. But canst thou cry—Abba, Father?

They love the word of God, his people, and his day: "His delight

is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." "We know that' we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

They are worshippers of God in the Spirit: "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." No hypocrite doth this.

They are prepared for, and reconciled in some measure to, the whole will of God. To do it; and to suffer it: "He trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" This was the first word that grace spake in Paul.

They desire more grace. Wherever true grace is, it hath a desire of its center and fulness. Fire tends upward. He that says he has grace enough, has none at all.

HELPS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION.

Are you savingly enlightened? Hath God "begun" a good work in you? Have you the "things that accompany salvation?" Make this sure, and then be comforted.

What are your thoughts of sin? Do you hate and abhor it? ,

What are your thoughts of Christ? Do you love him? Do you long for his "appearing?" Where there is grace, there is this.

What are your thoughts of grace? Do you desire more and more of the image of God?

Are you at work for God? By that judge whether the good work be begun.

ADVANTAGES OF ASSURANCE.

There are many things that should move us "the rather" to make

our "calling and election sure." Time, and opportunity for doing it, is very uncertain. You *can* make nothing else sure; but this you *may* make sure. And how much depends upon it. It is a matter of great concernment.

I know a man's election, calling, and salvation *may* be sure in itself, though he be never assured of it. Many a one goes to heaven who lives and dies in uncertainties. But I know their condition is better that have made it sure to themselves. There are four great advantages to be gotten by it.

1. It is much for the praise and glory of God. The more sure a man is of it, the more thankful is he for it. Will any man give thanks for the bestowing of that benefit which he is not assured he hath? Were we assured—instead of complainings and fears, there would be praises and thanksgivings. You little think what a loser God is in his glory by our doubtings.

2. It would be much for our peace and comfort. He that knows his election, how can he choose but rejoice with joy unspeakable? He has a heaven upon earth. The more clear sight a man has of his title to heaven, the more content he is in every condition. Having made *that* sure, all other things are as nothing: "Ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Christ sends his disciples to *heaven* for comfort: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." How can we go to heaven for comfort, if we do not know our interest in it?

3. It would be much for our proficiency and progress in holiness. It is a special bridle to keep from sin: it is a special spur to duty. Moses had respect to the recompence of reward, and that carried him through temptation. They are mightily *out* that think assurance makes people careless and presumptuous. None walk more closely

with God than those that have the clearest evidences for heaven: "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." He labored to be accepted and go to heaven, because he knew he was accepted, and should go to heaven.

4. It would be much for our profiting others. It brings a good report upon the ways of God. It invites men. It encourages them. Droopings discourage. The example of those that are assured is shining, and stirs up others to labor after it: "Therefore, the rather, give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

EFFECTUAL CALLING.

Those who are effectually called, are called from death unto life: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

From darkness to light: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."

From the power of Satan unto God: "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

From uncleanness to holiness: "God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

From the world to Jesus Christ. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son

Jesus Christ our Lord."

From hell to heaven: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."

And, in this work, the Spirit reveals to man, in a way of conviction, his own sin; and his misery by reason of it: "He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Not only particular acts of sin, but a state of sin, and damnation. And he pursues it home, so as the man is not able to shake the arrow out of his sides—which produces fear, bondage, amazement. The Spirit discovers the remedy provided for poor sinners in such a condition, in Jesus Christ, which is sufficient: "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." And it is to be had freely: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

Of these things there were before only some dark, confused notions; altogether ineffectual; working nothing upon the will, either to move or to stir it. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.—But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But *now* the Spirit proceeds to work upon the will: sweetly inclining it, and enabling it; as to refuse all other ways, so to choose *this* way: as to let go the man's own righteousness, so to cleave to Christ, and his righteousness: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will

and to do of his good pleasure." And this working of the Spirit doth not at all prejudice the freedom of the will; no more than the saving illumination of the understanding destroys its proper acts. No. It doth not destroy, but perfect it. Hence that expression—" I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." He finds us unwilling. He makes us willing. So that all along free grace is to have the glory: as in predestinating, so in calling.

The benefits of effectual calling are justification, and glorification. The evidence of it, our obedience to it; "We are the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

GOD AND MAMMON.

The command of God is to be "careful for nothing," Phil. iv. 6; Luke xii. 22. Mammon is in every thing: "Eat the bread of carefulness;" the "bread of sorrows." The command of God is—" My son, give me thine heart." "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Give it me, saith Mammon—the thoughts of the heart; the affections of the heart; our love. Now, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." The command of God is to wrong and defraud no man, 1 Cor. vi. 7, 8; 1 Thess. iv. 6. Mammon saith—Overreach any man for gain. The command of God is to make him our refuge: to fly to him, and hope in him: "Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us." Mammon saith—Trust in me. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit." "Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness." As he, "I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." "If," said Job, "I have made gold my hope, or have said to

the fine gold, Thou art my confidence:—this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above." The command of God is, that we be ready to part with all for his sake, and at his call, Matt. x. Mammon saith—Do not part with me. Rather sin than suffer. Rather let Christ go than riches; as the young man in Matt. xix. The command of God is, that we give, and forgive. Mammon is against both: a great enemy to charity, as Nabal; see 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11. The command of God is, that we rejoice in him, and delight in him, Psa. xxxvii. 4; Phil. iv. 4. Mammon saith —Rejoice in me; see Job xxxi. 25, 28. The command of God is, "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy." Mammon saith—No. Think. Talk. Travel. Do any thing for gain on the sabbath day.

TRUE WISDOM.

Would you be wise?

You must repent of all your past follies. This is the *first* thing to be done. "'What," say they, "shall we do?" "Repent," said Peter; "*Repent*, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." That is, see that all this while you have been arrant fools. For so certainly every sinner *is*, as long as he is going on still in his trespasses—a fool. We must not call our "brother" so, but we may call ourselves so without danger: "So *foolish* was I, and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee." "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the *understanding* of a man.

Judge in yourselves.—Is not he a fool that prefers toys, and trifles, and trash before treasures of gold and silver, and pearls, and precious stones? That ventures the loss of a diamond or a ruby, to purchase a pin, or a pebble? *That* thou hast done, sinner. Is not he a fool that grieves his best friend to gratify his worst enemy? *That* thou hast done, in offending God to serve the devil. Is not he a fool that, in his fancy, prides and pleases himself in a supposed

happiness, which he is far from ?—as he that called all the ships that came into the harbor his own. "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." "Smite upon thy thigh," and say—"What have I done?" Oh that ever I should be guilty of such prodigious folly. How it grieves and vexes me, that I have spent my time so idly; so vainly; that I have lost so many sabbaths. Be sure do this to God. In secret; in sincerity.

You must receive Christ Jesus the Lord upon gospel terms—as a Prince, and a Saviour. We are never wise, neither can we be, until we do *this*. Until he is "made unto us of God *wisdom*" we remain in our foolishness. Now *that* he is not until we "receive" him, until we are "*in* him:" "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." "As many as *received* him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." All the sons of God are wisdom's children. And "wisdom is justified of her children;" that is, they are wise children. Oh! then, this day, this moment receive him. Accept of him. Close with him. You may do it as you sit here: "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." They came to the meeting fools; they went away wise. It was a house-meeting.

You must resign and yield up yourself to the guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit. He is that Spirit of "wisdom and revelation" promised for the enlightening of dark and foolish souls. "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Therefore Paul prays, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of *wisdom* and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what

is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." Away with all false guides.

WISE PRINCIPLES.

God, who is the first and the best, is to be served first, and with the best. The first and best of our time, and of our strength. Therefore, with our youth. Therefore, early: alone: with the family: daily.

It is better to suffer than to sin. Never choose iniquity rather than affliction. It is better a thousand times to be chidden of men than cursed of God.

"Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right."

The things that are seen, and are temporal, are not to be compared with the things that are not seen, and are eternal. The misery, the torments *eternal*. The joys, the happiness *eternal*.

That we are really which we are relatively. Therefore, strive to be good in all relations: within doors: without.

We must do what we can, when we cannot do what we would.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

"It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Our opportunities to do good are our truest riches.

Duty is ours. Events are God's.

That is best for me that is best for my soul. The soul is the man. Therefore, make thy soul thy "darling," and use it accordingly.

Time is precious. Opportunity is most precious. Therefore, to be redeemed, improved.

Learn to number your days. This was Moses' way of wisdom. Therefore he prays—" So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." None are more likely to "apply " their hearts to wisdom than they that are taught to number their days. There *are* false rules of numbering: "We have had so many; and so many lived thus and thus long: therefore we may live longer yet. Others of our relations lived to see sixty, seventy, eighty years, therefore why not we?" It does not follow.— The best way of numbering is the Scripture way; not by addition, or multiplication, but subtraction; not by years, but days; counting upon but few, and those, perhaps, dark, gloomy, winter days. "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." Especially learn to number your sabbath days: sacrament days: lecture days: opportunity days. One of those is of more worth than twenty others. Therefore spend them accordingly.

REMARKABLE SAYINGS.

The Holy Ghost, in Scripture, takes notice of several remarkable sayings of God the Father to his Son Jesus Christ, at the several periods of his undertaking for us.

At the designation of him to his priestly office, Psa. ex. 4.

At the bringing of him into the world, Heb. i. 6.

At the time of his baptism, Matt. iii. 17, when he entered on his public ministry.

At the time of his transfiguration in the mount, Matt. xvii. 5.

At the time of his resurrection, Acts xiii. 33, as if the day of his resurrection were the day of his being begotten.

At his reception into heaven, Psa. ex. 1.

DIE DAILY.

"And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is *betrayed to be crucified*." This was seasonable—to dispossess them of the hope they had of his temporal reign; and that they might apply it to themselves, and count upon it that they must go by the cross to the crown. He, therefore, tells them that he should be betrayed and die. He had done it expressly three times before, Matt. xvi. 21; xvii. 12; xx. 18.

It is our duty to be often thinking and speaking of dying. We are in health, so was Christ. We are young, so was he. Do not put off the evil day. No age is exempted. Be often thinking upon and looking into the grave. Be dying daily. In the midst of pleasures and worldly pursuits, think of *dying*: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Think seriously of your "latter end." It would make us "wise." We learn by Christ's example not only to think of death, but to think of sufferings before death: of death in its worst circumstances: a violent death. Christ the Son of man is betrayed to be *crucified*. This we must do, not to frighten ourselves, and others; but to quicken them and ourselves to prepare.

NONE LIKE CHRIST.

There never was any like him for singular worth and excellency. He was a "standardbearer" among ten thousand. A "man;" and the "Son of man." Not a mere man; but the "Lord of glory," 1 Cor. ii. 8. If they had "known" him, they would not have done as they did.

There is none like him for spotless innocence. He did "no evil, neither was guile found in his mouth." Yet that would not excuse

him. He was a Lamb; nay, the "Lamb of God," the "Holy One and the Just." Yet they denied him, and preferred a murderer—Barabbas — before him.

There is none like him for service and usefulness. He went up and down "doing good." It was the business of his life. "Many good works have I showed you from my Father"—curing the sick, raising the dead; "for which of those works do ye stone me?" For which did they crucify him?

Now the more like any persons are to our Lord Jesus in these things, the greater is the wickedness to devise mischievous devices against them. The more excellent, the more useful. Yet against *such evil is* devised—against "the quiet in the land."

SURRENDERS FOR CHRIST.

We must be willing to part with our dearest and best beloved sins out of love to Christ. These he would fain have from us. Now what say you to this? Bring him thy sins. Offer them up for a burnt-offering. Say—Lord, here they are; all that are dear to me. But is here *all*? Is there no box of precious ointment that thou art willing to break for him? Let all go, though a "right hand," or a "right eye." This is love. This he takes very kindly. And this he calls for, Matt. v. 29, 30. Does thy soul answer—Lord, take all? Though it be mine own "iniquity," I will part with it for thy sake: with an eye to thee. Is this the language of thine heart? Then, blessed be God. I believe he, that will part with his sins, will part with any thing else.

We must be willing to part with our dearest, and best beloved selves. There is nothing so near to us as ourselves. Whatever else we give him without this, he cares not for. Give him your *bodies*: your eyes to read his word; your tongue to speak his praises; your hands to lift up in his name, towards his holy temple: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your

bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Stretch out your hands to the poor. Employ them in a lawful calling. Give him your *souls*: "My son, give me thine heart." Why, Lord? What wilt thou do with it? Why, if thou wilt give it me, I will take it, and dwell in it. Give him all the faculties, all the powers of the soul. Lord, I give thee myself, saith the gracious soul. We must give ourselves to him as the wife gives herself to her husband: as the patient gives himself to his physician: as the traveller gives himself to his guide.

We must be willing to part with our dearest and best beloved relations. Sometimes God calls for these; father, mother, brethren, sisters. Canst thou say—Lord, they are dear to me, but for thy sake, and in obedience to thy command, I will part with them. A godly martyr said he had eleven arguments against suffering—a wife and ten children; but, blessed be God, he could answer them all. He did so. And laid down his life for Christ.

We must be willing to part with our dearest and best beloved righteousness. When we have done anything that is good, we must not lie down upon it, and rest there. But we must see that our own righteousness merits nothing. It cannot commend us to God. Rely then on the righteousness of Christ for acceptance, as that which is enough, and enough for you. Oh! deny the merit of your own righteousness as the matter of your justification before God.

We must be willing to part with our worldly possessions. The box of ointment was worth three hundred pence, yet the "woman" broke it. Three ways we must testify this willingness :—By our right using of outward things; serving God with them. Mercies should be oil to the wheels of our *obedience*.—By relieving the poor members of Christ as we have ability and opportunity: "The King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—By relinquishing the whole estate, or any part of it when God calls for it. God saith—Man, I must have a part of thy estate. Lord,

saith he, take it. I had it from thee; I give it to thee. I am freely willing to part with it. There is then a box of ointment poured on the head of Christ. It yields a sweet savour; it is of good report.

We must be willing to part with the praise of men. "A good name is better than precious ointment." But we must be willing to part with our good name. Do not "love the praise of men." Many stick at this. They cannot away with it. When you have any praise given you for anything that you have done, throw your crowns at the feet of Christ. Do not put them upon your own head. If you do, they will prove crowns of thorns.

A PART IN CHRIST.

What is it to have a part in Christ, or with Christ? It is to be spiritually washed by Christ. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."

It is to be cut off from the stock of the first Adam, and ingrafted by faith into Christ, the second Adam. We are all of us born in the old Adam, and in him we continue until we are "born again:" until grace makes the change; cuts us off from the old Adam, and ingrafts us into Christ.

It is to have union and communion with him in all his covenant relations. Real union. Such as the head hath with the body. The weakest true saint is a member of, and hath a part in, the head: is a branch in the vine, and hath nourishment from the root. There is relative union, such as is between the husband and the wife; the father and the children; brother and brother. And he is not ashamed to own them, and call them his "brethren." Nay, "thy Maker is thine husband."

It is to have an interest in all the spiritual benefits and blessing of his undertaking as Mediator. These are especially four:—Favour and reconciliation with God. This we have only by Christ. He is well

pleased in Christ: with all that come to him by *him*.—Freedom of access to the "throne of grace:" a "new and living way" laid open to the Father.—The aids and assistances of his Spirit; as we have need of them at all times, and on all occasions.—Admission into his heavenly kingdom; whither he is gone as our "forerunner."

SPIRITUAL WASHING.

Those that have a part in Christ have three kinds of washing.

There is the washing away of the guilt of sin by Christ's blood in justification. Every sin leaves behind it a blot, a spot, and stain. And that is taken away by pardoning mercy. "Wash me," saith David.—"Make me to hear joy and gladness." And the Lord heard his prayer; see the 51st Psalm.

There is the washing away of the filth and power of sin by sanctification. This is the work of God's Spirit, (see the Assembly's Catechism,) whereby the man is made a new creature. The bent of the soul is changed. He begins to love that which he hated: to delight in that which before he cared not for. The image of God is on the man. "I will wash them." "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and the spirit of burning." This is a promise of holiness. And this blessed work is wrought on all that have a part in Christ. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Water and the Spirit; that is, to be born of the Spirit working like water. The Spirit is a washing, and a cleansing Spirit. If he wash thee not, thou art none of his.

There is the washing of the life from the practice of sin: "Wash

you, make you clean." This we are often called on to do: "Wherewithal shall a young man *cleanse* his way?" The way of young people is apt to be defiled; and therefore they must "take heed," as cleanly people that look where they tread. We are to "take heed," and do what we can. But after all, it is the blessed Jesus that doth it. *He* washes our lives as well as our hearts.

How is it with us? *Are* we washed, or are we yet in our filthiness? Inquire. Search.

You may know by your loathings. What is it that is most loathsome to you? If you are washed, sin is it. It is loathsome to you in others; especially so in yourself. And the nearer, the more loathsome. Heart sins are most loathed: "Wash" my "heart from wickedness." Those who are washed, not only loathe their sin, but loathe themselves because of it: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." "They shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations." "I abhor myself." "So foolish was I and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee." "O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God." Why? What had he done? Nothing. Only his neighbours had married strange wives; and *that* made him blush. Blushing evidences washing.

You may know by your lovings. Which way doth your greatest love go? On, saith he that is washed—I love the word of God, as it is a discovering word, showing men their filthiness. It is "very *pure*, therefore thy servant loves it." If you can say you love the word of God because it is pure, and because it is purifying, then it is a good sign you have a part in Christ. He that is washed has a dear love to Christ the "Word," the Author of our cleansing: "Whom have I in heaven but *thee*?" And he hath a dear love to them that are washed; because such have the image of God. He loves the saints, because they are "pure."

You may know by your longings. What do you desire and pant after? They that are washed desire to be washed more. If Christ should come and ask thee what thou dost most desire—wouldst thou say, Lord, that I may be more pure, more and more *cleansed*? That is a good evidence. Paul cried out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

HUMILITY.

Christian humility will show itself in the looks, and in the language: " Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Disdainful, scornful language, is not the language of humility.

It teaches us not to strive for priority, or precedency of place. He that is ready to wash his brother's feet will not strive to go before him, or to sit above him. Those are but small matters, yet they evidence pride.

It teaches us to yield in opinion to the judgment of our brother; yet not so as to let go any truth of Christ out of humility. No; we must " buy the truth," and not " sell it." Paul would not give place to "false brethren." No; "not for an hour," when the truth of Christ was concerned. Humility teaches us neither to judge, nor despise one another, in doubtful matters; see Rom. xiv.

It teaches us to "bear one another's burdens." When thy brother is sinking under a temptation of doubts and fears, help him. We should please our brother "for his good," rather than ourselves. We should rather deny ourselves the use of lawful liberty than offend a "weak brother:" "Though," said Paul, "I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more."

It teaches us to be thankful for the least kindnesses, and patient under the greatest unkindnesses. It is pride that makes people so ungrateful. They look upon kindnesses as debts, and so are not thankful; and upon unkindnesses as wrongs, and then are impatient.

In case of quarrels, a humble man will rather recede from his right than "strive." You see an instance, Gen. xiii., in Abraham and Lot. Abraham, the superior, was willing to yield.

Humility teaches us as to our company: not to disdain any that are good, though they are poor and below us. David, a king, was a companion of all that feared God, Psa. cxix. 63. It is against this law of humility that in some families the servants are not to come into the room at family worship; whereas they are upon equal terms with God.

How amiable and excellent is this duty! It is marvellously well-pleasing to God. He loves to see people in this frame. "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit—is in the sight of God of *great price*" 1 Pet. iii. 4. The reason is, because it is in conformity to the image of his "dear Son." The more like we are to Christ, the more lovely we are in the eyes of God.

It is marvellously winning to others. It brings a good report on the religion we profess. Though every one hath remainders of pride in himself, yet there is no one but hates it in others. By this frame Paul "gained" men: "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law." This meek, condescending frame, convinces people that we are actuated by other principles than the world is. The world's principles are—stand upon your terms. The world is for a high and princely spirit. A gracious soul can be of a princely spirit in the cause of God; but in his own cause—lowly, humble, and condescending.

It works rest, comfort, peace, and quietness to ourselves. So that for our own sakes we should be humble. There is no such way to rest as the humble way. Be "meek and lowly," that ye may "find rest."

Prize a humble spirit, then, as amiable in itself. Let it be so to you. It is a jewel; learn to value it. Fall in love with it.

Pray for it. Beg of God, with all earnestness, to lay low the pride of your spirit. He alone can do it.

Practise it. Think meanly of yourselves, and highly of your brother. Be *clothed* all over with it; inside and outside. The more humble, the more like Christ. And the more like Christ, the more beloved of God.

KNOWLEDGE AND HAPPINESS.

The way to be happy is to *know* and *do* the will of God. But Christ is the "way." Must we make void the gospel? God forbid. The same that said, "I am the way;" said also, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye *do* them." We can neither know nor do aright without Christ.

Be persuaded in good earnest to look after *knowledge*. There is else no happiness: "That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good." An ignorant soul cannot be a good soul: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the *knowledge* of the *truth*." Knowledge was a great part of the image of God in which Adam was created, and that image must be renewed, in order to happiness: "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all *know me*, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." It is an article of the new covenant, that they shall all know God; even the least Christian as well as the greatest. There is knowledge for *necessity*; and all the Lord's people have *that*. There is knowledge for ornament; and that some have more than others. Labor to grow in

that knowledge. Do not rest in degrees attained. I look upon ignorance in the things of God to be one of the crying sins of England at this day, (a.d. 1683.) Ignorance reigns among all sorts. Would we could say that even professors were not greatly wanting in knowledge.

