TEN SERMONS,
Tending chiefly to the fitting of men for the worthy receiving of the Lords Supper.

Wherein, amongst many other holy Instructions, the Doctrines of sound Repentance and humiliation, and of God's special favours unto penitent sinners, and worthy Communicants, are largely and effectually handled.

The first, by I. Dod.
The four last, by N. Sayer.

The Lunte is annexed a plaine and learned Metaphrase on the Epistle to the Colossians, Written by a godly and judicious Preacher.

There is also set before the Sermons, a short Dialogue of Preparation, containing the chiefe Points that concern the worthy receiving of the Lords Supper: taken for the most part, out of the Sermons following, and collected into a Method, for the benefit and ease of those that desire direction in this matter.

Newly Printed, and enlarged.

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PRINCETON, N. J.

Presented by Mr. Samuel Agnew of Philadelphia, Pa.

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TO THE RIGHT
Worshipfull, the Lady Anne Cope,
Wife to Sir Anthony Cope, of Hanwell;
and to her vertuous Daughter, the Lady Elizabeth Cope, Wife to Sir William Cope, of Hardwicke:
"Encrease of Grace, and all true Happinesse, 

It is a thing better knowne, than well con sidered of, that in the mystical Body of Christ Jesus, every member hath his severall Office, whereon it must attend, the weakest, as well as the strongest: and in the Family of the great Ruler of Heaven and Earth, each servant hath his severall rate : which he must imploy, the meanest, as well as the worthiest: To deny myselfe, the Member of that Body, or a Servant of that Family, I cannot without injury to God and my selfe: to profess to be such a one in word, and indeed to deny it, were no lesse dishonourable to my Head, to my Master, than discomfortable to my selfe. What then is to be done? I be thought my selfe (for the avoiding of these Rockes) what service I might performe, and in thinking, this which I have now done, was offered to my consideration, whereby, as an underling in Gods House hold, for want of greater ability, I have done my best endeavour to put forth to the best advantage others Talents, which else (to the griefe of many) would have beene hidden at least, if not utterly lost: For the doing whereof, I had rather undergo the censures of such as are curious & carnally disposed, than deprive those of a benefit, that are religious and spiritually minded.

A 2

Let
The Epistle Dedicatory.

Let it not be offensive unto your Ladiships, that I have presumed to offer these Sermons unto publike view, sheltered as it were under your Names, for I had sundry Motives which even inforced me thus to doe.

First, in regard of the Matter therein contained, much of it being delivered in your hearing, and all of it suiting unto your affections: whose religious care, for the preparing both of your selves, and of those that depend upon you, for the worthy receiving of the holy Sacrament, is well known unto those that are acquainted with your conversation in Christ Jesus.

Secondly, in regard of the Authors: whose affections, I persuade myself, is such towards you, in sundry both Civil and Religious respects, that they would most willingly consecrate themselves and their Labours, to your further building up in Christ Jesus.

Lastly, in regard of myself, who for many special favors received, do acknowledge myself unaquially indebted, and indissolubly bound unto your Ladiships. And having nothing of mine owne of any worth, whereby to testify my unsought thankfulnesse, I have borrowed of others for this purpose, and withall annexed my hand-writing, that if my ingratitude should hereafter appeare, I might by a publike Censure be condemned & made ashamed for the same. Thus hoping for pardon of my boldnesse, and for favourable acceptance of my good meaning in this behalfe, I humbly take my leave, recommending your Ladiships to the Lord, & to the Word of his Grace, who is able to perfect that good work which he hath begun in you both.

Your Ladiships most bounden,
and in all Christian duties to be commanded,

John Winston.
To the Christian Reader.

Ooke not (good Reader) to finde in these Sermons an absolute discourse of this Subject, of Preparation to the Sacrament, for that was not intended by the Authors, but onely the excitement of their present Auditors, as they saw occasion: whereby yet I doubt not, but a Christian heart shall finde great furtherance in that worke of Preparation.

Furthermore, let it please the Reader to be advertised, that the Texts handled in this Book, have neither so many Doctrines gathered from them, as the Authors could have done, nor so many Vses inforced upon the Doctrines, but onely such, as were thought most meete for their present Auditorie.

In this which I have done, I had, as the approbation, so also the helpe of those that preached these Sermons following, for the revising and perfecting of divers things: yet so, as their leisure could afford: and therefore, what defects soever shall be found in the manner of penning, let them be imputed to me (if the Printer be not faulty) not unto them, who were content to put a finger, but not their whole hand, to this Worke.