Knowledge is necessary to faith. How can we believe that which we do not know ?" How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?"

It is necessary to duties of worship. An ignorant person cannot pray; nor hear; nor sing psalms; nor receive the Lord's supper, *aright*. All agree that ignorance and scandal unfit for the sacrament; see 1 Cor. xi. 29.

It is necessary to obedience. Knowing is put before doing. When we stumble upon duty unawares, without knowledge of the duty, it is not accepted of God.

It is necessary to comfort. Honest hearts often want comfort, because they have weak heads. Terrors are by reason of darkness. Men in the dark are easily affrighted.

It is necessary to our safety from seduction. The ignorant are always the seduced: "silly women," 2 Tim. iii. 6. Such are the prey for the seducers.

Then *desire* knowledge. Dost thou groan under the want of knowledge? If thou wert blind, wouldest not thou desire sight?

Offer up those desires to God by faithful, and fervent prayer. Say as the poor blind man, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." Pray, as Solomon did, for "a wise and understanding heart."

Be diligent in the use of means. Reading the word. Learning the catechism. I know none better than that of the "Assembly's." A knot of able men, upon mature deliberation, composed that "form of sound words." Study the Scriptures. These are the treasury of saving knowledge. When you go to read, your hearts should say as Joshua

— "What saith my Lord unto his servant?" Conference is another excellent help to knowledge. He that will be a scholar must be inquisitive. So must he that will be a scholar in Christ's school. You that are weak inquire of the strong. You that are strong instruct the weak.

Be constant in the use of means. Though it doth not come quickly, persevere: "Then shall we know, if we *follow on* to know the Lord." We must never leave off. We must never lay by the means. The oftener the sermon is read the more we shall find in it.

Practise what you know: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." To him that hath a little knowledge, and lives up to it, more shall be given. God gives up the willfully ignorant to judicial blindness. He that is ignorant, let him be ignorant still.

It is not knowledge only, but practice also, that makes us happy. Hell is filled with those that knew their duty, but did not do it. Labor not only to know, but to do.

Knowledge is in order to practice. We *know*, that we may *do*. God hath set the eye in the body that we may walk according to the guidance of it.

Knowing *and* doing denominates a "wise" man. Such build on the "rock," Matt. vii. 24.

It is this that makes us of Christ's kindred: "My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it." They that hear, and do not, are but half akin to Jesus Christ. Doing is the badge of Christ's family. Christ himself did teach and do, Acts i. 1. And we that are his disciples should hear and do. Learn and do. Know and do. Else he will not own us for his followers.

Doing hath the promise; see Matt. xix. 16, 17. "*Keep*" not know, "the commandments." Knowing is good, but it will not save us without doing: "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to

everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as *keep* his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to *do* them."

Knowing without doing is an aggravation both of sin and punishment: "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin." An ignorant man that doth not know his duty hath some cloke for his sin. But, "that servant which 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. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." If one place in hell be better than another, that shall be his portion.

We must be judged at the "last day"—not according to what we have known, but what we have done. You know the process of the day of judgment; see it in Matt. xxv. Mind that *novo* which you are like to stand or fall by *then*.

I exhort you then, as David did his son Solomon—"Arise," and be doing, 1 Chron. xxii. 19. You that know the will of God, live up to your knowledge, as you hope and desire to be eternally happy. "Walk before me," the Lord said to Abram, "and be thou perfect." Walk before me—not stand still and look about you— but "*walk*." "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was."

Would you know what God will have you to do? I will tell you in short.

He would have you to believe in his Son Jesus. You cannot please him better: "This is his *commandment*, That we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."

This is "his will, even your sanctification." He would have you holy.

He would have you to wash one another's feet. Let your love be condescending love. Walk in humility.

In all we do we must have an eye to God as a Father; looking upon ourselves as "not under the law, but under grace." While we look upon God as a "hard master," we shall never do anything to purpose in his service. He that thought his master a hard man buried his talent. See him as a *Father*; accepting sincere endeavours: eating "the honeycomb with the honey." Who that considers this would not strive to please such a Father?

Do all you do in "the name of the Lord Jesus." Look to him for assistance: for acceptance. It is not our doing, but *his dying*, that commends us to God. The most spiritual prayer that ever you prayed is accepted only "in Christ," 1 Pet. ii. 5.

Put on Christian resolution.

Be often looking at the recompence of reward. You shall lose nothing by working for God.

THE MIXTURE OF GOOD AND BAD.

"I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: But that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."

There is a mixture of bad with good in the best societies in the world. And there are reasons for this mixture.

Sometimes their own choice. The bad choose to be among the good: "It shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you." So Laban desired Jacob to stay with him, because he saw God blessed him for his sake; not that he loved Jacob as a godly man.

Another reason is that the good do not infallibly know who are good, and who are bad, until their badness appears. We are to judge charitably, and not to despise "the weak."

And, God, in his wise providence, orders it so for holy ends. For the sake of the bad—that they may be made better by being with those that are good. If it have not that effect, it will aggravate their condemnation another day that they would not follow the good examples of the saints. Sometimes their nearness to the good makes them worse. They malign, and despise, and hate, and reproach them.

God so orders it too for the sake of the good, to exercise their *graces*—the grace of *thankfulness* to Him that hath made the difference. Lord, why am I not as bad as he?" Even so, Father, because it seemed good" to thee to make a difference. I have nothing but what I "received." —The grace of *patience* under the taunts and reproaches that they meet with from the bad: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;" that so, "tribulation may work patience," and "patience, experience." — To exercise their *wisdom*: "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without." There is great need of wisdom to do this; to exercise *charity* and *zeal* in mourning over, and reproofing, and admonishing, and praying for, them. "The poor ye have always with you." And so God hath left the profane always with us.—To keep us always upon our watch: because we are in the midst of snares and pollutions.

God so orders it to make the grace that is in us the more illustrious. Contraries illustrate each other.

And, to make a difference between heaven and earth. This is not the unmixed world. In hell *all* is misery. In heaven *all* is happiness. On earth there is a mixture both of conditions and persons.

CAUSES OF APOSTASY.

There are five causes of apostasy which we must take heed of.

1. Not laying a good foundation, at the first, when we take up a profession. Many miss it here. There are three lasting foundations which will abide. These we must make sure of. There is *sincerity*. Without this there is little hope that we shall stand. Look to this. Pray that ye may be "sincere."—There is *sound humiliation*. This foundation must be laid. Many a building falls for want of it: for want of digging deep to lay the foundation low. Light come, light go.—And there is *serious consideration* before we take up a profession. Sit down "first, and count the cost." For want of this, many come to nothing. He that will be Christ's disciple "must deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow" him. Lay Christ the great foundation, and then these three: and then your building will stand.

2. Loving this present evil world inordinately. This was at the bottom of Judas' s apostasy: "What will ye give me?" So it is with many. Take heed of this. Sometimes people apostatize to keep that they have: sometimes to increase their estate. They deny Christ to get preferment. But cursed be that preferment that is so gotten.

3. Leaning to a man's own strength. The miscarriage of many begins at this. Witness Dr. Pendleton. He was confident, yet denied Christ. So Peter: "Though all men deny thee, yet will not I." And yet he was the first to do it.

4. The "fear of man." *That* brings " a snare" upon thousands. "Fear not them that kill the body." Who fears a sword without a hand? Christ cautions his friends: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into

prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

5. Following the "multitude." Resolving to do as the most do. Many that never intended to deny their profession have been carried down the stream. Do not as the most do. Strait is the gate that leads to life. Walk by "rule," not by the example of the multitude.

THE DEITY OP CHRIST.

The Lord Jesus sees and knows all events: things that are future and secret: "Jesus was troubled in spirit, and testified, saying, Verily, verily, I say unto you, One of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake." Judas had as yet done nothing towards it, but the Lord Jesus knew it: "One of .you shall betray me." "I know thy works." We have this repeated seven times. He knows our good works, and our bad works. The workings of grace, and the workings of corruption. He knows what is *in man*, John ii. 25. He knows what are the inward motions of the heart. This knowledge appears by his discourses, wherein he often speaks in reference to the ends and designs of men to whom he spake, though their words were contrary.

This is a proof that he is truly *God*. None but Jehovah can "search the heart," and "try the reins:" "I the Lord search the heart." "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." None of the idols could do so, or foretell future events. But God can. Therefore we are to give to the Lord Jesus Divine honour, because of his omniscience.

And this may comfort us in our integrity, when we can approve ourselves to him as to what we have said or done—that he knows the heart, knows our principle, knows our end. There is unspeakable comfort in such an appeal. This was Job's comfort—he had a Friend

in heaven: "Behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high. My friends scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears unto God." "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined." With this we may comfort ourselves as to the reproaches that are cast upon us as rebels, and traitors, and enemies to government. Our witness is in heaven. Our record is on high.

It should make us cautious in our walking, that at all times, in all places, whatever we are doing, the Lord Jesus sees and knows all: "All things are naked and open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Take heed of *secret* guilt. He that sees all now will proclaim all hereafter: "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing."

THE SINS OP PROFESSORS.

There are three things in the sins of professors that must be displeasing to the Lord Jesus.

1. The disappointment to his expectation. "He looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes;" see Isa. v. 4. From such better is expected. What! *my* friend, and be proud, worldly, treacherous.

2. The ingratitude that is in it. It is an ill requital of his love. This is often insisted upon in the Old Testament as to the dealings of God with Israel. They were very ungrateful. Nathan aggravates David's sin by what God had done for him.

3. The scandal that is in it: that which causes others to "stumble and fall." Judas was a leader among Christ's followers. An apostle. A preacher. A light. What he did was a scandal to all that heard of it. The whole society was reproached. The Spirit of the Lord Jesus was troubled.

Now decays in our "first love" are a trouble of spirit to the Lord Jesus. When men are cold towards him. When they abate in their affections: "O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me," Micah vi. 3. He challenges them to give a reason. What iniquity have you found in him that you should not love him as well now as heretofore?

So is distrust. When we are upon all occasions questioning his love, and his truth, and his faithfulness; whether it be as to the great business of pardon, peace, and justification before God. We can hardly believe that we *shall* be pardoned, though we repent. That he takes very ill. He is troubled in spirit when we do not believe.—Or, as to outward wants. How apt are we to distrust him though he hath said we shall want nothing.—Or, in reference to the public concerns of the church of God. Moses and Aaron were rebuked for this. He is troubled when we distrust him.

Dejections and despondencies of spirit are the fruits of distrust. And he is troubled to see his people troubled. "Let *not* your heart be troubled," is his language. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." "Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me." Many are saying so now. Oh! that is a trouble to the Lord Jesus.

Divisions trouble the Lord Jesus. He would have his people to be of "one mind," if it might be: or, however, of "one heart." He is grieved to see his people hating one another. Walk not as men, but as Christians, in respect of unity; see 1 Cor. iii. 3. Oh that our present troubles might have that blessed effect: that the barking of the dogs may drive the scattered sheep together.

Declinings in their walking are another source of trouble to the Lord Jesus. When professors grow loose and careless: "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Let us look to it, that we are not found declining. Let us beware of those things that trouble the spirit of the Lord Jesus.

CHRIST'S SPECIAL LOVE.

"Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved."

There are *some* disciples of Christ for whom he hath an extraordinary love, and whom he lays in his bosom.

The Lord Jesus will love them best that are most like him. Likeness is the loadstone of love. All his children are like him, have his "image," Rom. viii. 29. But there are some *more* like him than others. And those he loves with a special love. All "receive of his fulness," but some more than others. The more of his grace is in us, the more of his grace and favour there is towards us. The more we tread in his steps, the more we shall have a place in his special and peculiar love. Often reflect in your walking—Is this to do like Christ? Labor to conform yourself to him, and to his example.

He loves those best who love *him* best. "Would you lean on *his* breast? bid him welcome to lean upon *your* breast. He begins in love to us: "We love him because he *first* loved us." But the manifestations of his love are grounded upon the growth and increase of our love to him. See that your love to Christ be not only sincere, but fervent: not only true, but faithful. Where there is *true* love there are desires after union. Judge of your love by your *desires*. According as the love is weak or strong so will the desires be. If the love be warm, the desires will be warm. Now, where the Lord Jesus sees true desires of his presence, *there* will he throw open his bosom.—Where there is true love there will also be delight in the enjoyment of him. There is no delight comparable to that which a child of God has in the enjoyment of Christ. Cursed be he that esteems all the pleasures of the world comparable to one hour's communion with Christ. There will also be grief in his absence. If he be at anytime withdrawn, oh, how restless is the soul! Why are his chariot wheels so long a coming? As the earth and plants mourn in the winter, when the sun is withdrawn: as the wife mourns in the

absence of her beloved husband; so the Christian in the absence of the Saviour. And, where there is true love there will be care to please: fear to offend. How is it with you as to *this*? Do you care in every thing to please Christ?

He loves those best who are most meek, and humble, and lowly in their hearts. This is part of his "image." He was a meek, humble, lowly Saviour. "Learn of me," saith he, "for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest." He "giveth grace unto the humble." "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool:—but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Let others look to themselves, I will look to this man. I will take care of him. Labor to be humble and lowly, for Christ loves such. The proud he "knows afar off." Paul was very low in his own eyes. He could deny himself for the salvation of souls; and the Lord Jesus loved him with an extraordinary love: inasmuch that he took him up to his bosom to the third heavens before he died, where he saw and heard unspeakable things.

He loves them most that have most faith; because he that hath most faith doth most honour and lift him up. Faith lifts up Christ, and Christ lifts up faith. Abraham was eminent for faith. He is called the "Father of the faithful." He obeyed the call of God when he called him from his kindred to go he knew not whither. When God told him he should have a son by Sarah, though he was a hundred years old, and Sarah ninety, he believed God, "staggered not at the promise." And when God bade him offer up his Isaac, the fruit of the promise, he went about it in obedience to the command. So that his faith was a very strong faith. Now for this Abraham was a special favorite of Heaven. "I know," said God, "that thou fearest me." "In blessing I will bless thee." And he called him "Abraham." In all that

truly love Christ there is a faith like this. A faith to enable us to leave all near and dear relations to follow God wherever he calls us. To "hope against hope." To be willing to sacrifice our dear Isaacs. All that love Christ have true faith, and do something of these; but not all in a like degree.

Those that are most active for God and for his glory, in the place where he hath set them, Christ loves with a special love. Those who are thus active are like him. - When he was upon earth he "went about doing good." Magistrates, ministers should "shine." We may be active in our place, though we are but in a narrow sphere. The Lord Jesus will love them that love him, and are careful to manifest that love, by doing what they can for his glory. "Give all diligence" in doing this. "Be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." "Add" grace to grace: faith to faith: that you may lean on the breast of Christ. "Them that honour me I will honour."

He loves them that keep their integrity in times of general apostasy: that will not suffer themselves to be carried down the stream with others. These Jesus Christ hath a special care for. Caleb and Joshua brought in a true verdict of the promised land when the rest of the spies brought an ill report. And God honoured them. They were famous in their generation, and entered into Canaan. Whereas the carcasses of the rest fell "in the wilderness." In Ezek. xiv. mention is made of three famous men—Noah, Daniel, and Job—who were most likely to prevail with God. These kept their integrity in times of apostasy, and God remembered it long after. "The priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God." If we would have an interest in Christ's special love we must hold fast our integrity in times of apostasy.

He loves them specially who carry themselves aright under sufferings.—Sufferings *from* God: in the estate—losses, crosses,

disappointments; in the family—sickness, death of friends. Now, how do we carry it under these? Do we murmur and repine, and "charge God foolishly?" Or do we keep close to him, and carry it submissively towards him? Afflictions are called trials. They try what metal we are made of. Job, though greatly afflicted, carried it bravely. "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; *blessed* be the name of the Lord." God puts a mark of honour upon him. He makes his boast of him: "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man?" He was not perfect in patience, yet God accepted him, because his patience did prevail.—Sufferings *for* God. When we are called, to bear our testimony in bonds and imprisonments, perhaps unto death. God will especially love and honour them that suffer aright for him: "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my *faithful* martyr." Not that the sufferings themselves endear us to Christ, but our gracious carriage under them: our rejoicing under them.

He has a special love for those that are good betimes: for *young* converts. They shall lie in Christ's bosom. Some think that was the reason of his special love to John. He was by far the youngest of the disciples. "Those that seek me *early* shall find me." "Thus saith the Lord God, I remember thee, the kindness of thy *youth*, the love of thine espousals." "All Israel shall mourn for" the children of Jeroboam, "and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam." So king Josiah began betimes in religious ways. You that are young, if you will He in the bosom of Christ, set yourselves to seek and serve him. Those that are good when young, break through extraordinary difficulties and hindrances. Usually such are very good: because then their spirits are lively, and vigorous, and active. "Remember," then, "your Creator in the days of your youth," and you shall lie in Christ's

bosom.

The Lord Jesus Christ hath a special love for *old* disciples: such as began young, and continue until old: " He taught me from my youth." Mnason was "an old disciple." David pleads with God — "Now when I am old and grayheaded, forsake me not."

What special tokens of love shall such as these have from the Lord Jesus? Or, what is it to lean on Christ's breast, to lie in his bosom?

1. He will admit them into his nearest communion. They shall be dandled on his knee. Peter, James, and John were the most intimate associates of the Lord Jesus, above the rest of the twelve. Three times we find *them* admitted when none else were:—To see the ruler's daughter raised; when he was transfigured in the mount; at his agony in the garden. The second admission was to fit them for the last. First they saw his glory. Then his suffering. Such are admitted into his "banqueting house:" they taste the sweetmeats. And what that is none know but those who *have* tasted. To the "carnal" world these are riddles and mysteries. Have not your hearts sometimes "burned within" you, so that your souls have been like "the chariots of Amminadib?" Why, that is a mark of special favour.

2. He will acquaint them with his secrets. Some of his secrets are with all them that fear him, Psalm xxv. 14. The secrets of his "covenant." But then there are the secrets of his providence. What the Lord doth, he reveals to his servants the prophets: "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do?" Christ tells John, the beloved disciple, who should betray him. The bosom is the place of the secrets. The way to know things to come is not to study the stars, but to have our "conversation in heaven."

3. They shall have audience to their prayers. He will hear their prayers. Noah, Daniel, and Job were all famous for prayer. God heard them: " Go to my servant Job: him will I accept." When Abraham interceded for Sodom, God granted as long as he asked.

Abraham left off first.

4. They shall have additions of grace: "To him that hath shall be given." He that hath faith, to him more faith shall be given: "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth: and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." He that hath the grace of prayer, and uses it, shall have more. As in worldly riches the way to increase them is to lay them out, and trade with them; so grace, the more it is employed the more it is improved. John, the "beloved disciple," was full of love. He was a man made up of love, as appears by his epistles. Love is the burden in every chapter. And how came he to be so full of it? By lying on the breast of Christ, the fountain of love.

5. They shall have more abundant consolation. The Spirit of God, wherever he is, is a "Comforter." But not always alike so. Christ's favorites shall have "*strong* consolation:" "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord;" see Matt, xxv. Present joy in this life. None know the sweetness of the "testimony of a good conscience" but those that experience it. It is our Master's "joy."

6. They many times have some signal token of the love of Christ at death. Sometimes in respect of the season of it, when their lives are lengthened to a "good old age." Then they are gathered "as a shock of corn in its season." This was so with Caleb, Joshua, and Moses. Sometimes he takes them away immediately before a storm. There are many instances of that. Augustine died immediately before the city, where he was, was taken. Luther just before the wars in Germany broke out. Sometimes in the circumstances of their death. They die easily, with less sickness and pain than others. Moses died at the word (Hebrew, at the mouth) of the Lord.

7. They shall have higher degrees in glory: "One star differeth from another." They that lie in Christ's bosom here shall lie there for ever.

8. Sometimes he sets a mark of honour on their posterity. David's

kindness to Mephibosheth is called the kindness of God, because it is God's usual way to be kind to his people's posterity. He blessed the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for their sakes. I believe many are now blessed for the sake of godly ancestors.

GODLY JEALOUSY.

Jesus said, "One of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?"

It becomes the disciples of Jesus Christ to maintain always a "godly jealousy" of themselves.

This jealousy is conversant about our spiritual estate and condition. We are to be inwardly and heartily concerned how it is between our souls and God. Am I alive to God? Am I "born again?" Am I "a new creature?" This should fill us every day—What am I? We should be afraid for our souls, lest they be yet in the "gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity." Are they in a state of sin, or a state of grace? Where am I?

We should be jealous about this.

1. Because it is the main matter. If we are in sin, we are miserable: undone for ever, dying so. If we are in Christ, we are happy: made for ever: "If children, then heirs." Not else. If we are not children we cannot be heirs. Therefore make sure of your sonship. Some blame those that preach conversion, and say there is no such thing, unless for heathens or infidels. But Christ saith to his disciples, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

2. Because multitudes are mistaken about it, the more it concerns us that we may not be mistaken. Many that are in a very bad condition think themselves to be in a good condition. Those that are for heaven are but very few. And, therefore, we are the more

concerned to inquire how it is with *us*. Few are in the narrow way. Are we of that few? If a man be but to buy a beast in the market, he takes advice; is afraid of being cheated. But in these greater things we maintain no jealousy.

3. It is an easy matter to be mistaken. The repentance of a hypocrite is so like the repentance of a true Christian, that it is hard to distinguish between them.

4. The danger is great if we *are* mistaken. And it is the greater because we have had such fair warning. This will be a stinging consideration hereafter—" Son, remember thou in thy lifetime" hadst warning. This day you have warning. See that your graces be true, not counterfeit. A mistake here is of dangerous consequence.

Jealousy is conversant *about our past actions*. We must be jealous of *them*. That may seem at first as if well done, which, when further looked into, is not so. Reflect—was my eye single? Was there not hypocrisy in this duty, in this prayer? Herein we have the pre-eminence above the beasts, we may reflect upon what is past. They cannot. This work is to be done weekly. Reflect—how did I carry it in the company I was in? Did I improve my opportunity for my soul's good? It ought to be done before every sabbath. When we are in affliction and trouble God calls us to it: "*Now*, consider your ways." "I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done?" He expects it from us. Oftentimes people rush into sin with eagerness, but do not often inquire—What have I done? The saints, however, have practised a holy jealousy. David did. He says, "I thought on my ways." And it is very beneficial to do so. It is the first step in conversion. The prodigal came to himself: then to his father. Conversion begins in consideration; it is a means to keep peace between us and God. When we often quit scores, we do not leave old debts unpaid. Hereby we shall be always ready for death. Repent every day for the sins of every day, that when we come to die we may have the sins but of one day to repent of. Oh, how comfortable

is that! If we would judge ourselves, and be jealous of ourselves, we shall not be judged of the Lord. Shortly we shall have to give an account of our stewardship, therefore let us be preparing for it. Was this well done? How shall I know whether it is or not? Why, try by the word of God. Is your faith Scripture faith? Is your repentance Scripture repentance? The word of God is a "glass," and it has all the properties of a good glass. It is clear, without spots. It is a "pure" word. It is broad. It will show you yourselves all over: inside and outside, heart and life. And it will not flatter. It will represent you as you are.

Jealousy is conversant about our *future concerns*. Especially as to four things.

1. Be jealous in reference to duty to be performed. Who is "sufficient for these things?" Many young men never ask themselves this question; but think themselves sufficient for the work of the ministry, though, indeed, they are not. This is for want of "godly jealousy." When you are about to perform any duty, do you lift up your heart to God, and say—Lord, help me in this duty? He that trusts in his own heart is a fool: so he that trusts in his own wisdom or strength. When Nehemiah was to speak to the king, he said—Lord, "give me favour in the sight of this man." How often doth duty fail for want of this. Be convinced that without Christ you can do nothing. Away to him for strength.

2. Be jealous where temptations are to be resisted. The enemy we fight with is a spirit. We are like a lamb who has to fight with a roaring lion. Maintain a "godly jealousy" over yourselves, lest you should be worsted. Do not say as Peter—"Though all men deny thee, yet will not I." Go as David against Goliath—in the name of the Lord, and in the power of his might.

3. Be jealous in reference to sufferings approaching. Consider—How shall I be able to bear such a trial?

4. There is need of this "godly jealousy" against death comes. It

is a great work to die. Be jealous how you shall do it. It is to be done but once, therefore should be well done. We have need to be preparing for it, to be treasuring up promises. Let us "die daily." It is a serious thing to die—depend on God for strength.

HEZEKIAH.

"Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore."

Hezekiah, of whom this was spoken, was a great man, and a good man. It is not often that these two meet: "Not many noble are called." But some are. And he was one.

Observe his sickness: it was "unto death." Neither the grace in his heart, nor the crown upon his head, could protect him. And it was immediately after his victory over Sennacherib: "In those days." Soon after that great triumph came this alloy. We should learn to "rejoice with trembling."

Observe what he did under his sickness, and how he took it: "He turned his face to the wall, and prayed." For privacy sake. It was a secret prayer, and, therefore, to be made secretly, Matt. vi. 6. For the temple sake. The Jews to this day when they pray turn their faces towards Jerusalem. But Jesus Christ is our Gospel Temple. To him we must look in all our services. He *prayed*. Prayer is never out of season, but it is in a special manner seasonable when we are sick and come to die. Christ's last breath was praying breath. Then we take our leave of prayer for ever. Those that do not pray while they live cannot expect to be heard and accepted when they come to die. *His* (Hezekiah's) prayer was, "Remember now how I have walked before thee in truth," etc. It was a prayer fetched from his heart. And observe that he neither asks to be spared nor to be taken away. As

the thief upon the cross —Lord, "remember me." He refers it to God whether he should live or die. But he "wept sore." It was not a dry prayer: it was steeped in tears. Some think he wept out of loathness to die, not having such clear discoveries of a future state as we have now. Others because he had no heir.

Observe the success. God heard and answered; and gave him a new lease of his life.

We learn from the prayer that reflections upon a well-spent life are a very prevailing plea with God, and a very comfortable cordial to ourselves when we come to die.

Hezekiah walked "before God," "in truth:" in opposition to guile and hypocrisy: "with a perfect heart." Not sinless perfection. The Scripture has recorded his faults. But he was perfect as it stands in opposition to dissembling, to dividing, to drawing back. It was a perfection of perseverance.

He did that which was good in the sight of God. Not that, and *only* that, as if he had never done anything amiss. But it was his constant aim and endeavour to do "that which is good." And *we* must *do*. It is not legal preaching to press people to *do*. Christ did so. We must do that which is *good*. Many are busy doing, who do not that which is good. And it must be in the "sight" of God. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The good thing that Hezekiah did in a special manner was the setting up of a work of reformation, teaching us that those do that which is good who mind the work of their place and station, their own work.

But how is this a prevailing plea with God? Not at the tribunal of his justice. It is no plea there, Psa. cxliii. 2. Christ only is "The Lord our righteousness."

It is, however, a good plea at the bar of grace. It will not do in the law court; but in the gospel court it will, as an evidence that our faith in Christ's atonement is true faith. Hast thou sinned? Lord, I

have. Thou knowest it. And my own heart knows it. What hast thou to say why sentence must not pass? Lord, Christ hath died. But what is that to thee? I have made him mine: accepted of him for my Surety. How doth it appear that thy faith is right? By the integrity and uprightness of my walk. And so comes in Hezekiah's plea; not as my righteousness, but as an evidence that my faith is right.

How will this be a cordial? As it was to Paul: "Our rejoicing is *this*, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." Rejoicing is more than a cordial. A cordial stills the soul, but rejoicing stirs it. What would a man have upon a sick bed? If God please, he would desire to live. And so thou shalt if thou hast any more work to do, and it be for thy good. He would be supported under his pains.—He would see the sting of death out. —He would have good company in the darksome valley. —He would have some comfortable evidence of his title to eternal glory.

Answer this one serious question to your own conscience. What religion are you of? Are you of Hezekiah's religion, that is, sincerity? There is no religion but that. That was Paul's, "simplicity and godly sincerity." That was Nathanael's; "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." That which is contrary to this is the Pharisee's religion, which was all to be "seen of men."

By all means be sincere in your sorrow for sin: in your closing with Christ. Let your faith be "faith unfeigned." Let your love to Christ be "in sincerity." And being sincere, in God's name "hold fast" your sincerity. Never be otherwise than sincere. Never let go the comfort of your sincerity. Though our integrity be at the best, and in the best imperfect, yet art thou aware of the imperfection? Dost thou bewail it? But, neither your walking, nor your doing, nor your sincerity, will do without Christ: "What things," said Paul, "were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." None but Christ. None but Christ.

HOLY WEEPING.

This piece of charity must begin at home: for that man will never weep aright for the sins of others, that doth not weep for his own. But it must not end there.

Families are to be "wept over" where there are none in them, as far as we can judge, spiritually alive.*

* See the Life of Rev. P. Henry, p. 116. 8vo. 1825.

And, are there not many particular persons to be wept over? Near relations. Profane persons. Individuals declining in profession. Persons drawing back.

Now we have such always with us to exercise our compassion towards them in mourning over them; see Matt. xxvi. 11. And we should do it out of love to God, who is dishonored by their sins. Is God grieved, and the Spirit grieved; and will not you be grieved? Love to God will make us grieve at that which is a grief to him. Mourning for our own sins flows from self love; but mourning for others' sins flows from pure love to God. I do not know, indeed, how else you can acquit yourselves from the guilt of their sins; see 1 Cor. v. 2. Sorrow works to the clearing of *ourselves*, 2 Cor. vii. 11. Besides, this is the way to have a mark set upon us: "The Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." This is as the "blood upon the door-posts." It is good setting a "mark." And, what do you know but your weeping over sinners may be a means to set them a weeping for themselves? Who knows but it may be a means to prevent the judgments that are coming on the places where we live?

Then, weep and pray. These two do very well together. This was the course Abraham took, and Ezra: "Wherefore liest thou upon thy

face?"

Then, weep and reprove: "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Our not reproving sinners brings us into a fellowship with them.

Then, weep and exhort: "Exhort one another daily, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." We are bid to take up our cross daily; to die daily; and to exhort one another daily, "while it is called to-day." And when that is over it will be called—to-night.

Then, weep and set a good example: "Let your light shine." When the wall was to be built every one repaired before his own house, and then the work was done quickly.

CHRISTIAN DILIGENCE.

There must be diligence in four things.

1. To acquaint ourselves with the Scripture evidences of effectual calling. Those are the touchstone by which we are to try ourselves. Some take marks and evidences that are too low, and some that are too high: so miss it on either hand. Therefore, "to the law and to the testimony."

Those that go by a rule that is too *low* are deceived. Such are those who think all is well with them because they are called with the common call. Nay, they have been baptized. They have been admitted to the Lord's supper. They have had some qualms of repentance. They have some kind of faith, and love, and knowledge. They perform holy duties. They are companions of God's people. They are sufferers with them. All this will not do; see Luke xiii. 23, etc. Many a man comes within a step of heaven, and yet never comes thither. Judas was a disciple: a preacher: and yet—a "castaway." Therefore do not try by these marks.

Then, there are marks that are too *high*. These leave men under mistakes which are disquieting to their peace. For example: that none are elected and called, but such as can make out the time and circumstances of their conversion. But this does not hold. Many can say as the blind man, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Others have examined their condition by marks that they find in books, and cannot see that they come up to them. Whereas grace in books is one thing; and grace in the heart is another thing. Ministers set high marks to prevent presumption. Others doubt they are not called because they are not so deeply humbled as they think they should be. They have not had those legal terrors that many have. Whereas God has various dealings in conversion. There was a great difference between the knocking down of Paul and the opening of Lydia's heart.

It is the *Scripture* marks that we are to acquaint ourselves with. They are not many, but few. Not dark, but clear; not uncertain, but indubitable. I will give you three.

They that are effectually called have such a sight and sense of sin as produces sorrow of soul for it; hatred of it; and departure from it. Whenever God calls a man, he calls him from his sins. The soul falls out with sin.

They that are effectually called have such a sight and sense of Christ, and his excellency, and their own need of him, as makes them truly and heartily willing to let all go for him: to accept of him upon his own terms; and to yield themselves to be ruled by him in all things. They are called to Christ. They come to Christ.

They that are effectually called have such a sight and sense of things that are "not seen," as, in some measure, takes the heart off things that "are seen," 2 Cor. iv. 18. The aims and ends are altered. *Before*, their language was, Let us have present things, and we have enough. But *now* they are of another mind. Unseen things are their hope and aim. They become more afraid of an unseen hell, and more

desirous of an unseen heaven; than of any misery, or any happiness, in this world.

2. To try ourselves by such Scripture evidences. What is a man better for having a touchstone before him, if he will not bring his gold or silver to it? God's word is a rule which will discern *that* which is crooked. God's word is a light, and light is discovering. It will discover what faith is right, what repentance is right. Try your faith and repentance by it. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves." There is an allusion to the examination of candidates. We must be putting questions to our own souls. What is sin to me? What is Christ to me? What are the things of the other world to me? Have I left every sin? Am I sound at heart? Have I the "root of the matter?" "When this is to be done we must make a business of it. We must sequester ourselves from other employments. "I thought," said the psalmist, "on my ways." There is an allusion to those that work embroidery, work which is done on both sides. There must be great care: turning it first on this side, then on that side. A sudden glance will not do. There is need of this care. For all is not gold that glistens.

3. To hearken to what sentence passes on the trial. Many are trying all their days, and yet never are sure. It is because they do not attend to the issue. Like many suits in Westminster Hall, long pending, so it is with many in reference to their spiritual state. And the reason is, they do not give *diligence* to put the matter out of doubt. The Scripture says, he that believes shall be saved. The question is, Do we believe? The Scripture saith, We may know "our election of God," if the gospel be come to us "in power." is the gospel come to me in power? If it *be*, I must needs grant that I am elected. Do not deny the conclusion if you grant the premises.

4. When the sentence is passed concerning our condition, we should give diligence to proceed accordingly. If *for* us, we should be thank full; give God the glory; stir up ourselves to "abound in the work of the Lord." "Grow ii: grace." The more grace, the more

evident is our election of God. If *against* us, what then? Be not afraid to hear of it. Do not say there is no hope; but set about making your condition better. Have I *not* repented? Then repent now. Have I *not* closed with Christ V I close with him now. Many people doubt of their condition, who never do anything towards the bettering of it. Though I do not come to you and ask each of you in particular—Is your "calling and election" made "sure?" yet I would have each of you to ask yourself seriously this question, and drive the business to an issue. Take Christ as he is offered.

Many things should move us to this "diligence:" "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure." Do it "the rather," because time and opportunity is very uncertain; because you can make nothing else sure. Oh the folly of this mad world!" Careless about this great business, leaving *it* all to sixes and sevens, and yet taken up with care to make other things sure; which, after all, they cannot do. And, because so much depends upon it. It is a matter of great consequence. I know a man's election, calling, and salvation may be sure in itself, though he be never assured of it. Many a one goes to heaven that lives and dies in uncertainties. But I know their condition is better that have made it sure to themselves. There are four great advantages that will be gotten by it.

1. It is much for the praise and glory of God. The more sure of it, certainly the more thankful for it. Will any man give thanks for the bestowing of that benefit which he is not assured he hath? Instead of complainings and fears, there would be praises and thanksgivings. You little think what a loser God is in his glory by our doubtings.

2. It would be much more for our peace and comfort. He that knows his election, how can he choose but rejoice "with joy unspeakable?" It is a heaven upon earth. The more clear sight a man has of his title to heaven, the more content he is in every condition. Having made that sure, all other things are nothing, Heb. x. 34. Christ sends his disciples to heaven for comfort, John xiv. 1, 2. How

can we go to heaven for comfort, if we do not know our interest in it?

3. It would be much for our proficiency and progress in holiness. It is a special bridle to keep from sin. It is a special spur to put on to duty. Moses had "respect unto the recompence of the reward," and that carried him through temptations. None walk more closely with God than those who have the clearest evidences for heaven: "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." For this cause did the apostle labor to be accepted and to go to heaven, because he knew he was accepted and should go to heaven.

4. It would be much for our profiting of others. It brings a good report upon the ways of God. It invites men. It encourages them. The droopings of others discourage. The example of those that are assured is shining, and stirs up others to labor after it.

THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE.

"For to me to live is Christ."

This is the apostle Paul's account of his life. And he only is a true Christian that can truly say the same. We are not to think it was Paul's prerogative. Every true Christian can say so. Though some more, some less.

Now, if to us to live be Christ, the word and will of Christ is our rule in all the actions of our lives. Not our own will; or the will of the flesh, or of men, or of the devil. But we say, as Paul, "Lord, what wilt *thou* have me to do?" It was then that to Paul to live began to be Christ. See how it was with David: "Remove from me the way of lying, and grant me thy law graciously. I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me."

And, the example of Christ is the copy that we write after. His

"peace" and his "pattern" are the two legacies he left us. A copy without a blot. The endeavour of every true Christian is to be a follower of Christ. "Learn of me," said the Saviour. "Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps."

If to us to live be Christ, his spirit, and

strength, and grace is the principle that actuates us in every thing. It is a great matter what principle we act from—whether self, or Christ. Self is a naughty principle: self-love: self-pleasing. Who prayed such a prayer? Self. Who resisted such a temptation? Self. But a Christian's principle is Christ: "I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." "I am crucified with *Christ*, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but *Christ* liveth in me." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." "By the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world." Do *we* do duties in our own strength, or in Christ's? True Christians fetch daily supplies from heaven.

If to us to live be Christ, his merit and righteousness is that which we trust to for the pardon of our amisses, and for the acceptance of our performances. As to both those things we have a need of a righteousness. Now, which way are we to look for it? To ourselves? To our own sorrow and repentance? To our own well-doings? No. The true Christian looks to Christ: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count, all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Certainly herein lies the mystery of godliness.

If to us to live be Christ, the name, and honour, and glory of Christ is our chief end. How did Paul delight in mentioning the very name of Christ. Christ was his highest end: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

The Pharisees did all for the promoting of their own credit and reputation. To them to live was self, and not Christ. And they had their reward. With a true Christian it is otherwise. To you to live, let it be Christ. That is—

1. In the sense of the great things he has done for you. Set yourselves to love him, and live to him. Have you married the blessed Jesus? Be careful in every thing to please him. Your scope and end must be changed: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."

2. In all your repentings for sin look at Christ. See him pierced, wounded by sin, and let that grieve you, Zech. xii. 10. In all your expectations of pardon look at the blood of Christ, and see your pardons streaming to you in that blood. Here is the mystery of true gospel repentance, which the most of men err in.

3. Whatever you do, in word or deed, "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Do it by warrant from him, and in his strength. Let Christ be in the beginning, in the middle, in the end of all you do. Show forth his virtues and praise.

4. When you have done all, look for acceptance only through Christ. Look for acceptance here, and acceptance in the judgment only upon the account of his merit and mediation. "Christ has died" must be all our plea. But what title hast thou to him? I have accepted him. I have closed with him. To me, to live has been Christ. Has it been so? Then, be comforted. To thee, to die shall be "gain."

A GODLY MAN'S HOPE.

The hope of a godly man is well laid in its ground and foundation. It stands upon a rock: "Christ *in* you the hope of glory." "I hope in thy word." If our hope be a Scripture hope, it is a "good

hope." Being built upon the "everlasting covenant," it is "sure," 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

And, in the use and benefit of it, is a helmet: "Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." This hope is a good head-piece in the day of battle. It wards off many a blow. It makes a man "more than conqueror."

It is an anchor: "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail." The anchor is a stay to the ship. The man possessed of this "hope" shall "not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord."

It is a city of refuge: "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." This is very comfortable when the avenger of blood is at our heels.

It is a cordial: "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." "By whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

It is a laver in which the possessor purifies himself: "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

It is a spell to put him forward in heaven's ways. Issachar bowed because he saw the land was good; see Gen. xlix. 14,15. "I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, *instantly serving God day and night*, hope to come."

And in the end and issue of it this hope is "gladness," Prov. x.

28. It ends well. "The righteous" never fails of what he hopes for. His hope never makes him "ashamed," Rom. v. 5. We are "saved by hope," Rom. viii. 24. Not as we are saved by Christ, and by faith; but saved from sinking in the gulf of despair: saved from being overcome by many temptations.

Then, "rejoice in hope." How doth a young heir live upon his hopes. Every true Christian is a great heir. Oh that we could live upon our hopes!

ON LOOKING AT THINGS NOT SEEN.

To look at things not seen is to make them our scope and end. As the archer does, who makes the white the scope, the mark at which he aims: on which he fixes his eye. So to make *heaven* our scope is to aim at the attaining of it. This is Christian wisdom.

As the traveller does the place to which he is going. If he can, he gets the sight of it. However, he thinks of it. He sets himself in the way to it. If he comes to a turning, he inquires—Is this the way? If he meets with company going to the same place, he joins himself with them. Just thus should we make heaven our scope. We should ask the way to Zion with our " faces thitherward." The face of many, like the hypocrites, is the contrary way.

As the laborer looks at his hire. We should often look at our wages.

As the soldier looks at his pay. Our life is a warfare. Heaven is our pay. It is the reward of him that "overcometh:" "So run, that ye may obtain ;" not as one that beats the air, or fights at uncertainties, but as one that has the pay in his eye.

As a merchant, that goes a voyage long and dangerous, looks at the gain. This world is a sea. Oh, give all diligence to come off well, and then the pearl is sure.

As the racer looks at the garland: "They do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible."

As the husbandman looks at the harvest, Ploughing and sowing is toilsome, but the crop will make amends, Jas. v. 7, 8. The harvest will pay for all the pains, and all the patience.

Of what advantage will this looking at unseen things be?

1. It will qualify our desires of, and pursuits after, present things. It will put the mouth out of taste for them. When he that has had his fill of sensual pleasures, that has been rich toward men, that has enjoyed the favour of great men, comes to taste spiritual pleasures; to be rich towards God; to have the favour of God, he will say—These are the *best* pleasures, the best riches, the best favors. The sight of things unseen made Mary, when work was to be done in the house, leave all, and seat herself at the feet of Christ.

2. It would quell and quench our envy towards those that abound in the things that are "seen." Envy is a heart sin, and little heeded. But there is great wickedness in fretting at the prosperity of others. Get a sight of things "not seen," and you will see little cause to envy sinners. There are two whole Psalms—the 37th and 73rd—written against this sin. If God has given you a part in Christ, you have little reason to envy others. If heaven be thine, why shouldst thou fret at those that have no more than earth—though never so much of it?