John Winston.
A Summarie Collection of the Heads of Doctrines, handled in the Sermons following.

The Doctrine of the first Sermon, on

Prov. 28, 13.

1. Hiding of Sinne hindereth all true prosperity.
2. He that would have pardon for his offences, must bring before God an acknowledgemen't of the same.
3. He that would be assured of God's favour, must joyn reforma|tion with his confession.
4. Whosoever confesseth his faults, and endeavours to amend them, shall finde mercy from God, how sinful soever he hath been in former times.

The Doctrines of the second and third Sermons, on

Isa. 1: 16.

1. Whosoever would have God wash him with the blood of his Sonne, must wash himselfe by godly sorrow.
2. Christians must have regard to the manner of their good workes, as well as to the matter.
3. All penitent persons must learne to doe well.
4. Every one must have a principall care of the duties that pertaine unto him.
5. Workes of mercy are very acceptable unto the Lord.
6. In matters of religion, men must hearken unto God, and not unto flesh and blood.
7. If we become truely penitent, neither the greatness nor multitude of our sinnes shall hinder our salvation.
8. God looketh for truth, not for perfection, at the hands of his children.
9. Those that have soundly repented, shall not onely have spiritual graces, but also corporall blessings bestowed upon them.
A briefe summe of the Doctrines, &c.

The Doctrines of the fourth Sermon, on
2 Chron. 30. 18.

1. It is the dutie of all Governours, to pray for them that belong unto their charge.
2. Whosoever would receive mercy from God in the Sacrament, must come with a sincere heart thenceunto.
3. So long as we labour to keepe the substance of Gods worship willingly, though we faile in some circumstances unwillingly, God will be mercifull unto us.
4. God doth accept, and will fulfill every faithfull prayer that is made unto him.

The Doctrines of the fifth Sermon, on
Isa. 55. 1.

1. The thirsty soule alone hath interest in the graces of God, and shall reape benefit by the meanes of grace.
2. Whosoever commeth to Christ Jesus in the religious use of his Ordinances, shall have all his wants supplied.
3. The best things are best cheape.
4. Nothing can satisifie and content the minde, but Grace.

The Doctrines of the sixth Sermon, on
Matth. 22. 11.

1. God is the only absolute King over all the whole world.
2. The Lord taketh notice of every guest that sitteth at his Table.
3. It is not sufficient to come to Gods Wedding-Feast, but wee must come as fit Guests for so great a Banquet, and so glorious a Presence.
4. When God hath to deale even against sinners, yet he dealeth in good and peaceable termes.
5. Sinners shall have nothing to say for themselves, when God entreteth into judgemenct with them.
6. The speciall time and place of the punishment of wicked men, is after this life, in Hell fire.

The Doctrines of the seventh Sermon, on
Psalm. 119. 1.

1. Religion is the way to happinesse.
2. So much sincerity as any one hath, so much happinesse shall he have.
A briefe summe of the Doctrines.

3 It is a marvellous great prerogative, to be freed from the bondage of sinne.
4 Nothing is superfluous, that is done in obedience to God holy will.

The Doctrines of the eight Sermon, on

John 6.

1 By faire speeches to us, or courteous usage of us, we ought not, to be stayed from telling men their faults, when by our calling we are required to admonish them.
2 Christ Iesus is acquainted with the purpose of such as come to his services.
3 A man cannot be both a Worldling, and a Christian.
4 They are most provident for themselves, whose greatest labour is for grace.
5 The efficacie of the Word and Sacrament, is from Christ his owne hand.

The Doctrines of the ninth and tenth Sermons, on

Mark 14.18.

1 Jesus Christ knew before what sufferings he was to undergo.
2 They are like to stand best, who are most fearefull of falling.
3 No bands of kindenesse can make wicked men faithful unto godly men.
4 Wicked men fulfill the will of God, to their owne condemnation.
5 All the delights and contentments of the wicked men in this world, cannot countervail their miseries in the world to come.
6 The efficacie of the Sacrament is from Gods owne hand.
7 Christ Iesus, in the Sacrament, by corporall food giveth a most sure possession of himselfe, and union with himselfe.
8 Christ in the Sacrament doth make a full Meal.
9 Faithfull Communicants at the Lords Table, come to bee enriched by Christ his Legacie.
A BRIEFE DIALOGUE CONCERNING PREPARATION FOR THE WORTHY RECEIVING OF THE LORDS SUPPER:

Taken, for the most part, out of the Sermons following.