3. It would quicken us in all manner of gospel obedience. Godliness, indeed, has the promise of temporal things: "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." But the promise of them is with a proviso, and limitation. The promise of "things not seen" is absolute. *Those* will surely be for God's glory and your good. What reason have we then to "abound always in the work of the Lord;" to love him; and live to him; who has given happiness for our end, if holiness be our way. Oil the wheels of your

souls then with this consideration, when they drive heavily in duty. What is yonder heaven for, yonder glorious palace? Doth it become me to drive at this rate that have a crown, such a crown, before me? Why art thou so? Oh, work as those that work for *heaven*: a glorious city; the streets whereof are so bespangled. Oh, say—All yonder is mine if I fear the Lord, and serve him. Up then, my soul, and be busy.

4. It would quiet our spirits under all cross providences: "For which cause we faint not," saith the apostle; "but though our outward man *perish*, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." "Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Goods out of sight made them willing to part with goods in sight. When the stones were flying about Stephen's ears, and he dying in the midst of them, this encouraged him—that he saw heaven opened. This heavened the martyrs. "We shall have a sharp breakfast," one of them said; "but we shall sup with the Lamb." If we be called to part with present things—estate relations, liberty, life,—how easy is it if sure of heaven. Who would not part with a handful of sand, that was certain to have a handful of gold instead of it? Let all go. No matter. I have better things in prospect. If tempted with present good things. If it be said—Quit your profession, and here are riches and honours for you—a temptation which has overcome many;—"look at things not seen." This is the way not to be overcome. One serious cast of the eye of the soul upon this "unseen" happiness would damp the thoughts of all earthly things.

FEARFUL THINGS.

A great man for our enemy. He has power to do us a great disadvantage. And this people are often afraid of. But is it not a

thousand times worse to have the great God our enemy? *His* power is unlimited.

There is a great deal of evil in a prison. It is against that which is sweet and dear to us, even our liberty. Especially to be cast, into a dark dungeon, as Jeremiah was. But what is that to the prison of hell? To lie for ever under the custody of him that has the power of death, which is the devil?

To be under banishment is an evil thing. To be driven from our homes and habitations, from wife and children who would help to comfort us. To be forced to wander in deserts and mountains —how sad! But to be banished for ever from the presence of God, and Christ, and the holy angels, is far worse. What must it be to have God say, "Depart, ye cursed?"

There is much evil in reproach and shame. This our Lord Jesus "endured" for us. But this is nothing compared with the "shame and everlasting contempt " that is in hell, Dan. xii. 2.

Tormenting pain is an evil: sometimes by bodily distempers; sometimes by persecutions. But that is nothing to the torments of hell. Deny the truth, and you run into hell. Stand to it, and you fall into persecution.

Death is evil in itself. Clothed with such and such circumstances it is very terrible. But that is nothing compared with eternal death—the second death. Ever, ever, ever dying; but never dead.

CHRISTIAN SUBMISSION.

Christ said, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" And it is the duty of his people to be freely willing to drink of every cup of affliction which their Father puts into their hand.

We must check and chide ourselves into this frame. David did so: "*Why* art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted

within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." We should observe the motions of our spirits: our drawings back from the cross, quarrelling with it.

We must pray ourselves into this willing frame. When you find corruption strong; the weakness of the flesh, prevailing against the willingness of the spirit; away to the throne of grace. Cry mightily to God for assistance and succour. As our Lord Jesus did: "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him."

We must reason ourselves by Scripture reasons into a willing frame. Particularly this one—that it is an article of our covenant with God, that we would lie at his feet, and resign ourselves wholly to be at his disposal. That as we would not pick and choose precepts, so we would not pick and choose providences. Was it upon any other terms that you made the bargain? Was it not a marriage covenant, for better for worse, for richer for poorer?

We must press ourselves to it by Scripture precedents. We must find out the footsteps of the flock: the footsteps of the saints that have gone before you in this way of patient submission to the cross. Set the "cloud of witnesses" before you—Eli, David, Paul—and walk after it.

We must believe ourselves into this frame. Certainly the more faith the more patience. Faith in the *promises*. There are many "precious promises" for faith to feed upon at such a time. Promises of assistance, of God's presence with us in our sufferings, and of the reward after suffering. Faith in *Christ*. Look unto Jesus. See him taking out the sting: the poison out of the cup. Why then should you not drink it? Look at his example. Look at unseen things by faith, 2 Cor. iv. 16—18: at an unseen heaven, and an unseen hell: both which will help to make us willing to drink of every cup. Blessed be God it is not hell.

Whatever cup our Father puts into our hand we must drink it,

whether we will or no. For "who has resisted his will?" Now, let us make a virtue of necessity. Let us not say—It is an evil, and I must bear it—but, It is an evil, and I will bear it. In Psa. lxxv. 8, we read of "a cup of mixture;" a cup mixed with love, with mercy; with a design to do us good. "But the dregs" —the unmixed wrath of God —are reserved for "the wicked of the earth." The saints have not the dregs of the cup to drink. They should, therefore, be freely willing to drink of every cup that is put into their hands.

GOSPEL FRUIT.

In the 5th chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians we see a basketful of gospel fruit: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." These are fruits of the Spirit; that is, the new nature in opposition to the "flesh," or corrupt nature. Where grace is not, these good fruits are not. Ere any of these fruits can be brought forth there must be a work of regeneration and sanctification. Grace is the root of the matter. Have you received that grace? Are you regenerate and born again? I pray look to this "fruit of the Spirit." This reminds us of the Holy Ghost, the third Person in the Trinity. It is he that works all these good fruits in us: "From me is thy fruit found." He works in us "both to will and to do." These fruits come not up of themselves. Love comes from the spirit of love. And it is he that waters them and makes them to nourish: "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." The Spirit is the north and south wind. So the fruits are called the "fruit" of the Spirit, in the singular number: for what one is, all will be in some measure and degree.

Love. That leads all the rest. It is the "fulfilling of the law." The love of *God*. Love him above all. "O, love the Lord all ye his saints." This love will appear in our care to please him, fear to offend him, satisfaction in him, delight in his presence, grief in his absence.

Leaving this love is a provoking sin. It provokes God to remove the "candlestick," Rev. ii. 5.—The love of our *neighbour*. Love should be borne to all men, especially the "household of faith." We should reprove and watch over one another.

Joy. That is, a cheerful frame of spirit, in opposition to drooping dejections and despondencies. There is a vain, frothy joy which is sinful. But it is a duty to "rejoice in the Lord:" "Rejoice evermore." Spiritual, heavenly joy is good fruit. The gospel brings tidings of joy — "great joy to all people," Luke ii. 10.

Peace. A peaceable frame of spirit within, and peaceable behaviour towards all men. The gospel is the gospel of peace: "On earth, peace." Christ is "The Prince of Peace." The more the gospel prevails, the more there will be of this peaceableness. "Follow peace with all men." "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

Long suffering. Patience stretched out: which looks two ways. Upwards towards God, willing to wait his leisure: "Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness."— One towards another. Forgiving seventy times seven. Mesh and blood are against it, but the Spirit requires it. Consider the longsuffering of God towards us.

Gentleness. In opposition to roughness and ruggedness of spirit and behaviour. We should not be, as Nabal was, of a "churlish" spirit. *That* is not a Christian spirit, because not a Christ-like spirit. Our carriage should be amiable and obliging.

Goodness. That is, usefulness. Doing good in the places God has set us in. Christ went up and down "doing good." How many go up and down doing evil—cumbering the ground.

Faith. Faithfulness. So it should seem to be meant here. "All men have not faith;" see 2 Thes. iii. 2, 3. God's people should be a fast people: true to their promises; engagements; betrustments.

"Faithful in Christ Jesus" is one of the titles of Christians: "Children that will not he," Isa. lxiii. 8. It is a shame when it is otherwise.

Meekness. In opposition to pride and passion. Meek towards God. Receiving the word with meekness. Bearing the rod with meekness. Meek towards all men: "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." And observe the reason—because of the redeeming love of God in Christ: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared: not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Temperance in the use of lawful enjoyments: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life." "Add to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance." The more knowing people are, the more temperate they should be. Many have much knowledge that want temperance.

ZEAL.

Zeal must be according to knowledge. We have need of knowledge to guide our zeal. Zeal without knowledge is like mettle in a blind horse. We should be well assured that what we are zealous *for* is truly good; and that what we are zealous *against* is truly evil.

We must be upright in our zeal. A man may be a zealous hypocrite, when his heart is not upright in it. The Pharisees had much zeal. So had Jehu, but he must have his zeal seen, 2 Kings x. 16. That is not true zeal that is anxious to be seen.

We must be humble in our zeal. Jehu made a boast of his zeal. Not so David—"Who am I, O Lord God?" His zeal was humble. So was Paul's: "I labored more abundantly than they all, *yet not I.*"

We must be charitable in our zeal. Take heed of bitter zeal; see James iii. 14. Even when we reprove for sin we must love the person. The disciples (Luke ix.) were zealous for Christ, but severe to the Samaritans.

We must be universal in our zeal. Zealous against every sin, and for every duty. Not partial in the law: warm against one sin, and indulgent to another.

We must be discreet in our zeal. Wisdom is of excellent use to order our zeal: it is like bit and bridle to a mettlesome horse.

We must be regular in our zeal. Zealous, but keep in our places. It is not for a man to take upon him to be a magistrate or a minister, and say—My zeal puts me on to do it. It is unwarrantable. Zeal is sinful when it draws us out of our station.

We must be constant in it. It must be like the natural heat of the body, not like an aguefit: burning hot, and then presently key-cold. We must be "zealously affected *always* in a good thing."

MINISTERS.

Ministers are "workers together" with God; see 2 Cor. vi. 1. Workers. Not triflers, Paul exhorts Timothy to carry it like a "workman."

A minister's work is ploughing work, and sowing work. The gospel is compared to a plough; which ministers are to hold, and drive too, for the breaking up of the fallow ground. They are then to sow the seed of the word, which must be into "honest and good hearts."

It is planting work, and watering work, 1 Cor. iii. 6. Planting work, is endeavouring to begin grace. Watering, is to carry on the work of grace.

It is digging work and dunging work, Luke xiii. 8. Digging by

the terrors of the law. Dinging by the comforts of the gospel.

It is dressing work and pruning work. A congregation is like a garden. The minister is the Adam, whose work it is to dress and keep it. You are to "suffer the word of exhortation:" to be glad of such smitings.

It is bearing work and nursing work: "My little children," said the apostle Paul, "of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." None knows the travail of soul of a faithful minister but he that feels it. Our misery is when we travail of dead children; see 1 Thess. ii. In nursing we meet with many froward children. There is need of great patience, and tenderness, and love to souls.

It is building work, and in order thereunto hewing work. We meet with many a rough piece, but we must hew them to make them fit for God's building.

It is wooing work. They are the friends of the Bridegroom, sent, as Abraham's servant was sent, to get a wife for his young master. Our design is to betroth you to Christ. You should yield. Do not give us repulses.

It is watching work; see Ezek. iii. 17; Heb. xiii. 17. We are to give you warning of danger, as those that must give account.

It is fighting work, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.. The ministry is the good warfare. Therefore endure hardness, 2 Tim. ii. 3. We must look for hard words, hard looks, hard usage.

It is fishing work. We are fishers of men. We fish with the angle when we deal with particular persons. We fish with the net when we preach in assemblies.

It is angels' work. They are "the angels of the churches." Angels are heavenly messengers. So are ministers. Ministers should keep themselves as angels—pure and holy.

It is Christ's work. He was a minister. He "went about doing

good."

It is God's work—" workers together" with him. When they are speaking, God is speaking both reproof and comfort.

Those who do not work this work do not deserve to be called ministers. The church's ministers they may be; but not Christ's ministers.

GOSPEL GRACE.

What are God's ends in revealing gospel grace to us?

To lead us thereby unto repentance. When God sends the gospel among a people, it is with a design to bring them to repentance, Acts xvii. 30. Every impenitent sinner receives gospel grace in vain. The riches of God's grace in giving a Saviour is the best argument to engage us both to sorrow for sin past, and to sin no more, Zech. xii. 10.

To endear the hearts of the children of men to himself. A word made us, but blood redeemed us. And God took this way to convince us that he has loved us. Herein "God commendeth his love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And he courts your love. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, he receives gospel grace "in vain."

To hide pride from us; to lay us low; and make us humble; and keep us so in all our walkings. The gospel is a humbling gospel, not only as it sets before us the example of a humble Saviour, but as it reveals such a way of salvation as carries in it nothing of man; but only free grace. Boasting is excluded by the law of faith.

To meeken our spirits. To mortify passion in us, that we might forbear and forgive as God has forgiven us. Those that are of a forgiving spirit are of a gospel spirit; see Tit. iii. 3, 4. Nothing is more likely than this "grace" to tame the roughness and ruggedness

of our spirits.

To take our hearts off from the world. In order to this it sets before us the example of Christ, who was perfectly dead to this world and all its glories. It reveals unto us better things. The gospel spirit is the heavenly spirit: "Set your affections on things above."

To promote and further our spiritual joy— by covenant relations of God to us, precious promises, access to the throne of grace. There are fountains of joy. They are enough to keep the heart in a cheerful frame. Consider gospel grace—how rich, how free it is.

THE BUILDERS.

"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

These are the closing words of that famous sermon which our Lord Jesus preached upon the mount. They are like the binding sheaves which bind on all the rest. As there are now, so there were then, two sorts of people. Some were hearers *only*. They are likened to one that built upon the sand. Others were *doers* also. They are likened to one that built upon a rock. We are all builders. The question is what we build upon—the rock, or the sand.

What is this "house?" Our hopes of heaven.

What is this "rock?" Christ. On him the wise build: "Thus saith

the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Those build upon this rock that hear Christ's words and do them.

What is the sand? Bare hearing of the word of God.

What is the storm? Death and judgment. There is a dying time coming. *That* will try the building. *Before* that day comes a storm *may* come: a time of trouble, and trial, and temptation. Man is "born to trouble," and "born again" to trouble. Then happy they who have built upon the rock. But if not, where will you be?" What will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far P to whom will ye flee for help? And where will ye leave your glory?" By the distress and trouble that is in such a day, we may infer what it will be when death comes. Now the building may be mended. Not so then. There is no repentance in the grave.

The only way to make sure work for our souls is to hear and do the words of the Lord Jesus.

CHRIST A PRINCE.

He is a great Prince. He is so in respect of sovereignty and supremacy. A Prince indeed. "Prince of the kings of the earth." He is one to whom other princes are subject. "King of kings;" "Lord of lords." He is "far above all principalities and powers." He is a Prince also in the bounds of his principality. His "dominion" is "from sea to sea." "No creature is exempted from it. And, he is great in personal excellences and perfections: "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite." He is infinite in power: "All power," said he, "is given unto me in heaven and in earth." And he is infinite in wisdom. In him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." When Solomon would ask but one thing, he asked a

wise and understanding heart. And he had it. But, behold, a wiser, a "greater than Solomon is here." Would not any one choose to be governed by *such* a Prince?

He is a gracious Prince, graciously endowed: "Grace is poured into thy lips;" that is, holiness; that is, the grace of a man., of a prince. He received the Spirit without measure: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God." None holy as he is. And he is graciously inclined. Meek and lowly. He came "riding on an ass," noting the meekness and mildness of his spirit and government. The poorest may come to him every day, and make his requests known.

He is the Prince of hearts and spirits. As he himself says, his "kingdom is not of this world." There is nothing in it of outward state, greatness, or grandeur. Therefore the kings of the earth need not oppose the setting of it up.

He is a Prince of life and peace. They "killed the Prince of life." He lives for ever. Other princes do not. They die: and oftentimes their death is of ill consequence. But he lives for ever; see Psa. cxlvi. 10. He is the Author of our life—temporal, spiritual, eternal. He is the Prince of peace also. As such Solomon was a type of him. Christ's kingdom is a peaceable kingdom. The disturbance that the gospel makes is because of the lusts of men, that will not submit and yield to it.

He is a Prince "just, and having salvation," Zech. ix. 9. Justice is the great ornament of a prince. Jesus—which is the Just—is just in his laws, in his rewards, in his punishments. He brings "salvation;" that is, he is a Saviour. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

He is a Prince of pardons and petitions. He is a forgiving Prince. One that "gives repentance and remission of sins." Such an one we have need of. He is himself Master of the requests. You may go immediately to him: "Be of good cheer, he calls thee." You do not

need the mediation of any saint or angel. Our Prince glories in this—that he is "a God hearing prayer:" "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you."

YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

Young beginners in godliness are under the special, tender care of the Lord Jesus: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

Who are young beginners in godliness? Young converts. Those who have begun to set their faces heavenward. These are not always such as are young in years. Many are old in years that are babes in Christ. Such an one was Nicodemus. Usually the work of conversion is wrought when people are young: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

When may we reckon a man a beginner in godliness?

Such have had a heart-breaking sense of sin, else they are not beginners in godliness.

Such as have been with Christ, and closed with him, and learned him. They have been with him by a humble, hearty, sincere address; resigning their souls to him.

Such as do in good earnest set about a holy life. Till men break off from all sins, leave their wicked company, they are not beginners in godliness: "Depart from me ye evil doers." "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." And not only so. Join good company. Say, "We will go with *you*" Say, as David, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee." They are the "excellent of the earth."

Such as love the word of God, and prayer. The word is the "seed." It is the "milk," such as new-born babes desire. Those who can live without the word of God are not so much as babes in Christ.

All that begin in godliness begin to pray. It was so with Saul: "Behold he prayeth." This was the evidence that the old persecutor was become a young convert. The crying of a child is a sign it is alive. "For this shall every one that is godly *pray*." The spirit of "grace and supplication" go together. Christ's lambs will cry after him.

And the Lord Jesus shows his care of them by bearing with their infirmities. Young beginners in anything are apt to miss it. But he knows their frame. He will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed. Smoking flax. This Christ will not quench. The bruised reed he will *strengthen*. See an instance of this tender care in the case of his disciples. Though he chode them he did not cast them off. He encouraged them, Matt. xxvi. 40. They were sleeping when he was in his agony. He rebukes them: "What, could ye not watch?" Yet afterwards excuses for them: The "spirit is willing." See another instance in the case of Thomas, John xx. How meekly did he carry it to him: "Reach hither thy hand. Be not faithless, but believing." What love! And he has the same tenderness now he is in heaven.

He shows his care too in feeding them with food convenient. He charged Peter, "Feed my lambs." If thou wilt love me, love my lambs. He was to feed them as a minister, with the wholesome food of God's word. "Tell me,, saith the devout soul to Christ, "tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest." He answers—" Go thy way, feed thy kids." Be sure to look to the young ones. It may be my remnant may be among them. I must have them looked after. And he will see that *they have* food convenient. There is "strong meat" for strong men in Christ; and "milk for babes." When he was on earth, feeding his flock, he taught as they were able to bear it. "I have fed you," said the apostle, like a wise under shepherd, "with milk." "Strong meat," is his language elsewhere, "belongs to them that are of full age." The Epistle to the Hebrews is the most difficult of Paul's writings, and it is the last. Christ's ministers do, or should, follow him herein.

He shows his care in driving. A tender shepherd is careful how he drives his flock. Jacob was so: "If men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die." They are tender, and must be dealt with accordingly. And so is Christ's care. He will not, nor will he suffer others, in the duties of religion, to put them on beyond their strength; see Mark ii. 22, etc.: "*No* man putteth new wine into old bottles." They were yet but young beginners in godliness. The devil hath done much hurt in this matter. When he can keep people no longer, when they *will* look towards heaven, then he falls to overdrive them: he puts them on above and beyond their strength. But Christ considers their weakness. He proportions burdens and sufferings accordingly. While the first disciples were young beginners they were not called before kings and rulers. God will not suffer the young ones to have the strongest temptations.

The same care is shown in protecting them. He will take care of their preservation. They have many enemies. The world. The devil. But they have a tender Shepherd, who gathers them in his arms, and carries them in his bosom. He hath undertaken that not one of them "shall be lost." He hath made "a hedge about" them as he did about Job, about his house, about all round about. Nay more— a 'wall. More yet—" a wall of fire round about," Zech. ii. 5. It is an allusion to shepherds who were forced, oftentimes, to make fires about their flocks to frighten away wild beasts. Saith God —I will be that wall.

He will be sure to bring them forward in their growth and strength. They are "babes," but they shall not be so always: "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon." What a comparison !—that the great God of heaven should compare himself to such a thing as dew.

"He shall grow as the lily"—for quickness and speedy growth. I have observed, and wondered sometimes at the speedy growth of some young beginners in godliness. It was from a shower of this blessed dew.

"As the cedar of Lebanon"—which is a strong thing.

"As the corn." The corn grows with a useful growth. First the blade. Then the ear. "Ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall"—which is quick, and speedy, and to great usefulness.

OMISSIONS.

Take heed of omissions. Decays in grace usually begin in the closet. Duties are first carelessly performed. Then totally omitted. They go then to the family. Thence to public worship.

CHRISTIANS, SOLDIERS.

They must count upon their life as a warfare. And it is so. As long as we are in the wilderness we must do as the Israelites did, travel harnessed. We are in the midst of enemies, and should provide accordingly.

We must put on our armour. It is not for soldiers, especially in the midst of enemies, to be unarmed. Take "the whole armour of God." The armour of his making, of his appointing, of his putting on. When you want it go to him. Lord, I want a headpiece, put on me the helmet of hope, etc. He bids us take it, and put it on. We are never the better for graces lying by. And observe, that there is no armour for the back. We must not run away. We must stand. We must not yield. Many in an hour of temptation yield a little. That is turning the back. It is prayer that buckles all on: "Praying always, with all prayer." The devil is not able to stand before the breath of

prayer.

We must stand always on our watch. Soldiers, in time of war, must be sure to keep good sentinel. We are set as so many sentinels to stand always on our guard: "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." Watch the eye; the lips; the thoughts; the affections: "Keep thy heart with all diligence." With all keepings, keep thy heart; for that is the castle. And, watch for the coming of our captain: For "in such an hour as ye think not," the Lord comes. Watchfulness is that which should run through all our duties and graces—as the thread through the bracelet. If that breaks, all fall asunder.

We must fight manfully against all his and our enemies. Soldiers are not enlisted to play, but to fight: "I have fought the good fight;" fought with my own corruptions; fought with the devil and his instruments. Remember to go forth in the name of "the Lord of hosts." Sin and the devil are conquered enemies. When the enemy is conquered, every coward will take heart: "I have overcome the world." What is left for us but to pursue, overtake, and divide the spoil. Christ's soldiers should often read Revelation, chapters ii. and iii. There are many promises there to them that overcome. Consider, as a motive to courage, that you are always under your Captain's eye. See your Captain seeing you.

We must be very careful to keep rank. Walk in love and unity with one another. If we fall out among ourselves it will weaken us: "My undefiled is one;" then "terrible as an army with banners." Mind the duty of your particular place and calling. You that have the charge of families must see to them as those that must give account. Do not go out of the way of your calling. Soldiers must keep rank. While we do so we are under special protection. But, "As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place."

We must "endure hardness"—as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, 2 Tim. ii. 3. A soldier's life is no easy life: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Many a hard word, and hard

blow perhaps. But "fear none of those things" before they come, nor faint when they do come.

Do not entangle yourselves in the affairs of this life. A man who is a soldier lays by thoughts of any other calling. Deal in things we must, but we must not entangle ourselves with them: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Care is our duty. Carefulness is our sin.

Hold on, and hold out to the end. A soldier is not enlisted for a day, or a month, or a year; but as long as the war lasts. If any prove false, and run from their colours, the punishment is death. "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

PRESERVATIVES FROM SIN.

Set the Lord always before you, Psa. xvi. 8.

Avoid carefully the occasions of sin: "Look not on the wine," lest your looking should cause desire, and so excess; and see Prov. v. 6—8. It is not good to come near a pesthouse. Carefully avoid idleness, and ill company. We must neither walk, sit, nor stand with the "ungodly," Psa. LI. "Save yourselves from this untoward generation."

If you would not sin, remember the account: "God will bring thee into judgment." Often think you hear the last trumpet sound.

Be much in prayer. Pray for preventing, restraining, renewing grace.

Hide the word of God in your heart: "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." *This* is an excellent preservative against sin.

The *precepts* of the word are preservatives against sin. These we

must hide in our hearts so as to answer temptations. Thus Christ did: "It is written." Scripture precepts well managed are good weapons. Instance the fourth commandment—"Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy." Have you this word written in your hearts? Have a care how you think your own thoughts, or speak your own words, or do your own works on that holy day. Sabbath sanctification is greatly neglected. All complain of it, but who goes about to mend it? Thou and thy son, etc. The command is directed to masters of families.

There are the *promises* of the word. They are "exceeding great and precious:" "Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction." Understand this of the *promising* part. When sad tidings were brought to Mr. Dod, he blessed God for the good he knew would come out of it. "I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment." What a sweet word to the church! And there is a promise to particular saints: "I will never leave *thee*, nor forsake *thee*."

Consider the *threatenings* of the word. Let these "dwell richly in you." Adam in innocency was awed by a threatening: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." There are terrible denunciations of wrath: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." "Stand in awe, and sin not." You that do not pray in your families, remember Jeremiah, x. 25: "Pour out thy fury upon the families that call not on thy name."

The Scriptures have stories too. *They* are food to help us against sin. Some have refrained from sin, and it was well taken. God blessed them for it. See the case of Joseph. Others have been entangled, and bad has come of it. David in the matter of Uriah fell sorely. The sword did not depart from his house. He went halting to the grave. Teach Scripture stories to your children.

And, there is the *gospel* of the Scripture. The unsearchable love

of God in the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ; see John iii. 16. That man has a hard heart indeed, that the blood of Christ will not soften.

THE THRONE OF GRACE.

"Let us therefore 'come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Such is the call to each of us. The errand is twofold—"mercy;" and "grace to help in time of need." And there are four times of need.— Tempting time. Troublous time. Duty time. Dying time.

It is the will of God that those who come to the throne of grace should come "boldly:" not ignorantly, irreverently, or unpreparedly. There must be habitual preparation—a principle of grace in the heart. And there must be actual preparation, both solemn and sudden: "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." How needful to be always in a good frame. Remember that God is a Spirit, and is to be worshipped in the spirit. He that is best must have the best.

To come "boldly" is to come in full assurance of faith, with joy and cheerfulness, laying aside slavish fear and groundless doubtings, whatsoever the duty is that we go about. The more faith the more boldness: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." We must "believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Nor are we to be drawn to duty. We are to "serve the Lord with gladness:" to "call the sabbath a delight." All slavish fear is to be laid aside. But filial fear there must be: such as that of children to their father. And there should be no groundless doubtings: "O ye of little faith," *wherefore* do ye doubt? None ever get any thing by doubting.

There are six reasons for this boldness.

1. The invitation. We are *bidden* to "come boldly." The God of

heaven calls us—calls us to repentance—calls us to believe the gospel; to forsake our sins; to love our Bibles. Then come to the throne of grace; bring your Bible. Say, Here is my ticket. Therefore I may be bold.

2. The Intercessor. Jesus Christ is our Great High Priest. *Therefore* come boldly, seeing we have such a High Priest: "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

3. The relation. Children may come boldly to their father. Friends come boldly to each other. "Doubtless thou art our Father."

4. For reputation sake. It would not be for the honour of God, if those who come to his throne were always to come trembling. Either he gives the things we ask, or something better. His denials are from love, and in tenderness.

5. Our errand. Mercy. Grace to help in time of need. Therefore, come "boldly." We say, Need makes bold: as it did the man who came to his friend's house for bread at midnight. And because of his importunity he rose and gave him. It is not for superfluities, but necessities, that we come.

6. Example sake. We should come boldly, to encourage others to come. We, otherwise, bring an ill report upon our Master and his service.

All this intimates that we may come to the "Throne of grace" as often as we will. Petitioners to earthly princes cannot do so. They have their set days and times. To come at any other time is to no purpose. But it is not so in coming to the King of kings. "We may come any day in the week, any hour in the day. He is always ready. In the morning come; in the evening; at noon; at midnight come. You are welcome. His ear is always open to the supplications of his servants. There are times that may be unseasonable for us to pray—as when it is very late, when children and servants are more fit to sleep than to pray. Take heed of this. But no time is unseasonable to

him.

And, we may stay as long as we will. Our time is not limited. Our Lord Jesus continued "all night in prayer to God." Nor is he ever weary of hearing prayer.

We may say, too, what we will. Make your requests known in every thing. We never find any rebuke to asking too much; on the contrary — "Hitherto ye have asked nothing;" that is, but a little: not so much as ye might, and should have asked. How did Abraham "wrestle" with God. And God was pleased with the holy importunity of his servant. One said, he would desire no more to make him rich than a quarter of an hour's freedom every day to be with the king. What a privilege is it to have such freedom with the King of kings! Another said, he had most comfort in those relations he prayed most for.

Come "boldly" as to the way of expressing yourselves in prayer. If you cannot *speak* a word—sigh, groan, weep, look. The dumb beggar hath the most pity. If there be sincerity and uprightness, your very desires shall be accepted; even "groans that cannot be uttered." I think the meaning is, those desires that are *inward*; so small as to be scarcely discernible. "No book, nor prayer in any book, can reach your circumstances at all times.

Get a sense of the things you want—mercy and grace.

Look upon God as a father. The lisping of a child is more acceptable to the parent than rhetorical flourishes from a book.

Be acquainted with the Scriptures. With Scripture prayers. You cannot speak to God better than in his own words. With Scripture promises: "I will take away the heart of stone." I will be a "sun and shield." Plead them.

Use that little strength you have. Begin in the closet. Then pray in your families. If God give "a willing mind," though weak abilities, he will accept: according to what we have, not according to

what we have not.

And, we have liberty not only to pray, but to *plead*: "I will not let thee go." Jacob was bold, but not more bold than welcome. How did Moses wrestle for the people of Israel, Exod. xxxii. Read Ezra ix., Neh. ix., Dan. ix. See how those holy men pleaded and wrestled with God. You have another instance in the woman of Canaan, Matt. xv.

Do you ask, What shall we do to get and keep this holy boldness in prayer? Make sure your covenant interest in God, as your God and Father in Jesus Christ. Close with him cordially. Renounce all others. Cleave to him alone. Take heed of sin. A guilty child cannot come boldly to his father as he used to do. "Open thou my lips." Lord, give me my pardon, and then I shall be able to pray again. Ezra said, "I am ashamed, and blush." If you are guilty, do not, therefore, stay from the throne of grace. But the rather come "boldly." We have a Mediator. Is it weakness that discourages your boldness? I am so cold and dull in my duties that I cannot come boldly. God hath sent his Spirit to help our infirmities, Rom. viii. 26.

But the consideration of what a great High Priest Christ is should be a *prevailing* argument with us, not only to come, but to come "boldly," upon all occasions, to the throne of grace; see Heb. iv. 14, 15. *Therefore* we should do it.

There is great encouragement in considering who it is we come *to*. It is to a Father, merciful and gracious; true and faithful; willing and able to help. Oh, think of this in coming. "Good and upright is the Lord; *therefore* will he teach sinners in the way." What an encouraging "therefore!"

But the consideration in whose name we come, and by whose mediation it is, adds greatly to the encouragement. It is in the name of *Christ*, the "great High Priest of our profession, who is passed into the heavens." He is our only High Priest. He is ordained to be such. He is one of ourselves: "taken from among men." He is

merciful, one that "can have compassion," Heb. ii. 17, 18; iv. 15; v. 2. He is a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, Psa. ex. 4; Heb. v. 6; vi. 20. See the story of Melchisedec, Gen. xiv. 18, 19. Ho was a type of Christ. Our great High Priest laid down his life once for all, a sacrifice to make atonement, Heb. ix. 25, 26. And ho lives again, and that for ever, to make intercession. Let us, therefore, "come boldly," triumphing with holy Paul. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

This is our encouragement upon a fourfold account, according as our doubts and fears are apt to rise.

1. From the sense of our unworthiness as creatures. How shall "dust and ashes" appear before the Lord of glory? But then remember what a Friend we have to introduce us; to make our way; and intercede for us, Eph. iii. 12.

2. From a sense of the guilt we bring with us, old and new. How dare we appear before God? The very sight of us may provoke the eye of his glory. But consider what a High Priest we have; one who has made atonement. God the Father hath declared himself well pleased in him. He hath *bidden* us come and plead his merit and righteousness. And he is always ready in court; never out of the way: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." If ho were only an advocate and not a propitiation, it would not do.

3. From a sense of the great worth of the things we come for. The less value the thing is that we ask, the more bold we are in asking, whether a pin or a pebble. But if it be any thing that is precious—a pound, or talent, or pearl—we have no hope of speeding unless there is one to speak for us. Now the things we have need of every day are pardon, peace, and heaven. These are *great* things. Excellent things. Unlikely to be obtained. But having such a

High Priest, there is a likelihood. Nay, there is ground for full assurance, John xvi. 23, 24; 1 John v. 14.

4. From a sense of our great weakness and manifold infirmities. Petitions to kings and great men must be written fair. But, alas! all our petitions are, at the best, blurred, blotted, polluted, and denied, through vain thoughts, unbelief, deadness, dullness, and drowsiness. Therefore, what hope? None; but for our High Priest, who presents all in his own name. This is like writing it fair. He perfumes it with the incense of his own intercession. He takes all in good part if there be sincerity. Is not this encouraging? see Rev. viii. 3, 4.

What a loss is it to us not to be more acquainted with the priestly office of Jesus Christ. His oblation once for all: his continual intercession. We have often come in vain to the throne of grace, by coming without our Advocate; by coming in our own name; by trusting to the merit of our own performances. Let us repent, and let us always remember to take our High Priest with us. Let us appear in his merit and righteousness; let us ask in his name. "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name."

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Who may come to the ordinance of the Lord's supper? The *invited*. These come to a feast. The *children*, to eat of the children's bread. *Friends*: "Eat, O friends." Those who have on the "wedding garment;" that is, a suitable frame of heart to the feast: a garment made up of repentance, faith, and sincerity. Those who "hunger and thirst" are welcome to this feast. I must see my need of a Saviour. I must believe the report of the gospel concerning Christ. I must see God offering him to me to be my Saviour. I must receive him accordingly. "He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the

rich he hath sent empty away."

BEING WITH JESUS.

"They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus."

There is a sort of people in the world concerning whom it may be *known* that they have been with Jesus.

Who are they? All that have closed with him by a true and lively faith. Such as have heard and embraced the call of the gospel. All true believers, and none but they. The great end of ministers' preaching is to bring people to him; to acquaintance and union with him; to see their lost and undone condition without him. Here is a Christ for each of *you*. A Saviour for that lost soul of thine; a righteousness wherein thou mayest stand before God: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." You have been taught the three offices of Christ—Prophet, Priest, and King. Have you been with him in all these offices? As your Prophet, to teach you? As your Priest, to satisfy God's justice for your sins? As your King, to rule and govern you? In Matt. xi. 28—30, you have them altogether.

Such as have had, and have communion with him in his holy ordinances, have been with Jesus. It is not enough to be with ordinances, unless you be with Jesus in them. "What is your end in coming to ordinances? see 1 John i. 3. Is it to see and be seen? Is it to see such or such a friend? Or to meet with Jesus, your best friend? Search into your own hearts. Learn to be with Jesus in praying. You are so when you are sincere, and hearty. Asking "in his name." Doing what you do in the strength of his Spirit and grace. Expecting acceptance only through his merit and mediation. Are you with Jesus in hearing sermons? Do you look beyond the minister, the

instrument, to Jesus who speaks by him? At the Lord's supper we are with Jesus, when we see him by faith evidently set forth and crucified before us. Many come to this ordinance who are not with Jesus there; and to them it is a lost sacrament.

Walking with Jesus and before him in the course of our conversation, shows we have been with him. We must be with him all the day; frequently breathing towards him, desiring to approve ourselves to him. We are to press after this every day, in every thing: "To me to *live* is Christ." "The life that I live, I live by the faith of the Son of God;" that is, I venture into no place or company where I cannot comfortably hope that Jesus will go with me. If I go into my calling, into my shop, into my study, I take Jesus with me; if to visit a friend, I intreat his presence. This is to be with Jesus.

How may we know whether we have been with him? The "tree is known by its fruit." Make it appear by your "walk." When Moses, who had been forty days in the mount with God, "came down," his "face shone." If you have been with Jesus your face will shine: your "light will shine before men." What! Christians, and *not* be with Jesus. But how must it appear?

1. Those who have been with Jesus are taught of him. The eyes of their understandings are opened: "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true." The enemies of Peter and John knew they had been with Jesus by the understanding answer that Peter gave them; see Acts iv. Nicodemus, a doctor in Israel, understood nothing of the "new birth," because he had not been taught by Jesus. Not that all who have been with Jesus understand alike; or can express themselves alike, of what they do understand. But have you such a sight of the evil of sin, and beauty of Christ, as you never had before? Blessed be God.

2. All that have been with Jesus have their hearts made tender.

How may we know the wax has been at the fire, but by the softness of it? A heart that has been with Jesus is softened: it will easily receive impressions. Those who have been with Jesus are tender in their walking: they walk "surely," in opposition to walking at all adventures. They often ask— May I do this or that? Will God be pleased with it?

3. All such are taught to pray. They have not all the "gift" of prayer; but they all have the "grace" of prayer. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "For this shall every one that is godly pray." Do you content yourself with the prayer you learned when a child? That is as insufficient for you now, as the clothes you then wore are. Every day brings new wants.

4. All that have been with 'Jesus have the law of love written on their hearts. Where' there are envyings and quarrellings, it is a sign the parties have not been with Jesus, John was the beloved disciple. See his first epistle, how love breathes through every line. He leaned on Christ's bosom. This he got by being with Jesus.

5. They that have been with him may be known by their contempt of the world, and the things of it: "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Looking on the sun dazzles the eyes. So does looking on the Sun of righteousness. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." Not that we are immediately dead to all earthly things, for we still carry with us bodies of flesh.

6. They that have once been with Jesus long to be with him again. They are willing to die. When in a good frame they desire death; that they may be with him to all eternity.

Sow such are the persons whom we should take knowledge of, and be acquainted with. Let them be the men of our choice and delight.

SELF-RESIGNATION.

Self-resignation is our patient bearing of whatever God is pleased to do with us, with silence and submission. For that reason especially, because it is his will and pleasure that it should be so: "And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done."

There is patience in it. And "we have need of patience"—all of us, though some more than others. Patience is a bearing grace. It is the back, the shoulders of the new man.

There is quietness in it. Inward and outward. Our judgments must stoop. We must be satisfied in our minds and consciences, that what *is*, is by the will of God. Not a chance, but a providence. The hand of *God* was in it. It is the fulfilling of the counsel of his will. Therefore good; all good. Nothing can come from him who is good, absolutely and truly good, but what *is* really and truly good. To this our wills must bow and bend. It is against the grain, but it must be, Luke ix. 23.

There is silence in it.—*Within*. The heart, the soul, the inward man silent. Silent from all secret murmurings, repinings, complainings, objections, contradictions, swellings, tumults. There may be much of such unquietness, and yet nothing appear; like fire pent up: "The foolishness of man perverteth his way; and his heart fretteth against the Lord." God sees this "foolishness," and we should carefully watch against it.—*Without*. The tongue quiet, from unfitting speeches either of God or instruments. We say losers may have leave to speak, but then they must take heed what they say: "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." "I will

keep my mouth with a bridle."

Now this patience, submission, silence, has respect to the will of God. Other things may be thought of in a second place; but this is the main: "Because *thou* didst it." "It is the Lord." "The will of the Lord." We should say, What pleases God pleases me. As in active obedience we do duty, because it is his will to command; so in passive obedience we bear, because it is his will to inflict.

THOUGHTFULNESS.

It is the treble command of our Lord Jesus Christ to all his disciples and followers, that they should learn to "take no thought;" see Matt. vi. 25, 31, 34. So often repeated because he knew our proneness to the sin. It intimates, too, that it would be of great advantage to us to live thus, and *not* take thought. And further, that it would be marvellously well-pleasing to God.

We must take no thought for our life: no inward, soul thought; either for the comforts of life, or for the continuance of life: "Take no thought for the morrow." But we may and must take a thought of prudent diligence, a thought of honest care. We cannot manage our worldly affairs without it: "Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds." In the 32nd of Isaiah there is a woe pronounced upon the "careless" daughters. Some shelter themselves in idleness and carelessness under the shadow of the Scripture now before us, but Christ never intended that. There is a thought which is undeniable duty.

The kinds of thought forbidden are such as these.

Covetous, greedy thoughts about temporal things: "Let your conversation be without covetousness." "Labor not to be rich." Those who most covet to be rich seldom are so. But honest diligence without covetousness usually brings riches. Be content with that food and clothing which God hath allotted you. Take what God sees

good to give you, and do not take thought, or covetously desire better: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

Constant, abiding thoughts. So as to fill us in downlying and uprising. We should think of the world, as carnal men do of their souls and the things of God. *They* are flashy thoughts; they do not abide.

Perplexing, disquieting thoughts. Such as divide the mind; drawing it hither and thither as if with wild horses. Take no thought in your soul. Care is duty. Carefulness is sin, 1 Cor. vii. 32. Martha, Martha, thou art "cumbered." Thy mind is distracted; see Luke xii. "Be not of doubtful mind." Be not like meteors, or false fires, driven this way and that way by the wind. This solicitous care impairs the health of the body. It makes a man unfit for society.

Proggng, proling, projecting thoughts for the morrow are forbidden: "Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow." Away with such thoughts. How many of these foolish contrivances are in our minds.

Unnecessary thoughts. Christ tells us "one thing is needful." Take no thought, that is, no impertinent thought.

Unbelieving thoughts, either for our life or the morrow. We are guilty of many of these. "David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." And it was an ill thought. Watch, and pray against such thoughts.

Unseasonable thoughts. You must not "think your own thoughts" on the sabbath day. It is unseasonable. I believe our worldly business on week-days fares the worse, oftentimes, for the thoughts we have about it on the sabbath. Herein Martha missed it. Her care was unseasonable. She should have been as Mary was—sitting at Christ's

feet, hearing his word.

Now it is the will of Christ that we take no thought." This *should* be enough: "Be careful for nothing." He urges seven arguments against anxious, solicitous thought.

1. "The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment." You have life. You have it from God; and that without any thought. Now the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment, and God hath taken care for these—the greater—without thee. Can he not for the lesser, without thee?