What is the Lords Supper?

It is a Sacrament of the Eternall Covenant; Mat. 26. Verse 26.

whereby, through the use of Bread & Wine, rightely administered, and faithfully received, the soules of them that are ingrafted into Christ are spiritually nourished into eternall life.

What then is required of those that will be partakers of this heavenly food at the Lords Table?

They must be prepared, as meete guests for such a banquet.

For the better attaining to this preparation, how many things are there to be considered?

Three: First, what is to be done before the partaking of it: Secondly, what at it: Thirdly, what after it.

What is that which must be done before?

There must be first, an examinacion how fit we are to receive: secondly, a premeditation of the benefits that we are to receive: and thirdly, faithfull and fervent prayer for Gods blessing upon our examination, premeditation, and receiving.
A Dialogue of Preparation

Of what points are we to examine ourselves?

First, in general, whether we be of the number of the Faith-full, and have in us the life of Grace: for otherwise, we are utterly unfit to be partakers of the Lord's Supper; which is appointed for food, to continue spiritual life where it is; and not to work it, where it is not: to be for nourishment unto God's Children; but for the bane and destruction of Dogs and Swine, that dare presume to meddle with the same.

Secondly, we must examine ourselves more particularly.

Concerning what matters?

Whether we have attained unto a competent measure of Repentance, Knowledge, Faith, and Love: which if we can finde in our selves, we may resolve our hearts in that point of general Examination, and conclude, that we are within the Covenant of Grace, and have communion with Christ Jesus, and therefore are in state to bee Communicants at his Table.

How should we try our selves in the matter of repentance?

Wee must examine, first whether we have at any time carefully sifted our hearts and behaviours, to finde out as many of our corruptions as possibly wee could. Secondly, whether we have beene, and are, heartily sorrowfull for the same. Thirdly, whether wee have rightly confessed them before the Lord, with an earnest desire of the pardon thereof. And fourthly, whether we purpole and resolve for ever hereafter (through God's gracious assistance) to reforme both our hearts and waies.

Is there any necessity of that searching of our selves?

Yes verily: for otherwise, wee shall bee found hiders of sinne; which hindereth all true prosperity, and argueth plainely, that there is in us a love of iniquitie, and abundance of hypocrifie, which will keepe us from reaping benefit by the Word, or Sacrament.

Wherby should we try our selves, to the intent we may come to an more full and particular sight of our corruption?

By the Law of God, which is the true Touch-stone; examining ourselves by every Commandement, that so wee may discern,
differne, if not all, yet the most part of the corruptions of our soules, and errors of our lives: And for our more orderly proceeding herein, we may use this direction following: wherein are set downe the chiefe Heads of most of the sins against every Commandement.

**Sinnes against the first Commandement.**

1. **Theifme;** which is, when men either thinke there is no God, or live as if there were no God.
2. **Idolatry,** which is the having of a false God.
3. **Ignorance,** uncapablenesse of Knowledge, Errors and Heresies.
4. **Forgetfulnesse of Good things,** especially of those that most concerne us, and chiefly at that instant when we should make use of them: Secondly, remembring of evill things, especially of those that may most corrupt us; and chiefly then, when we should be most free from the thought of them.
5. **Unwillingnesse unto good things,** principally to the best; readiness unto, and willingnesse in evill, especially the worst: secondly, impatience under crosses.
6. **Distrust of Gods power,** mercy, &c. promises, and providence; whence carnall feares are wrought and cherished, and the true feare of God is expelled and banished.
7. **Presumption upon Gods mercy.**
8. **Carnall confidence in Wit, Learning, Wealth, Strength, Friends, &c.** thinking our selves the better, or safer, simply for them; whence ariseth pride and security.
9. **Much love of evill; as also of our selves, our friends, our pleasure profit, credit, &c.** Secondly, little love of God and of goodnesse, and of Gods servants and services.
10. **Hatred of God and goodnesse:** secondly, want of hatred against our owne and others sinnes.
11. **Abundance of worldly sorrow, Shame and discontentment:** secondly, want of spirituall grieue and indignation against our owne and others transgressions: thirdly, not lamenting for the calamities of Gods people, private or publike.
12. **Immoderate carnall mirth; too little spirituall joy.**

If any desire proofes of Scripture for these particular sins mentioned, he may use the helpe of Master Gods Booke on the Commandements; or, of the true Watch where many of these are touched.
A Dialogue of Preparation

13 Hardnesse of heart, benummednesse of conscience, or hellish terrors and accusations, proceeding from doing things either without, or against the Rules of the Word.

**Sinnes against the second Commandement.**

1. Base and unwarranted conceits of God, as when wee frame any Image of him in our mindes.
2. Worshipping of Images.
3. Adoration of Angels or Saints, observing Holy-daies in devotion to them, swearing by them, &c.
4. Approbation of Idolatry, by presence, speech, gesture, silence, keeping of superstitious Relickes & Monuments, keeping company with Idolaters, &c.
5. Neglect of any of Gods Ordinances, as of Preaching, Hearing, Reading, Meditation, Conference, the use of good Bookes, and of good company, of private and publike Prayer, Fasting, making of Vowes, &c.
7. Want of sorrow, for being borne of Idolatrous Forefathers.

**Sinnes against the third Commandement.**

1. Profession joyned with prophanenesse, whereby Gods name is dishonoured.
2. Abusing of Gods Word: first, by fruitlesse speaking of it: secondly, framing jests out of it, or against it: thirdly maintaining of sinne by it: fourthly, applying it to charming, &c.
3. Abusing the names or Titles of God: first, by admiration, as by saying in our common talke, O Lord, O Iesus, &c. secondly, by cursing, &c.
4. Swearing vainely, outrageously, falsely, &c.
5. Blaspheming.
6. Taking a lawfull Oath, without due reverence and consideration.
7. Praying without Faith, Feeling, Reverence, Fervencie, not
to the Lords Supper.

not waiting for an answer, &c. asking evil things; ayming more in our requests, at the relieving of our necessitie, then at the advancement of Gods glory.

8 Hearing, reading, meditating, conferring, singing of Psalmes, and receiving the Sacrament, without preparation, attention, reverence, delight, and profit.

9 Light passing over of Gods great workes of Creation, Preservation, Redemption, as also of other his mercies, and judgements.

10 Abuse of our Christian liberty, to the hardening, ensna-ring, perverting or just grieving of any.

**Sinnes against the fourth Commandement.**

1 Neglect of preparation for the Sabbath, before it come: and of fitting our hearts for holy services, when it is come.

2 Prophane absence from, or unfruitfull presence at Gods Ordinance.

3 Excessive eating and drinking, which causeth drounes, and unfitness for Gods worship.

4 Doing any ordinary worke of our Calling.

5 All recreations, which distract.

6 Vaine and worldly speeches and thoughts.

7 A secret desire that the Sabbath were over.

8 Neglect of calling our selves, or others, to a Reckoning after holy Exercises.

9 Giving liberty to our selves in the night, before the whole Sabbath be ended.

**Sinnes against the fifth Commandement.**

Sinnes of all Inferiors, in respect of their Superiors.

1 Want of reverence, inward or outward. 2 Neglect of Prayer. 3 And of humble submission.

Sinnes of all Superiors.

1 Want of love. 2 Fayling in prayer. 3 And in giving good example.
A Dialogue of Preparation

SINNES OF CHILDREN, IN RESPECT OF THEIR PARENTS.

1. Disobedience.
2. Murmuring at their Parents corrections, though unjust.
3. Contemning of them, for any defect of body or minde.
4. Unthankfulness in not relieving them, not standing for their deserved credit, &c.

SINNES OF PARENTS.

1. Negligence, in not instructing their Children betimes.
2. Not correcting them till it be too late; or doing it with bitterness, without compassion, instruction, and prayer.
3. Giving them ill example.
4. Neglect of bringing them up in some lawfull Calling.
5. Not bestowing them timely and religiously in Marriage.
6. Light behaviour before them, and too much familiaritie with them, whereby they become vile in their eyes.
7. Loving Beauty, or any outward parts, more than God's Image in them.

8. A sinne peculiar to the mother, is, refusing to nurse them.

SINNES OF SERVANTS, IN RESPECT OF THEIR GOVERNOURS.

The three first sinnes in Children, may be in Servants, as also these that follow:

1. Idiencesse in their Calling.
2. Unthankfulness in dealing with their Masters goods and affaires.
3. Stealing, privie defrauding of them, &c.
4. Eye-service.

DIVERS SINNES OF PARENTS ARE FOUND IN MASTERS, AS ALSO THESE THAT FOLLOW.