2. If God take care to provide for the creatures below us, much more will he for us. Consider the fowls of the air; the lilies of the field: "*They* toil not." We are elsewhere sent to the ant to learn; to the ox; and the ass. Is it not come to a sad pass when man, the top of the visible creation, must be sent to school to the brutes?" Behold the fowls of the air." They live a merry life; singing all day, and sometimes in the night too. Then as to raiment, "consider the lilies." Have you not seen their beautiful clothes? They did not spin them. Nor are they capable of taking any thought.

3. "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?" Here our Lord urges the vanity and fruitlessness of our care. Suppose a little man should fret and perplex himself, and take thought every day, desiring to be tall. Would that thoughtfulness add to his stature? No more will thy thoughts add one penny to thy estate.

4. "After these things do the Gentiles seek." The Jews were the "holy nation;" the "peculiar people." And shall you, the "chosen generation," do as the Gentiles, who know not God? Let me urge it to you, professing people. Will *you* do as the heathen do? When tempted to carking care, think, What am I? A child, or a dog? Though Israel play the harlot, let not Judah offend; see Hos. iv. 15.

5. "Our heavenly Father knows that ye have need of all these

things;" namely, food and raiment. Most of our thoughts and cares run into these. Our heavenly Father's eye is upon you. He sees you when you have but a little corn in the barn, but little bread in the cupboard. He sees. And he is thy *Father*. Make thy request known to him by prayer. Have you been with God, and told him how low things are with you? He puts words into our mouths: "Give us this day our daily bread." "I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that *trusteth* in him."

6. Take no thought about these things, because you have other, better things to take thought about: "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness:" first every day, first in your lives; and other things "shall be added." When Solomon asked a wise and understanding heart, God gave it, *and riches, and honour, and long life, besides.*

7. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Each day hath a sufficient burden of care.

Consider the foregoing particulars. There are seven of them, according to the days of the week. What if you take one for every day to meditate upon. It is want of consideration that makes us inordinately thoughtful.

ESTABLISHING GRACES.

It is a very desirable thing, when people are in a good mind, and in a good way, that they should be *established* in it: "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare

their heart unto thee."

Now the following are establishing graces.

Sincerity. This is the grace of graces. There is no grace to be called grace without it. Nothing will last that is not sincere. A painted face will not last. There are many painted Christians. There is no apostate who was not first a hypocrite. If there had been soundness he would not have been an apostate. That which is sincere *will* last. They went out from us, but "they were not of us!" "Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees."

Humility. When the high cedars tumble down, the shrubs are safe. Oh, be humble and low in your own eyes. Only by pride comes apostasy. Have you gifts, parts, usefulness? You have received them. Do not boast.

Faith. There is no establishment without this: "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." It is the "evil heart of unbelief" that causes departing from God: "Be *strong* in faith, giving glory to God." The anchor is faith. It establishes, as the hand of the soul. By it we take hold of Christ, and keep our hold of him. And, as the eye of the soul, to discern things invisible. There are grievous threatenings against apostates. Do you believe them? If you do, you will act accordingly.

Resolution. _ "Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Be strong in the grace of Christ, not in your own strength.

ESTABLISHING DUTIES.

1. Before you enter upon a Christian profession, sit down seriously and "count the cost." The want of this makes many look back. Many are carried on by the persuasion of friends, and do not think of the temptations and persecutions they may meet with.

2. Keep close to the communion of God's people. Omissions commonly make way for commissions, Heb. x. 23—25. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them"—vain men, wicked men. Oh, say they, there is a prey for *us*.

3. "Watch in all things" and "walk circumspectly," as those that have laid their hands to the Lord's "plough." Remember, your "adversary the devil" seeks to "devour" you. Take heed of the beginnings of apostasy. It usually begins in the closet. Then it proceeds to the family. Duty is first slightly performed; then totally omitted. Then vain company. And then, without a miracle of mercy, the man is gone.

4. Prayer. After all the several pieces of the Christian armour comes this—"praying always"—to buckle on the rest. That will engage God on our side.

RULES FOR PRAYER.

Ask in faith; with feeling and fervency; see Mark xi. 23. If the things we ask be absolutely promised, our faith must be absolute. If conditional, our faith must be so. Our fervency may exceed in temporal things. We must not say, "Give me children, or else I die;" but we may say, "Give me Christ, or else I die." Here we *may* be importunate: "I will not let thee go."

Ask with a forgiving spirit; "without wrath and doubting." He that prays in malice gets nothing of God. Forgive, as you are and hope to be forgiven; see Mark xi. 25.

Ask in sincerity and truth: "The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him in *truth*." "Draw near with a true heart." Be sincere in your asking. Look at your end in all you do; particularly in your asking.

Ask with submission and self-resignation. Our Lord Jesus has left us a pattern of this: "Not as I will." So Eli. So David. "Behold, here I am." Our heavenly Father knows what is good for us.

Ask with patience and with perseverance. Though the answer do not come quickly, be willing to wait. Pray always, and "not faint." Make your "request known." Then go to your watch-tower, and wait for an answer; see Hab. ii. 1.

Ask with praise and thanksgiving, with joy and praise. Take notice of your mercies. It is a mannerly way of begging.

Ask, putting all into the hands of Christ our Mediator. For his sake alone expect the hearing of your prayers.

ENCOURAGEMENTS TO PRAYER.

The precepts are, " Ask," " Seek," " Call upon me." When God bids us seek him, he will not turn his back upon us. "Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee."

The promise is, "It shall be given you." Nothing can be more plain or positive. The promise is express. What do we make of God? "Is he not *faithful* that has promised?" You will rely upon the word of an honest man; how much more should you upon the word of God. "He that believeth not hath made him a liar." He that believeth " sets to his seal that God is true."

Notice the performances. He hath been a performing God, even from the beginning. He has never been worse than his word. The Bible records many instances of remarkable answers to prayer. See Gen. xxiv., Abraham's servant. Gen. xxxii., Jacob, in great distress, prayed earnestly, and God heard. Exod. xxxii., Moses. 1 Sam. i.,

Hannah. And see Psa. xxxii. 5, 6. It is a thousand pities that praying people do not keep an account of the answers to their prayers.

Observe God's name and nature. He is "merciful and gracious." See how he proclaimed his name, Exod. xxxiii. He is "easy to be intreated." "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in anywise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry. "It shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me I will hear; for I am gracious."

Notice his near and dear relation to us. A Father. A Husband.

Also, the intercession of his Spirit within us. He is said to be a crying Spirit: "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, *crying*, Abba, Father." If the king employ his own secretary to write a man's petition, it is a sign he means to grant it. We have the help of the Spirit to indite our petitions.

Consider the intercession of his Son in heaven for us. He is no stranger; but "bone of our bone."

GOD THE BEST OF FATHERS.

He is almighty. This we are taught in the creed: "I believe in God the Father Almighty." I "will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Fathers of our flesh are poor and weak. They would do many things for their children which they cannot do. But "our Father" is "almighty."

He is all-wise. Here earthly fathers often miss it. But G-od "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." When it is good for his children to prosper, it shall be so. When he chastens us, it is "for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

He is all-seeing, all-knowing, always present. Parents, oftentimes, know not what their children at a distance endure. Jacob knew not the misery of his poor Joseph in the pit, or in the dungeon.

But our heavenly Father sees us, and knows all our wants. Whatever our condition be, our Father is present. He knows what grace, what strength, what support we need.

He is rich. All the riches of heaven and earth are his. It is not so with us. The child wants many a thing which the father hath not for him. But God is "*able* to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think."

He is ready. Willing to give. Open-handed. Tender-hearted: "*Before* they call, I will answer," is his language; "and while they are yet *speaking*, I will hear." He is always at hand. There is a ready passage from earth to heaven; no gulf.

He is a loving, ever-loving Father: "God is *love*." David was an extraordinary loving father, especially towards his son Absalom, though rebellious and in arms against him. But the love of our heavenly Father is in all respects superlative and singular. When he corrects, it is in measure and mercy. Nay, he is pleased to take to himself the tenderness of mothers: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." "As one whom his *mother* comforteth, so will I comfort you."

He is a living, ever-living, a lasting, everlasting Father. Earthly fathers are not so. They often die, and are taken away when their children have most need of them. But God is an everlasting Father: "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."

If we have such a father, let us cast our care upon him. What comfortable lives we might lead if we could learn this lesson—" Be careful for nothing."

"Be followers of God, as dear children."

THE HOLT SPIRIT.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Matt. vii. 11.

We are not here told *what*. The expression is unlimited. He knows best what is good for us. A child cries for a knife; for raw fruit. The wise parent denies, because not good for it. "They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

But let us compare this Scripture with a parallel place in Luke xi. 11—13: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the *Holy Spirit* to them that ask him?" The Holy Spirit is the substance of all "good things"—their quintessence: "Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." He gives the Holy Spirit to thee in answer to prayer. Thy youth is renewed. Thou art made a "new creature:" "Old things are passed away." If you have the Spirit, you *have* all good things. And this Spirit is given to all God's children, to work all their works in them and for them; and to make them meet for the heavenly state.

By the Spirit we are enlightened; turned from the darkness of a sinful condition to the light of saving knowledge.

It is the Spirit that quickens: that makes us alive, and lively in the ways of God.

The Spirit is the Sanctifier. If we have any grace, it is of his working. Faith is wrought by the Spirit of faith.

The Spirit teaches us to pray, and "helps our infirmities" in that duty.

He is our Guide: "Led by the Spirit 01 God."

Through the Spirit we "mortify the deeds of the body."

He is our " Comforter." He fills us " with joy and peace in believing."

And this Holy Spirit we are to ask of God, after the manner of children asking "good things" from their father. And we have his promise: "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring." Christ has prayed for it; see John xvii. Our need is pressing. We are undone without it. He is our Father, therefore we may ask; see Matt, vii. 9—11. Lord, thou art my Father. I have children. "When they ask bread, I do not give them atones. We know how to give good things to our children; much more does our Father who is in heaven.

SERVING GOD.

There are two ways of serving God. With the service of worship—inward and outward: daily, weekly. And, with the worship of the soul. By which we love, fear, serve, and hope in him.

We should serve by outward worship; praying, reading, and hearing as we have opportunity: "Come before his presence."

There are daily duties. Alone. With our families. See to it that those be not neglected: "As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord." Let this be your resolution. Though thou canst do it but poorly, do as well as thou canst. Do not say, I cannot. If a law were made, that every one that did not pray with his family should be hanged at his door, I dare say every one would pray with his family. And will you fear death more than damnation?

There are weekly duties. Do you "call the sabbath a delight?" Those who profane it "rob God." God expects them to be in the assembly. Let not thy place be empty.

There are monthly duties.* Blessed be God, we have such opportunities; when our Master calls us—not to wait at his table, but to sit at it with him; to make a spiritual meal. Hath he invited and

called thee, and dost thou turn thy back upon him? See to it; not only that you do that which is good, but that you do it *well*. Do it not as to yourselves, but to *God*. *That* makes it acceptable. If it be not done with an eye to *him*, he hath no regard to it. A man may serve the devil *and* the world, upon his knees.

*The Lord's supper was administered monthly by the author. —ed.

CHRIST'S PEACE.

The Lord Jesus Christ hath left and given his own "peace," as a legacy to all his disciples and followers to the world's end: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

There is outward peace: the same with worldly prosperity. No "adversary nor evil occurrent." Health. Plenty. The "candle" of God shining upon our "tabernacle; see Psa. cxliv. 12, etc. Job, xxix., describes this worldly peace. But is *this* the "peace" which Christ bequeathed to his? No, it is not. "In the world," said he, "ye shall have tribulation." And our experience seals the truth of it: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted." This is the condition of the church. And is it not so as to particular persons?" Many are the afflictions of the righteous." It is "through much tribulation" we must "enter the kingdom." Not that either the church, or particular members are always in this troublous state. The "spirit would then fail before him." God is pleased sometimes to send gleams of sunshine: "Then had the churches rest," and were "edified and multiplied." God forbid that worldly peace should be our portion.

But, there is inward peace—Peace of conscience. Satisfaction of mind and soul, arising from a sense of the pardon of our sins, and our acceptance with God. And *this* causes quietness and rest: "Come

unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you *rest*." Other rest and peace is not to be compared with this. Inward peace is when all goes well with the *soul*. No cloud of darkness; no storm or tempest within. This is heart's ease, to have the mind comforted on good ground. It is a house built on a rock. A storm arises. Winds blow and beat. But the house is firm. The man is unshaken; his heart is "fixed;" he has inward peace. This is like a ship at anchor in a storm. It is heaven upon earth: "He shall enter into peace." To go to heaven is to do so. The peace that Christ left to his, is the beginning of peace eternal.

Whence is it that so many of Christ's own people want the benefit of this legacy? It is owing to themselves. They do not do what they should and ought to do, for obtaining it. There are six things that are the reasons of the want of it.

1. One is want of knowledge. Ignorance causes fear. You must beg the light of *knowledge*, in order to peace. You must know God in Christ. You must be acquainted with the covenant of grace. This must be all your "salvation." You must see that you are under grace, not under the law: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him: and he will show them his covenant." Beg of God to show you his covenant. To discover to you upon what terms you are by this covenant.

2. Want of grace hinders. Where there is no grace, there can be no peace. Where grace is weak, peace will be weak. Where grace is strong, peace is strong: "Grace and peace be multiplied." The Spirit is a Comforter to none to whom he hath not first been a Sanctifier: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us *everlasting consolation* and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts." Give all diligence, therefore, to get to be "new creatures."

3. It is with us, as to peace, as it is in reference to godly sorrow: "Blessed are they that *mourn*; for *they* shall be comforted." He

wounds by contrition and sorrow, and then binds up those wounds: "Come unto me, all ye that labor." "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." That sorrow must be with an eye to Christ. They "shall be in bitterness *for him*." Where such godly sorrow is, there shall Christ's peace be in due time.

4. Peace is according as faith is: "Joy and peace in believing." As far as the evil heart of unbelief prevails, so far peace is wanting: "If ye will not believe, ye shall not be established." If you will believe, you shall. Believe that which

God hath promised; that if you penitently confess, he is "faithful and just" to forgive.

5. It is with us in our peace, as it is in our praying: "I create the fruit of the lips," namely praying lips. "Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord." It is said of Hannah, that, after she had prayed, "her countenance was no more sad." Clouds of fear and sorrow vanished. If a legacy be left me and I want it, but it is withheld, I must sue for it. Lord, give me the legacy Christ has left me. "Make me to hear the voice of joy and gladness." Speak joy. And also make me to "hear" it. It is said of Rachel, that her soul "refused to be comforted." Beg of God to silence unbelief.

6. Our peace is as it is with our obedience. This is not to be the matter of our peace, but the evidence of it. "Peace I leave with you" —an obedient people. Guilt will wither our peace. It will be like a worm at the root of the gourd. "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them." "Is it peace?" see 2 Kings ix. 18,19,22. What peace, so long as thou goest on in sinful ways? What peace, so long as you are proud? passionate? etc. God will speak peace to the saints: but "let them not turn again to folly." He reserves the sweetmeat of peace for obedient children. "Walk circumspectly," therefore, that you may keep the peace in your own souls.

GRATITUDE.

It greatly concerns us to render according to the benefits done unto us. If we do not, bad will come of it: "Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him ;—therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem."

Now, we must render ourselves to God. All we are—all we have—all we can. Without this, all else we render is nothing: "First gave their own selves to the Lord." Is this done? Have you done this in a sense of the benefits done unto you? Do it afresh every day: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Take him to be yours. Resign yourselves this day to him. Say — Thine I am; thine I choose to be.

We must retain a thankful remembrance of our benefits. Not write our mercies in the sand, but in marble: "Forget not," Psa. ciii. 2. Israel soon forgot. It was presently over with them. And it was their fault. I should much desire a catalogue of my sins and of my mercies. The former, to repent of them every day; the latter, to give thanks every day. We read of names of remembrance. So divers of Jacob's children. Eliezer—The Lord is my helper: so Moses called his son. Samuel—asked of God. We read of stones of remembrance. One called Ebenezer—" Hitherto the Lord hath helped us." We have "songs of remembrance," Exod. xv.; 1 Sam. ii. Days of remembrance. "Days of Purim," Esth. ix. 31. Now what shall tee render? Shall we forget all God's benefits?

Be ready to relate and speak of them, both to God and each other. Do not smother, but declare them. We are more ready to speak of our ailments, and desire prayer. But *this* is duty: "Unto thee, O God, do we give *thanks*; unto thee do we give *thanks*." "Bless the Lord, O my soul." When Hannah prayed, she did but whisper: "She spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard." But she lifted up her voice in thanksgiving.

We must love the Lord and Giver of our mercies: "I love the Lord." Love is the loadstone of love: "God hath loved us." "I *will* love the Lord." Let others love whom they will, "I will love the Lord." He loves to hear his people tell him that they love him: "O thou whom my soul loveth."

When we make use of the benefits done unto us as a bridle to keep us from sin, we "render" aright. Those whom we love we are careful to please, and fearful to offend: "Thou art made whole." That is the benefit. Then, "sin no more." "How *can* I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

We must use them as a spell to put us forward in all holy obedience. Love is boundless in its desires of pleasing the person loved: "That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the Lord." Where God sows in mercy, he expects to reap in duty.

When they are an obligation upon us to trust in God in other straits: "Wait on the Lord." If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, "the waters had overwhelmed us." "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." "This God is our God for ever and ever." "Cast thy burden upon the Lord." "Trust also in him."

There are some particular "benefits" for which there ought to be particular renderings. Deceit lies in generals.

1. There is the benefit of redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ. Here is the choicest benefit: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him Should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Herein God commended his love, "that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Without this all others would be no benefits. Now what doth this call for from us?

Inward adorings. Oh, admire the wisdom that contrived; the power that effected it; the love that set these a work. Angels wonder

at it. But the greatest part of the children of men see nothing in it, and make nothing of it.

Hearty thanksgiving. Run up all the rest of your mercies to *this*, as the foundation of all the rest. Do it especially on sabbath days. It is the work of the saints in heaven, and will be to eternity, to praise God the Redeemer.

Be sieving acceptance. This is thanks in deed, and in truth. Cordially accept him.

Answerable walking. Live like one of the redeemed. "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

2. There are spiritual blessings and benefits. Justification. Adoption. Sanctification. And all the benefits which flow from these. How *these* call for self-abasement, and God-advancement: "Is this the manner of man, O Lord God?" I was "a blasphemer, and a persecutor ;—but I obtained mercy." "Unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible,—be honour and glory." "How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?"

3. Present liberty, [the year 1695.] This is surely a choice benefit which we should be thankful for. Time was when we were lamenting after the Lord. And it pleased God to give us what we desired in a way we did not expect. Give God the glory, and improve it. "Grow in grace." "Make your calling and election sure." While you have the light, be busy at work. "Go to the ant;—consider her ways, and be wise." This is our summer; our market day: "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." Now be busy.

4. Family benefits. Suitable yokefellows. Children; perhaps many. They are "an heritage of the Lord." Perhaps a plentiful estate.

Now this calls you to say, with Joshua, "As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord." Be careful of the worship of God in your families. "Walk in the fear of the Lord in your particular

relations.

Are you blessed with children? Nurse them for God. Not for the devil; not for the world.

As for your estate: "Honour the Lord with your substance." Be charitable to the poor. This rent God expects from each, according to his holding. Is spending upon our lusts that which should relieve the poor, rendering according to the "benefit P"

5. Recovery from sickness. This was Hezekiah's case. Hath it not been, as to ourselves, that "as the Lord liveth" there was "but a step between us and death;" either ourselves or ours? Your new life must be a new life indeed. Now I have been in the furnace, I must be more refined.

6. Answers to prayer. Sometimes God answered in the very thing we desired: "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore I will call upon him as long as I live." Pray more. Pray better. Love prayer the better while you live.

There is great evil in not rendering. It brings great guilt. It brings great wrath. Sometimes God takes away the benefits we are not thankful for. Sometimes he gives the good things, but withholds his blessing. Sometimes he meets those who do not render by some other stroke. He followed Israel in the wilderness with one judgment after another, and at last shut them out of Canaan.

Then do these three things.

1. Often take a view of your benefits. Take notice every day of the mercies of every day. Preventing mercies. Sin-preventing. Danger preventing. Especially think of extraordinary benefits. Past mercies. Mercies in childhood: in youth: in the single state: in the married state.

2. Often ask yourselves, "What *have* I rendered? Ahasuerus says, What has been done to Mordecai? May not your answer be as theirs,

in reference to God and his mercies, "There hath been nothing done." What *do* I render? What *am* I doing for God?" What *shall* I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?" Some read, What shall I render? His benefits are upon me: I feel a weight from them. This is a good sign of a thankful heart: "He *loadeth* me with his benefits."

3. Forasmuch as, when "we have done all, we are unprofitable servants;" and, if we render ever so much, it is no more than "our duty;" let us go to Christ every day for righteousness and strength. There is need of his righteousness every day. Therefore say, "None but Christ. None but Christ."

CHRIST'S DYING WORDS.

There are seven words which were the *dying* words of our Lord Jesus.

1. Prayer for his enemies: "Father, forgive them."

2. Provision for his mother: "Behold thy son!" "Behold thy mother!"

3. A comfortable word to the penitent thief: "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

4. Looking up to his Father, he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

5. "I thirst."

6. "It is finished."

7. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

CAUSES OF SOUL TROUBLE.