1. Unadvised entertainment of unseasonable servants.
2. Not using religious exercises with them: not admonishing nor correcting them, or doing it in an evil manner: grieving more when they faile in their business, than when they are slacke in God's service.
3. Not recompening their labours, by giving them a due reward when they are with them, and when they part from them.
4. Neglect of them in sickness: unjust stopping of their wages for that time.
Not relieving them (if they be able) in their age, who have spent their youth in their service.

**Sinnes of the Wife, in respect of her Husband.**

1. Fayling in reverence: which appeareth in froward looks, speeches, or behaviour.
2. Disobedience in the smalleste matters.
   *Sinnes of the Husband.*
1. Not dwelling with his Wife.
2. Neglect of edifying her, by instruction and example.
3. Denying her comfortable maintenance, & employment.
   *Sinnes common to them both.*
1. Want of love.
2. Bewraying one anothers infirmities: discovering each others infirmities.
   *Sinnes of the People, in regard of their Ministers.*
1. Disobeying and opposing against their Doctrine.
2. Denying them competent maintenance.
3. Not standing for them, when they are wronged.
   *Sinnes of Ministers.*
1. Slacknesse in Preaching. 2. Unprofitable or hurtfull Teaching. 3. Giving ill example.
   *Sinnes of Subjects.*
1. Rebellion. 2. Refusing to pay dues.
   *Sinnes of Magistrates.*
1. Carelessnesse in establishing & promoting true Religion.
2. Of maintaining peace, and providing that malefactors may be punished, and well-doers be encouraged.
   *Sinnes of inferiours, in gifts or age.*
1. Not acknowledging, nor reverencing, nor imitating the Graces of their Superiours.
2. Despising of the Aged.

*Sinnes against the sixth Commandement.*

1. Ash Anger, Envy, Hatred, Malice.
2. Brawling, Reviling, Threatning, and provoking of others.
A Dialogue of Preparation

3 Fighting.
4 Crueltie in punishign, oppressing, &c.
5 Murthering of our selves, or others, or consent thereto.
6 Immoderate worldly sorrow: neglect of Physicke, of wholesome diet, and exercise, sursetting, and drunkennesse; all which are enemies to the health and life of man.
7 Crueltie to our owne or others soules.

Sinnen against the seventh Commandement.

1 A Dulterie, Fornication, Inccest; Rape, Sodomie.
2 All wantonneffe, secret or open, alone, or with others.
3 Vnholy marriages, in regard of Religion, age, neereness of bloud, want of Parents consent, &c.
4 Abuse of the Marriage- natural seperatio, Leu. 18. 19
Bed, not observing the time of solemnme humiliation.
5 Nourishing of the causes and occasions of wantonneffe, as impure Lusts, Sursetting, Drunkennesse, Idlenesse, lascivious Apparell, societie with lascivious persons, lewd Books, Songs, or Speeches, wanton Looks, Pictures, Stage-Plays, Dauncing, Dalliance, &c.
6 Wearing apparell contrary to our Sexe.
7 Vnlawfull Divorce.

Sinnen against the eighth Commandement.

1 Ovetousnesse, and all desire of our Neighbours goods, albeit through feare or shame we cannot get them.
2 Church-robbing.
3 Robbing of our selves, by wastefulnes in Dyet, Apparell, Gaming, &c. by Idlenesse, unadvised Suretisship, Niggardliness, &c.
4 Robbing of others, taking away the smallest things: first, by fraud: secondly, uncharitable inclosure: thirdly, dealing wrongfully with the goods of the deceased: fourthly, dealing in buying and selling: fifthly, with-holding either things com-
to the Lords Supper.

committed unto us, or things found, lent, earned, or otherwise due.

5 Not making of restitution.
6 Counselling, or consenting to others in Theft.

**Sinnas against the ninth Commandement.**

1 False witness-bearing in publike or private, or consent thereunto.
2 Raising, spreading abroad, or listening to false reports of Tale-bearers.
3 Rash suspicion, hard judging, interpreting things in the worst sense.
4 Aggravating and discovering others inirmities, without care of their credit, others edification, or our owne good.
5 Flatterie.
6 Lying though in jest, or to a good end.
7 Boasting.
8 Injurious charging of our selves to be Hypocrites in time of temptation.
9 Want of care of our owne and others good name, that God might have more glory.

**The breach of the tenth Commandent: by**

Multitudes of evill thoughts and motions against our neighbours, and scarcitie of such as are good.

When we have attained to a particular sight of our many and grievous iniquities and transgressions; what is further to be done of us?

Wee must labour to bring our hearts to true sorrow and contrition.

What use is there of that?

It is very requisite in divers respects; it being a speciall means to purge our soules from the pollution of sinne, to move the Lord to have compassion on us, and plentifully to powre downe his mercies upon us, without which, it is certaine there is no found repentance in us, nor mercie to be expected from our God.
Sith it is so necessary, shew me how it may be got.

1 We must beseech the Lord (from whom proceedeth every good and perfect gift) to worke it in our hearts.

2 We must use all good helps to stirre up our selves thereunto: as,

1 To call to minde the multitude, and grievousnesse, and offensivenesse of our sinnes, together with our long continuance therein; aggravating them by every circumstance, to make them more odious to our soules:

2 To goe to the house of mourning, and to make use of every stroke of God, as well upon others as our selues.

3 Not onely with patience to indure, but with earnestnesse to intreat, and with gladnesse to accept of the helpe of such as have broken hearts themselves, and so are more able and skilfull to pierce and wound the soules of others.

4 When by our owne sitting, and others faithfull dealing, our hearts are touched with some remorse, let us seriously and thoroughly ponder upon the infinite mercy of God the Father, in giving his Sonne; and of Jesus Christ, in giving himselfe for us; who by reason of our sinnes, were deadly enemies unto him: the consideration whereof, cannot but move our hearts to relent, unless they be altogether stile and hard as an Adamant.

When our hearts are touched with inward griefe for our speciall corruptions, what is to be done in the next place?

We must bring them in an holy confession before GOD.

What motives are there, to induce us so to doe?

Divers: for,

1 Without this, there is no promise of pardon of sinne, nor indeed any godly sorrow, or found repentance for sinne.

2 This is a soveraigne preservative against Relapses, as may be seene in David, Peter, and Paul.

3 This is an effectuall meanes to quicken our hearts unto Prayer.

4 Hereby God is much glorified, in his Truth, Mercy, and Justice. Isb. 7. verse 19.

Seeing this acknowledgeing of sinne is so needfull, declare how it must be performed?
These Rules must be observed therein.

First, that it proceed from a good Root, viz.
1. From an utter hatred of sinne, not from wearinesse under the Cross, as in Pharaoh; nor from some sudden passion, as in Saul.
2. From hope of mercy: for if that be wanting, we shall never rest on God for pardon.

Secondly, that it be made in a good manner, viz.
1. Heartily and sincerely, not coldly and hypocritically.
2. Particularly, and with enumeration of our speciall and most beloved sinnes, as in Paul and Ezra.

What will follow upon such a Confeffion?

A desire of generall reformation, and a full purpose to abandon the allowance of every infirmity, and the practise of every grosse sinne.

How may this reformation be attained unto?
1. We must constantly and carefully avoid all the occasions of sinne, and be most jealous of our selves, where we are most prone to be overtaken.
2. We must conscionably and continually use all the meanes of goodnesse.
3. When we are overtaken through infirmity, we must presently and heartily lament our fall, and seeke a reconciliation.
4. If these meanes prevale not, we must binde our selves by a solemnne Vow, to strive against our principall sins, and most dangerous corruptions.

What other notes are there, besides these already spoken of, whereby we may be assured, that our repentance is found, and that our hearts doe not deceive us therein?

These following.
1. If wee be univerfall in our obedience, desiring to practife or forbeare whatsoever God would have us: not giving a dispensation to our selves for the committing of any sinne, or for the omitting of any duty; but disliking all manner of evil, both in our selves and others.
2. If wee increase in goodnesse, neither waxing worse, nor standing at a stay, but daily getting ground of our corruptions.

Notes of sound repentance.
PHI. 19. 6. See the Sermon on that place. DOTH. 2.
PSAL. 13, 14.
A Dialogue of Preparation

3 If in all our intents and actions we looke unto the Lord, as the searcher of our hearts, and the trier and rewarder of our workes: not discouraging our selves, whatsoever men thinke or speake of us and our doings, so that God do approve of us, and them; nor contenting our selves with mens approbation, when the testimony of God is not for us.