There are four sorts of sins which usually bring soul trouble to

those who are the children of God, and have had the light of his countenance.

1. Carnal security, and self-confidence: "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved." "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled." "Be not high-minded, but fear."

2. Letting slip opportunities. So the spouse: "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" She makes excuses—will not admit him. The next news is, "My Beloved had withdrawn himself; see Sol. Song v. 3—7.

3. Giving way to a worldly frame of heart: "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart."

4. Cowardice in God's service. God bid Jonah go to Nineveh to preach. He was afraid; would not go. The next news is that he was in the sea; in "the belly of hell." Some that have denied the truth through carnal fear, have had no rest in their souls till they recanted their recantation. When thou hast found out the Achan, stone it with stones. Throw the Jonah overboard.

SPIRITUAL THIRST.

There are some things that we are earnestly to desire and long for. "Covet earnestly the best (spiritual) gifts." These are worth thirsting for.

Thirst after the Divine favour: "Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us." Is this the one thing you would desire of God? "I entreat thy favour with my whole heart."

Thirst after the righteousness of Christ, Matt. v. 6. For justification. For sanctification. Never did any one truly thirst for Christ, and his righteousness, and go without it.

Thirst after communion with God in holy ordinances: "My soul

thirsteth for God :—when shall I come and appear before God?" Are ordinances, sabbaths, wearisome to you? Do you snuff at them? That is a bad sign.

Thirst for the conversion and salvation of your near and dear relations: "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." "How greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ."

Thirst for the setting up of the kingdom of Jesus Christ in the world. The hallowing of his name. The coming of his kingdom. The doing of his will. We should earnestly desire, and pray for the accomplishment of the promises made, as to the church of God.

Thirst for Christ's second coming. Say with the universal church in the closing words of the Bible—"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." "Make haste, my Beloved." It is so with every gracious soul. And the more ready we are for his coming, the more desirous we shall be of it.

PEACE OF CONSCIENCE.

"Would you have peace of conscience?"

1. You must break off all your sins by repentance. This is the "good old way." There is no peace in the way of sin, Isa. xlvi. 22. The foundation of "peace with God" is laid in true repentance; made up of contrition, confession, conversion. Sin must be bewailed. None reap in joy but those that sow in tears. None are comforted but those who mourn for sin. And he that truly repents makes confession, acknowledges his sin fully, freely, particularly; aggravating all against himself. While the psalmist "kept silence" his "bones waxed old;" but when he confessed, he was healed. If there be no opening of a wound there will be no healing. "He that confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall find mercy," and peace.

How long must I try whether I truly leave my sin, after I have

confessed and bewailed it, before I can have peace? The Scripture limits no time; but as soon as a man hath confessed and bewailed his sins, and is broken off from them in the sincere purpose of his soul, for anything I know he hath an immediate title to the peace of God through Jesus Christ. And if he continue, and it appears by the change of his way that his heart is changed, his peace will be strengthened and increased thereby.

2. "Would you have peace of conscience? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for justification, acceptance, reconciliation, and salvation: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Have you peace then, and not a believer? It is none of the "peace of God." What is believing? It is a poor sinner's seeing himself lost, who hearing the report of the gospel concerning Christ, and having an offer made of him, doth thereupon heartily close with him; taking Christ to be his, and giving up himself to *him*. Is this done? I hope it is. But is there no peace? *Why* so?

You say, If I did but know that I believe, I *should* have peace. But fear I do not *believe*. Now, in other things we can know what we close with, and what we reject. And if we are faithful to ourselves, why may we not know that we truly reject sin when we do so; and close with Christ when we do so?

3. Would you have peace? Betake yourselves to the throne of grace, and beg of God, in the name of Jesus Christ, that he who hath "given to believe," would give also the knowledge, sight, and comfort of believing. It is one thing to have an estate, and another thing to use it well. So it is one thing to believe, and another to know you believe. Beg this of God—that he would "speak peace," and make you to "hear joy and gladness." And then, when you have done thus, it is your duty to be assured in your souls that, through Christ Jesus, you are "accepted." It is your duty to be comforted. We are sinners against our own souls, if we are not. We have a promise: "Ask"—in prayer—"and it shall be given you. Seek"—in the use of

means—"and you shall find. Knock"—in respect of importunity—"and it shall be opened unto you." God's word speaks plain: "I will *hear* what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly."

What is the reason why so many praying, believing, repenting souls have not peace? It is because they do not "hear what God the Lord" says. We must look upon "peace with God" as a legacy left us by Jesus Christ when he made his will, John xiv. 27: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.—Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This was spoken to his disciples, who were penitent believers. If *you* are so, it is spoken to you. Say then—Lord, I come to thee for the legacy which thou hast left me. He dying made his will, and rose again to execute it. Go to him, to be put in possession. Go to the executor, and make your claim.

You ask, What must they do who *have* this "peace," to keep it? If you would maintain a constant, perpetual calm in your souls, take these rules.

1. Bottom your peace upon your justification, and not upon your sanctification. It may be described a sweet tranquility of mind, arising from a sense of our justification before God. "Justified by faith, we have peace"—"through our Lord Jesus Christ." Christ's* righteousness and merit imputed, and applied to us, is the ground of our peace, and not any righteousness of our own.

2. Labor to understand, and be sure to take heed of, that which will break the peace. We must "walk circumspectly." We must not turn aside to the ways of sin and folly. Peace will never follow us out of the way of duty. Avoid places and company that most endanger. Take heed of snares, and temptations; of presumptuous sins.

3. If at any time guilt be upon thy soul, make haste to repent. Delay not, for fear of the worst. If thou art "fallen," arise by repentance. There was a great difference between David's case and

Peter's. They were both good men, and sinned greatly. David was long in trouble, without peace; because he lay long under guilt unrepented of—near three-quarters of a year. But Peter no sooner sinned, than he went out, and wept bitterly. He was soon refreshed with a comfortable message from Christ: "Go tell my disciples," particularly Peter.

Renew your repentance solemnly at the end of every day. Take no guilt unrepented of to bed, lest it break your peace before morning.

More solemnly renew your repentance at the end of every week. Cast up your account. Set all straight between God and your souls in the blood of Christ. Oh how sweet will the sabbath then be to the soul.

Most solemnly do so when you are to come to the Lord's supper. Without this you cannot be prepared for it, nor improve it to your peace. In your work of preparation, you will find that one quarter of an hour spent in serious reading and reviewing the records of your own heart, and the course of your life, will be of greater advantage than reading a good book for many hours without doing so.

4. If we would keep the peace, we must understand on what terms we are with God. We must look on him as our Father, reconciled in and through Jesus Christ; and believe that, "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear" and "trust in him." The want of good thoughts of God occasions many a poor soul to be without the peace of God. If we can but call, and come to him as a Father, and trust in him as children do their father, which he would have us do, we may keep our "peace." And, we must keep in mind that he is a God in covenant with us through Jesus Christ; and the covenant between God and us is an "everlasting covenant." It is a marriage covenant. Every breach *in* it is not a breach *of* it. Every unkind carriage doth not break this bond. For we have "an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

5. We must take heed of misinterpreting God's providences in our afflictions. The rod is on our backs; trouble in our families; crosses; losses; burdens; disappointments. And we are apt to conclude God is angry. This breaks and interrupts our peace. But is there no such thing as afflicting for *trial*? Yes. Sometimes God does it to try the graces of his people; to burnish and make them bright. And, when he doth so, is there any reason why we should interpret it to the breaking of our peace?

But my afflictions are for my *sin*. It may be so. What must I do then? Pray to God to cast a perfect lot. To discover it to you. Then repent of it. Flee to Christ. Accept pardon in and through his merit and mediation. When you have done so, return to the "good old way." "Rejoice in God. Though he afflicts, he never does it but for our *profit*. Do not argue from affliction, therefore, the breach of the peace.

6. Do not misinterpret the word of God. Many put far from them that which belongs to them, and take that to themselves which is not spoken to them. It is a common thing with sinners to take the children's meat—the promises—to themselves; and with the saints to speak terror to themselves from what belongs not to them. It is a great work to hear *well*, so as to take our own portion from the word: "Take heed how you hear." And, if you would keep your "peace," take no more to yourselves than belongs to you.

But, suppose my peace broken, pray set me in a way to recover it again. I hear it may be lost, and so as never to be recovered. Many go halting to the grave. They never regain their peace. I would not do so. What must I do that it may be with me "as in the days past, when the light of the Lord shone on my tabernacle?"

Why, what would you do if you had lost a jewel, or thing of great value? Would you say, Let it go? No. You would inquire after it. You would take pains to find it. Your peace is a jewel worth looking after. Think it so. And look after it.

But, where doth a man think is the most likely place to find his lost jewel? Where he had it last. So do you. Remember where it was. Perhaps in your closet. There you lost it by cold, careless performances. You are not so frequent, nor so fervent, nor so solemn there as you were wont to be. If so, go to your closet again. Seek to recover it there. Repent of your deadness, formality, or neglect.

Another may say, The last time I had my peace was in the solemn assembly. I lost it by neglect of the house of God, or unsuitable attendance in it; either going to it or coming from it. Then seek it there. Attend more constantly; more carefully; more conscientiously.

Another says, I lost mine in my shop, or when about my secular employment: by overreaching; or by over-eager pursuit of my worldly affairs. Seek it *there*. Bethink yourselves what broke it. Repent of it. Leave it. Turn into the way again.

The Bible is a book of receipts for our souls. And there are receipts against all maladies. Among the rest, one for setting broken bones. "Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." Bethink yourselves, how it was with you while you had peace; and how since you wanted it. Remember from what tranquility and calmness of soul you are fallen, and then repent. Confess, bewail, turn from your sin. Go to God. Tell him you are sorry you have offended: that you are come to make peace. Beg of him that you may make, and that he would speak, *peace*. And, do your "first works." Do as you did when first converted. Repent. Believe. Renew your covenant with God. The same thing must be done to recover a broken peace as to get a peace we never had before. Tea, recover your "first love" also. Be lively and serious again. Set God always before you. Then, "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

TYPES OF CHRIST.

The types of Christ were of two sorts—real: personal.

The *real* types, or such things as were figures of him, and were fulfilled by him, were twelve:— Noah's ark. Abraham's ram. Jacob's ladder. The paschal lamb. The manna. The rock affording water. The brazen serpent. The red heifer. The two goats. The cities of refuge. The temple. The altar. These were all "shadows of Him that was to come." The body, or substance, was Christ, Col. ii. 17.

Having at large opened each of these,* I shall now give you a brief account of them altogether. The great end I aim at is to confirm your faith in him as the true Messiah promised: that Jesus *is* he that was to come, and that we are to look for no other.

* See Rey. P. Henry's Life, *vi supra*, pp. 157,191.

The clearer our belief is, and the stronger, as to this matter, the more influence it is like to have, both upon our comfort and our obedience.

And besides—God only knows how we may be any of us tried and tempted as to it. Most people are far from knowing it "*assuredly*," Acts ii. 36.

1. Noah's ark. That was the floating house wherein Noah and his family were saved when the world was drowned. It was a type of Christ: "For Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and

authorities and powers being made subject unto him."

There is certainly a deluge of Divine wrath coming upon this present world, as there came a flood of water upon the old one. And the posture men will be found in is like to be the same, Luke xvii. 26,27. But as there was then an ark of God's appointing, so there is now a Christ in whom a few, a remnant, shall be saved. And the fewer, the more need we have to "strive:" to strive to get *into* Christ. For to them "there is no condemnation." Men may hang upon him by external profession, as, no doubt, many did upon the sides of the ark; and yet perish. They may climb high, as was the case then—to the tops of trees, houses, hills. But, if out of the ark, they were drowned notwithstanding. So, unless we are in Christ, though mounted high in parts, gifts, attainments, and the good opinion and esteem of our neighbours, it is all as nothing.

Where are we? In the ark, or out of it? "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house." We are warned; but do we fear? We fear; but do we prepare? Christ is already prepared. God hath prepared him. That which we have to do is to get into him. To make sure our interest in him.

2. Abraham's ram. Of that we read in Gen. xxii. We have the account there at large. "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son." Now, as that ram was taken by Abraham, and offered up instead of Isaac his son, so that Isaac escaped, and the ram was slain: so we poor Isaacs, being bound, laid on the altar, the knife in the hand, and the hand stretched out, and the fatal blow just ready to be given by Divine justice: behold the Lord Jesus caught, and killed, and his death accepted instead of our damnation. This was "the Lord's doing," and it should be "marvellous in our eyes." It was by no forecast of Isaac's, nor any friend's for him, that he escaped; but Jehovah-jireh, the Lord

provided.

How much are we indebted! What Shall we render? See what the Saviour said when they came to apprehend him: "I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these *go their way*." Our duty is to "love Him" that hath "first loved us;" and, out of love to him, to be willing and ready to venture for him, according as he shall thereunto call us.

3. Jacob's ladder. "He dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." This ladder is Christ. As man, in his human nature, his feet stood upon the earth. As God, in his Divine nature, his top reaches unto heaven. And he is the only way or means of converse and intercourse between us and God. All the services that ascend from us thither, are made acceptable only in and by him. And all the blessings that come down from thence to us, come only in and by him.

As for ourselves, if ever we come to heaven it must be by this ladder, in ascending which we must begin low, as Christ did. In poverty of spirit. In a thorough work of repentance, and humiliation. For want of this many who build high in outward profession, come to nothing. "Jesus saith, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Then make use of him as such. Go to the Father by him. Expect all from the Father through him.

4. The paschal lamb. We read concerning that in Exod. xii. At the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt; when the last of the ten plagues was to be executed upon the Egyptians; for the safety of the Israelites, God appointed the blood of a lamb to be sprinkled upon the door-posts of their houses, to be a sign to the destroying angel that *there* dwelt an Israelite; that *there* no harm was to be done. He appointed, also, that the flesh of the lamb was to be eaten with bitter herbs; with their loins girt; and with their staves in their hands in \.e posture of travellers. A yearly feast was to 1 kept in

remembrance of this.

Now under these leaves the fruit lying hid was Christ. This is clear: "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and "wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

By the sprinkling of his blood upon the doorposts of our souls we are secured from the strokes of Divine vengeance. The justice of God, in the destroying day, passes over us. And we must by faith, as by the bunch of hyssop, make use of it daily—for justification; for consolation.

We are also, as they, to "keep the feast;" not once a year only, but all our lives long. We are to feed upon him; to "rejoice and be glad" in him. We are to purge out all the old leaven of malice and wickedness. We are to haste, like travellers, to the heavenly Canaan.

Besides this, there was also another lamb, typifying Christ: and that was the daily lamb; offered every day to make atonement for all Israel. The whole congregation, and every member of it, were alike concerned in it. So are we in Christ, and in his "once " offering of himself. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." We have daily need to do this.

5. The manna. Manna was the bread that came down from heaven fresh every morning, which the Israelites were fed with, forty years together, in the wilderness. It came in a dew, and they were to gather it before the sun waxed hot; for when the sun waxed hot, it melted.

This manna is a type of Christ: "Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread,

he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

For this we must hunger. We must say, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." We must gather it, each one for himself. It falls not into our mouths. It comes down in the gospel dew. We must gather it in time. "Go to the ant;— consider her ways, and be wise;" see Prov. vi. 6, etc. And, when we *have* gathered it, we must feed heartily upon it—every day. We must make application of Christ and his righteousness to our souls. It is not meat set before us, and gazed at, that nourishes; but meat taken, and digested.

6. The rock affording water. As the Israelites had their bread in a miraculous way, so they had their water. Moses smote the rock, and out of the rock water issued. This they drank of. And for sweetness it was more like oil or honey than water; see Deut. xxxii. 13.

Now "that Rock was Christ," 1 Corinthians x. 4. That is, a type or figure of Christ. He was smitten by Moses, that is, the Law, being "made a curse for us." He died "the death," "even the death of the cross." From that smiting, and that dying, issues a blessed stream of comfort and consolation to all true believers.

Our duty is to be drinking of it daily; sucking sweetness from it. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." That is the way to thirst no more; see John iv. 10—15. It is the way not to thirst "for ever."

"They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them." While we follow "the pillar," the rock follows us. While we keep close to God in a way of duty, God will keep to us in a way of comfort. But if we forsake him, the rock will forsake us.

7. The brazen serpent. Besides meat and drink, we have need sometimes of physic. The blessed Jesus hath it for us. He is the true brazen serpent: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,

even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

While the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they were often murmuring against God. And once God sent "fiery serpents" among them for it; and "much people" died by reason of their biting. At last God bid Moses make a "serpent of brass," and put it "upon a pole;" and as many as looked up to it recovered from their wounds. Those that would not do so, died. Now "as Moses lifted up the serpent, so must the Son of man be lifted up." You see he himself says so. Here was a type of Him that was to come.

While we are in this world we are exposed to the bitings of sin and Satan. We are daily trespassing and transgressing, whereby God is dishonored, and the soul wounded. And those wounds are all mortal in themselves: "For the wages of sin is death." "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." But, behold! a remedy. A Christ "lifted up." First upon the pole of the cross: afterwards upon the pole of the gospel. We must look up to him by an eye of faith: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." That is the way to have healing: that is, peace with God, and peace in our own consciences. Do not say, It is a silly, simple, unlikely way; for so was looking at the brazen serpent. And, no doubt, many slighted it. But say—It is the way; the only way; God's way: therefore I will try. "Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net."

8. The red heifer. Among other ceremonial appointments by Moses there was one concerning a water of purification; for the cleansing and purifying of those that happened to be unclean: as, suppose, by touching a dead body, or a grave, or the like; see Numb. six. They were to take a red heifer, and burn it to ashes, and then put the ashes into running water, and to sprinkle the unclean. *That* cleansed him.

This the apostle applies to Christ: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God P"

As sin is wounding and killing, so it is polluting and defiling. It defiles the mind, the soul, the conscience. The fruit of that defilement is the turning us out of God's camp; out of his favour and friendship; out of his communion and fellowship; out of his kingdom and glory. Now, when we are defiled, we are not to do by our souls as slovens do with their faces, and hands, and clothes—let them alone in their defilements, one blot and spot after another, taking no care to make them clean. But, we must be sensible of what we have done, and make haste, and wash. Wash. Where ?" In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." That "fountain" is the blood of Christ. A fountain; therefore there is a fulness in it. A fountain opened; therefore flee to it: "Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The spots of guilt will never wear away of themselves. They must be washed out — washed out in this laver

There is no other way to satisfy justice, or to pacify conscience: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me."

9. The two goats. See the law concerning them, Lev. xvi. 8—10, 22.

It was briefly this. Upon a certain day in the year, called the day of atonement, there were to be two goats brought to the priest. One he was to slay, and sprinkle the blood before the mercy-seat to make atonement. The other he was to take, and, laying his hand on his head, confess over him all the sins of all Israel; especially the sins of that year. Then he was to send him away into a land of forgetfulness,

never to be heard of more.

Now these two goats were one type of Christ, and a notable figure of Him who was to come. The goat that was slain was a type of Christ dying, whose blood is sprinkled in heaven before the mercy-seat for us. The goat that escaped is a type of Christ rising again. For though death had power over him to take him, it had no power to hold him: "He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification."

Our duty is to afflict our souls in true repentance. To lay a hand of faith upon the head of Christ. To confess over him all our sins; and all our transgressions in all our sins. If we do so, he will certainly carry them into a land of forgetfulness. They shall be sought for, but they shall not be found. Oh, what gospel is here! What good news to a troubled soul!" I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put me in remembrance; let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified."

10. The cities of refuge. Those were places for malefactors to flee to, especially man-slayers that had killed at unawares, without malice prepense. Thither they were to hid; and if the avenger of blood overtook them ere they got thither, he might execute the laws upon them. But if once they reached the city, though but the suburbs, they were safe: although in a kind of banishment until the death of the high priest. *Then* they were acquitted, and might return home.

Now the malefactors are you and I, and all the guilty sons and daughters of Adam. The avenger of blood pursuing us is Divine justice. The cities of refuge are our Lord Jesus. To him we must flee with all speed. If we can get thither we are safe. In two scriptures there is reference to this: "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have *fled for refuge* to lay hold upon the hope set before us ;"— " *And he found in him*, not having mine own righteousness, which

is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the * righteousness which is of God by faith."

The High Priest, which is our Lord Jesus also, is dead. And, therefore, we need not remain at all in banishment from peace and comfort; but immediately, upon repentance and faith, return to former "joy in God."

Many of these cities were conveniently placed: for situation, on high hills, to comfort with the sight- of them afar off: for nearness

within half a day's travel from every village. They were Levites' cities; way-marks set to direct overseers to keep the ways in repair. All which are to be spiritually applied for our encouragement.

But, nevertheless, if the manslayer were caught *out* of the city of refuge, it was death. So, "how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

11. The temple: "Jesus said unto them, Destroy this temple"—his body,—"and in three days I will raise it up," John. ii. 19—21. The temple was a holy place, and nothing defiling was to come into it. So Christ's body was a holy body. No pollution ever befell it. The temple was the place of God's peculiar residence and abode. There he dwelt between the cherubim. So "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The worshippers were required to look towards the temple in their prayers. So we are to look to Christ for acceptance in all we do. And for our own bodies, we are to look upon them as temples of the Holy Ghost. We are to preserve them, accordingly, pure and undefiled; and to glorify God with them.

12. The altar: "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." There was the golden altar. *That* was for incense. It stood within the tabernacle. It typified the intercession of Christ in heaven. And, there was the brazen altar. *That* was for sacrifice. It stood without. It typified Christ dying for us on earth. Of which, believing in him, we have a right to eat; that

is, to take comfort. Through it all our gifts are sanctified; that is, made acceptable, 1 Pet. ii. 5. To it we are to fly, taking hold of its horns, when guilt and wrath pursue.

THE HISTORY OP CHRIST.*

* See the Life of Rev. P. Henry, *ut supra*, p. 402

Holy Paul gives us a short account of his preaching, and that of his fellow-laborers, when, writing to the Corinthians, he says, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

The preacher that preaches himself, can never either please God or profit his hearers; or save himself.

Paul and his fellow laborers preached " Christ Jesus the Lord." *He* was their text; their doctrine; and their application. Christ in the beginning. Christ in the middle. And Christ at the end of their sermon. That is the best preaching. Philip preached "Jesus" unto the eunuch; see Acts viii. 35.

And, themselves their "servants for Jesus' sake." "*Not* ourselves your lords and masters, lording it over God's heritage as having dominion-over their faith; but your " *servants*," ready to the meanest to do them good.

But observe, it is your servants—" for Jesus' sake" Not to do whatever you would have us do, rather than displease you: not servants to your lusts. No-" for Jesus sake." As far as he allows and approves: to promote your spiritual and eternal advantage.

"We preach Christ Jesus the Lord." This has been the subject of several sabbath sermons for divers months. I design at this time a "Repetition." Which to me shall not be grievous; to you it will be safe. If Christ Jesus be the great subject we are to preach, as Paul thought it, then it is what you are to *learn*. And *have* ye learned

Christ? *Have* ye grown more and more in the knowledge of him? And in acquaintance with him?

If ye do not know him, ye cannot believe in him. Knowledge is put for faith; see Isa. liii. Ignorance of Christ is at the bottom of unbelief in him.

If ye do not know him, ye cannot love him. How can we love him whom we do not know?

If ye do not know him, ye cannot be saved by him. If it be "life eternal" to know him, then it is death eternal not to know him, John xvii. 3.

The particulars which we are to learn and know concerning Christ, lately spoken to, are twenty.

1. His forerunner. That was John the Baptist, who came before him to prepare his way, and to make ready a people for him. He was his harbinger, as kings have. The morning star to the sun-rising. He was his forerunner. —In his *birth*. Six months older. Conceived in the womb of an old woman, as our Lord was in the womb of a virgin; only our Lord was there by the power of the Holy Ghost; John in the ordinary way of generation. The birth of both was foretold by an angel from heaven. —In his *baptism*. John received people that came to him confessing their sins, to be his disciples and followers; and for their initiation baptized them. It was called the baptism of repentance, because all that came to it professed repentance. The same ordinance was afterwards taken up by our Lord Jesus, and made the gospel way of initiation into the Christian profession, Matt, xxviii. 19, 20.—In his *preaching*. They preached the same doctrine from the same text: "Repent ye;" see Matt. iii. 1, 2.— In his *passion*. They both died a violent death. The one was beheaded; the other hanged. And both for doing their duty: not for evil doing. John for reproofing Herod; Jesus for speaking against the wickedness of the priests and elders. Both were young: in their prime. But in the end and design of their death there was a vast

difference. John did not die to redeem and save; Jesus did. Now, have ye learned this? Are ye acquainted with John as the forerunner of Jesus? How he came in the spirit and power of Elijah. Prophesied of in Mai. iv. 5, 6; performed, Matt. iii. 1.

2. His conception and birth: in all respects extraordinary and strange. We love to hear strange stories, especially if true. Behold his conception. How extraordinary! so as never any other was before or since. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost. This was requisite, that he might be without sin. How extraordinary his birth! He was born of a virgin whose name was Mary: a poor virgin, but a betrothed virgin; betrothed to an old man, one Joseph. There was mystery in it. Have ye learned this concerning him; how that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us?" How he took our nature, and was "born of a woman?" Born in mean circumstances; in an inn; in the stable of the inn, there being no room in the house. How he was laid in the manger, and at the same time worshipped by the wise men? Oh the mystery of godliness that was in this! see 1 Tim. iii. 16.

3. His circumcision, and the name then given him, Luke ii. 21. He was circumcised like other children of the stock of Abraham, on the eighth day. Then he first shed his blood for us. Thereby he became obliged to the whole law of Moses, which he kept accordingly. And, by undergoing it, he put an end to it. It is a mercy he did. "His name was called Jesus." A sweet name. Have ye learned it? It signifies a Saviour. He came to "save his people *from* their sins;" not *in* them. The *soul* must bow in holy adorings of his infinite love. And every creature must bow, that is, stoop to him, and his laws and authority, either with their will or against it.

4. His presentation in the temple when he was forty days old, Luke ii. 22, etc. This was according to the law of Moses; which, being circumcised, he was bound to obey. At the presenting of him there was a sacrifice offered for his mother's purification. There was the solemn dedication of him to God and his service. There was a

price of redemption paid for him, being the first-born. Two old people, Simeon and Anna, were there: "And she gave thanks unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem."

5. His flight into Egypt for fear of Herod, and his return thence; see Matt. ii. He began betimes to be a confessor, even while in his mother's arms. He was driven into banishment from his native country. So hath many a one since been. A trial to be borne with patience. As soon as Herod was dead, God sent an angel to tell Joseph they must stay no longer. Here was mercy: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."

6. His disputing with the doctors in the temple when only twelve years old. A most astonishing event, recorded in Luke ii. 46, 47. It was a proof that he was an extraordinary person, designed for some great work. And was he not so? While he was doing this, he was about his "Father's business." Are we careful always to be so? And when he had done it, he became "subject" to his earthly parents; that is, dutiful to them, and observant of them. Here was an example to other children, according to the law of the fifth commandment.

7. His being baptized by John when he was thirty years old, Luke iii. 21—23. His condescending to this was a famous instance of his humility. The Master baptized by the servant. One reason of it was to encourage John and the people. Remember how he was owned. "Lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

8. How he was tempted of the devil with three horrid, hideous temptations, one after another. One to distrust God, by turning stones into bread when he was hungry. Another, to break his neck from one of the temple pinnacles. Another, to fall down and worship Satan. Let none say, I am no child of God, because I am tempted. Mark the weapons he fought with, whereby he overcame. The word of God: "It is written." And again: "It is written." To teach us, in the

hour of temptation, to have that "sword of the Spirit" ready. If any of you should be tempted, remember you know where one is, a Friend of yours, who was tempted before you. Ay, and *therefore* tempted, that he might the better know how to succour *you*, Heb. ii. 17, 18; iv. 15, 16.

9. His disciples and followers: "He ordained twelve, that they should be with him." He had followers of divers sorts: men and women; some for love; some for loaves; some in truth and sincerity; some in guile and hypocrisy; some more loosely and at large; some more closely— as the twelve called his apostles, who were for the most part *constantly* with him, unless when sent abroad to preach. These were generally poor men, divers of them poor fishermen. Yet he chose to make use of them to catch souls. And they did so. He put "the treasure into earthen vessels," that the praise might be of God. Understand Psa. viii. 2, of these: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." Of the twelve, there was one who had a devil. There is no unmixed society upon earth.

10. His preaching, Mark i. 14, 15. To preach was one great part of his errand into the world. He was anointed for that purpose, Isa. lxi. 1. And he was an ordained, excellent, itinerant preacher. A house preacher. A plain, thundering, legal preacher. A comfortable, gospel preacher. A persecuted preacher. And a godly preacher in his life and conversation. Yet no very successful preacher. He converted but few in comparison of what we might have expected, and of what the apostles converted afterwards. Now we should make a business of acquainting ourselves with his doctrine. We should learn it. Love it. Live it.

11. His miracles: "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples." The things here called "signs;" and elsewhere, "miracles and wonders," Acts ii. 22; were miraculous wonders intended for "signs." Signs, of the truth of his mission from the Father; of the truth of his Messiahship; of the truth of his

doctrine. Therefore many of them were wrought after preaching. Many were his miraculous cures of sick people. The dead were raised to life. The winds and waves were "rebuked." The devil himself was rebuked, and made to obey him. Could any have done this but God, or one sent of God? His disciples *saw* them; nay, the multitude, thousands at a time—as when the loaves were multiplied. His *enemies* saw them, those who came purposely to be satisfied.—To the end that *we* might "believe."

12. The obedience of his life: "I do always those things that please him." Without failing at any time, in any thing; either in thought, word, or deed; against God or man. This could never be said of any other. He was a none-such herein. And it was requisite he should be so. Else he had not been a complete Saviour; else he had not been a sacrifice without blemish; else he could not have merited heaven for us, according to the first covenant, Gen. ii. 17. But one main end was to set before us an example: "Leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." An example of patience under suffering. Of prayer, for he was a man of prayer. Of humility and lowly-mindedness, Phil. ii. 6—8. Of love and charity, Eph. v. 2. Of care for souls, Matt. ix. 36. Of contempt of the world, John vi. 15. But who can follow him herein? If not as well as we should, do we as well as we can? *Endeavouring* to do so?" He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." To "learn" him, is to learn of him.

13. His sufferings at his death. He was a great sufferer as well as a great doer. Never was any like him, whether we respect the various kinds of his sufferings; his behaviour under them; or the blessed effects of them. Consider: What he suffered of himself, without the intervention of second causes. His agony in the garden, Luke xxii. 44.—What he suffered of his friends. One of them betrayed him; another denied him; they all forsook him. Each of which was an arrow to his heart.—What he suffered from his foes. They apprehended him; arraigned him; abused him; condemned him;

crucified him.—What he suffered of his Father. *He* hid his face from him; forsook him; nay, was pleased "to bruise him." Might he not then say, Was ever sorrow like unto my sorrow?

14. His death. This was the penalty threatened. And, therefore, without that there could have been no Saviour. Let me die, said he, rather than man should not be redeemed. "He became obedient unto death, *even* the death of the cross:" the most painful of deaths. To be fastened to a gallows, with nails driven through his hands and feet, those tender parts; and there to hang till dead. Sometimes it was a great while. It was a lingering death. The most shameful of deaths. None but the vilest malefactors were crucified. It was a cursed death, for it is written "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Yet, bad as it was, and the circumstances made it a thousand times worse, he underwent it for us; and that cheerfully and joyfully. "Behold, what manner of love!"

15. His burial. When they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulcher. The story is particularly recorded in the close of Matt, xxviii.; Mark xv.; Luke xxiii.; and John xix. Those who managed it are noticed; two especially—Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus. Both persons of quality. One scarce known before to be a disciple; yet marvellously stirred up to be active in this great affair. What it was they did is also mentioned. They begged the body from Pilate. They wrapped it in clean linen. They embalmed it with great cost. They laid it in a new tomb hewn out of a rock, wherein never man had lain before. And, it was in a garden. He was buried, not only to show that he was truly dead, but also to perfume and sweeten the grave for us. The sting being taken out, that is now a bed of rest; see 1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.

16. His resurrection: "God raised him from the dead." Sometimes he is said to have raised himself. Christ as God, raised himself as man. The Divine—the human nature. It was on the third day after his death, as Jonah; but on the "first day of the week."

Whence the Christian sabbath. It was also "early in the morning." He stayed no longer than just to fulfill the Scripture; see Hos. vi. An angel rolled the stone away, thus signifying that the debt was paid. The proofs were a threefold testimony— Angels. Apostles. Adversaries. And a tenfold appearance of him alive to many. Five the same day: five afterwards.

Surely this may confirm our faith in him as the Messiah promised, Acts ii. It may comfort our hearts in reference to the guilt of our sin. He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." In reference to worldly troubles—" He hath torn, and he will heal us: he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." In reference to the resurrection of our bodies, 1 Cor. xv.

It may direct our conformity to him in rising from the grave of sin to the life of righteousness, which is—to know "the power of his resurrection."

17. His ascension into heaven; just forty days after his resurrection. "After" he "had spoken to them." Spoken what he had to say in giving them instruction concerning the things of the kingdom of God; in blessing them. He was then doing it when just ready to be taken from them. It is said, "a cloud received him out of their sight." This cloud was his triumphant chariot, waited on by myriads of holy angels, Psa. lxxviii. 17. At this time, after the manner of conquerors, he "led captivity captive;" he "received gifts for men," or gave gifts to men, Eph. iv. 8. He ascended to receive his crown: to send the Comforter, Acts ii. 33, as our forerunner to "prepare a place" for us. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."

18. His sitting "at the right hand of God the Father Almighty," Mark xvi. 19. It was of great consequence to know what entertainment he had in heaven with the Father; whether he bid him

welcome or not. And he had great welcome, Psa. xxiv. 6, 9; ex. 1: as an ambassador who had done his duty faithfully and successfully. Sitting is not to be understood grossly and literally. He is said sometimes to stand; sometimes to be; sometimes to appear. But sitting is a posture of rest, when work is done: of honour: of office, as King, 'Prophet, Priest: of continuance, or abiding. And it being "at the right hand" notes preeminence. He is far exalted above all, Eph. i. 20, 21. It notes power, Matt. xxvi. 64; xxviii. 18.

We have thus an infallible proof of the Messiahship of Jesus Christ; an encouraging prop to faith; and a prevailing inducement to humility, holiness, and hope.

19. His making intercession: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." This is not to be understood grossly and carnally. But thus: "Ye are come—to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." *That* for vengeance—*This* for mercy. Typified by the incense offered by the high priest upon the golden altar within the vail, Rev. viii. 3. And, for our comfort, we may be assured that he is heard and accepted always. "Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down"—in reference to our sins. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also *maketh intercession*, for us." And, in reference to our services: "Another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne."

20. His coming again to judge the world at the last day, Acts i. 11. The rest are all past. His intercession present. This only to come: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner"—for substance, but not circumstance—"as ye have seen him go into heaven." As he then went up in a cloud, so his

coming again shall be in the clouds. As there were then angels present who spake, so when he comes again he shall come with like attendants. Not a few, as then; but all—all. The whole society of them shall wait upon him to do him honour, Matt. xxv. 31. There will be also "thousands of his saints," Jude 14, 15. He will come—to judge. The same that came before to redeem, comes now to doom us. Some to everlasting misery; some to "life eternal." Oh, think you hear that trumpet sounding. If unready, fear; and make ready. If ready; rejoice.

I have thus given you as short an account as I could of the blessed Jesus whom "we preach." Let me now put three questions.

1. What "think ye" of him? Is not his name deservedly called "Wonderful?" Is there any other to be compared with him? Ought he not in all things to "have the preeminence?" Is there any God-man but he? Was ever any conceived as he was?—Born as he was, of a virgin?—Lived as he did, "holy, harmless, undented, separate from sinners?"—Died as he did, such a painful, shameful death, so meekly and patiently?—Rose again, and went to heaven as he did?—Sits as he, to make intercession?—Shall come again as he, to judge the world in righteousness? What say you? *Is* there any like him? Have ye learned to prize, and value, and esteem him above all? If not, it is because ye know him not.

2. What desires have ye towards him? Have any of you a mind to him, to have him? He is the "heir of all things." Shall he be your Head and Husband? Will you love him, and leave all for him, saying, "None but Christ; none but Christ?" Oh that it might be so! It were a rich recompense for all the pains of the sermons, if only one soul would be persuaded and prevailed with.

3. What will ye do for him? You have heard what he hath done; what he hath suffered; what he is now doing for you. And are you in no care what you shall do for him? Have you no thoughts about David's inquiry—"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his

benefits towards me?" Or Paul's—" Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Believe it—our ingratitude, in not rendering according to all the benefits done unto us, grieves him more, and goes nearer to his heart, than all the wounds, and stripes, and thorns, and nails with which he was pierced when he hung upon the cross. Think you hear him say—" Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?"

THE REV. PHILIP HENRY'S LAST EXPOSITION.

We are told that, on the morning of the day in the night of which Mr. Henry died, "between seven and eight o'clock, he performed family worship according to the usual manner: he expounded very largely the former half of the 104th Psalm; see his Life, *ut supra*, p. 221.

His eldest daughter, Mrs. Savage, preserved a copy of that exposition. She says at the foot of the transcript, "Finis,—indeed."

At the beginning of the MS. she has written, "My dear father's last exposition in the family, the last morning of his life, June 23, 1696."

At the end of it," Wrote out for me, S. S., by Mr. Will. Cook, one of dear father's young men that were then in the house."

It is as follows :—

Psalm civ.

David, in this Psalm, stirs up himself, and others, to adore, and bless, and praise God upon the account of his wonderful works, both of creation and providence. He doth not stir up others only to do it, but himself also. He does not stir up himself only to do it, but others also: beginning with himself.

"Bless the Lord, O *my soul*." Blessing of G-od is to be soul work: not to be done in word and tongue only, but "in deed and in

truth:" inwardly and heartily. He addresses himself to *God* in the doing of it; and speaks not only *of* him, but *to* him all along. He speaks of the greatness of God in himself, and then of the greatness of his works. For as he is good and does good, so he is great and doth great things.

"O Lord my God, thou art very great;" that is, astonishing: but my God in covenant with me; that is comfortable. When we can look on the great God as our God, and our Father, with application of what he is to ourselves, how sweet is it!

"Thou art clothed with honour and majesty." Honour and majesty are royal clothing; especially such honour and majesty as is Divine and infinite.

"Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment." He dwells "in the light which no man can approach to." "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." No creature that we either see or know affords us such a representation of God as light does. But the light that we see is infinitely short of the light that God is, and that God is covered with. He covers himself with it. Understand it of the firmament light; the sky light with which God covers himself from being seen by mortal eyes.

"Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain." In a sense to veil his glory, and to conceal, cover, and hide it from being seen by us. The heavens, and the light of them, are for that use and purpose.

"Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters." There are waters beneath the firmament, and waters above the firmament, Gen. i. 7. It is meant of the clouds, which are waters beneath the firmament, upon which the beams of the firmament are laid. We should think water an unlikely thing to lay beams upon, upon which to erect chambers. But the mighty power of God hath laid the beams of *his* chambers upon the waters.

"Who maketh the clouds his chariot." That is another expression

of his greatness. The clouds are God's chariots, in which he rides triumphantly, Psa. lxxviii. 17. There we read of other chariots of his: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels." *Here* the clouds are said to be his chariot; manifesting his presence therein by the various causes and effects of them.

"Who walketh upon the wings of the wind."

The wind, in regard to the swift motion of it, is said to have wings. God makes use of the wind as he doth of the clouds, to serve his purposes and designs in this lower world.

"Who maketh his angels spirits." Ministering spirits, sent abroad for the good of those who are heirs of salvation. God is a Spirit—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but not a made spirit, as the angels and souls of men. Some read it—Who makes his winds his messengers. The word that signifies spirit, signifies wind; and the word that signifies angels, signifies messengers. He makes his messengers the winds. And so they are oftentimes messengers of mercy or wrath, as God orders them.

"His ministers a flame of fire." The angels are a flaming fire; made so by God. One of the names given to them in Scripture is seraphim; that is, burners. Upon the account of what they *are* in themselves. Burning in zeal in every thing they do for God. We pray—"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven:" that is, that it may be zealously done; with life, liveliness, and fervency. Upon the account of what they *do*. They burn and destroy when God gives them commission. Some read it—He makes flaming fire his minister. Understanding it of lightning and thunderbolts, which are often instruments of God's wrath, whereby he doth consume and destroy.

"Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever." Here he descends lower; from the clouds, and the winds, and the flaming fire, to the earth; which is laid, as it were, upon foundations. Such as shall abide, and continue; and that for

ever. And yet elsewhere, in Job, it is said he hath hanged "the earth upon nothing," Job xxvi. 7. The foundation of the earth is nothing, and yet that nothing bears it up.

"Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment—the waters stood above the mountains." This was fulfilled in the great deluge.

"At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them." Or rather we are to understand it of the creation, comparing it with Gen. i. 9, 10. By which it should seem that the mountains were created so from the beginning, and are not as the effect of the deluge. It is said, "the waters stood above the mountains."

"Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over, that they turn not again to cover the earth." That bound is a little sand which God has heaped together; unlikely in itself to make a bound, indeed seemingly unable to do it. The mighty power of God is so much the more manifest, in that though the waters are higher than the earth, they do not overwhelm it; although there be no visible defence save that of sand. *God* hath said to the waters, Hitherto ye shall come, and no further.

"He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills." There is another of God's wonderful works; namely, the several springs that are upon, and some at the tops of, hills; some at the bottom of them; and some in the valleys; by which the earth is watered; by which drink is provided for the beasts of the field. "The wild asses quench their thirst;" the fowl also. Some of *them* have their habitations about the waters.

"He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works." The rain is the fruit of God's works, wherewith the earth is satisfied and refreshed; the grass made to grow for the cattle; and, hereby, for the service of man. "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that

he may bring forth food out of the earth."

"And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread, which strengtheneth man's heart." « Wine."—" Oil."—" Bread." Here is bread for necessity; and wine and oil for delight. Bread to strengthen man's heart; and wine to make the heart glad; and oil to make the face shine. AH these are gifts of God. The influence of his mighty power and providence. Upon each of which the rain has influence towards the preparing of them; and without which rain we should neither have wine, nor oil, nor bread: and therefore, if God be the Father of rain, and the Giver of that without which these things cannot be, we are to own him in them all, and see that corn, and wine, and oil are products of his wisdom, and power, and goodness; and give him glory accordingly.

THE END.