4 If we like best, and desire most that company in private, and that teaching in publike, where our speciall corruptions shall be roundly, and wisely, and mercifuly reproofed and inveighed against; and the duties wherein wee come shortest, most earnestly pressed, and stood upon: Neither falling out with those that admonish us, nor denying, cloking, excusing, or extenuating our faults.

What else is required in a worthy Receiver?

A competent measure of knowledge, so that he be able to discern betwene the Elements, and the Lords Bodie and Bloud, taking everything in its owne nature and kinde: not confounding the signe with the thing signified, nor putting no difference betwene the Sacramentall and common Bread; but using each of them in the manner appointed by Christ, and with such reverence as is due unto them, and to that end for which they were ordained; namely, the commemoration of Christ his death, & our nearer & fuller communion with him.

What further examination must we use, before our communicat- ing at the Lords Table?

We must trie whether we have Faith, or not: without the which, it is impossible to please God; and whatsoever we do, is sinne.

What then is to be believed concerning this particular Ordinance?

That it is ordained of God, not onely to be a signe, to signifie and represent, but a Seale also to confirme, and an instrument to exhibite Christ, with all his merits, unto every Believer.

Why is love unto men, required in all faithfull Receivers?

1 Because being destitute of that, we cannot be assured of Gods love unto us, nor of our love unto him.

2 We cannot, with any confidence, expect at the Sacra-
to the Lords Supper.

The Lords Supper is ordained as a Seal of the mutual fellowship and communion of God's people, as with their Head Christ, so with one another.

What rules are we to observe in love?

1. If any indignity or injury have been offered us, we must forgive and forget the same, and overcome evil with goodnesse; loving them that hate us, and praying for them that speak and practice evil against us; at least, desiring and striving so to do.

2. If we have done wrong unto others, we must undo it again: otherwise our sacrifice and service cannot be accepted.

But what if those whom we have wronged, be farre off, that we cannot seek unto them: or will not yield to a reconciliation, when it is sought for?

God will accept of our true and unsainted desire in that behalf, when a reconciliation is desired: but occasion denied, and if others will not be pacified towards us, it is their fault, and not ours; neither must that keepe us from the Sacrament.

Thus much concerning Examination.

What is that Premeditation which must be used?

It is a serious consideration of the benefits which we are to receive by Christ.

What are those?

They are set downe in the new Covenant (whereof the Lords Supper is a seal) & they may be reduced to these heads.

1. First, freedome from all manner of evil whatsoever, whether of sinne, or misery in this life, or in that which is to come,

2. Secondly, the enjoyment of all good things.

1. In this world: 1 For the inward man; 2 For the outward man.

2. In the world to come, all manner of happiness.

Having
Having thus examined ourselves concerning our Repentance, Knowledge, Faith, and Love, and used premeditation of the benefits that are to be expected of all worthy Receivers, what remaineth further to be done by us?

We must, before our approaching to the Lords Table, earnestly beseech his Majestie to give a blessing to those our endeavours: and where we have come short in fitting our selves, we are to entreat him to pardon it; to accept of us in the meditation of his deare Sonne; and to make a supply of all our wants, of his rich mercie and free grace.

But what if a man finde that he cometh very short of that examination and preparation that is required, were he not better to absent himself from the Sacrament, till he be better fitted?

In no wise: for if he be upright-hearted, though never so weake, the Lord will accept of him. And if he feele his sickness to be grievous and dangerous, he hath the more need to hasten to the Physitian: neither is staying from Gods Ordinance, a meanes to better his estate, but rather to make him worse, and to pull Gods heavy judgement upon his soule and body.  

Thus much concerning the duties tending to Preparation, before our receiving.

How must we be disposed in the present act of receiving?

We must present our selves with reverence before the Lord, setting our senses and our faith a-worke, and heedfully meditating on these foure things:

1 First, when we see the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out, we must consider of the bitter Passion of Christ Jesus; who was wounded for our transgressions, and broken for our iniquities; who encountered with his Fathers wrath, and with Satan, Death, and Hell; and for our fakes, in particular, sustained such wofull terrours in his Soule, and torments in his Bodie, that he cryed out in the bitterness of his heart, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? and at length shed forth his most precious bloud, for the pacifying of his Fathers displeasure, and the satisfying of his infinite justice. And withall, we should seriously ponder upon the inconceiveable love of God the Father, in giving his onely and well-beloved Sonne, to suffer
fuffer such unspeakeable tortures for us, who were cursed rebels against him: and thence be drawn to thinke on the haynoysnesse and odiousnesse of our sinnes, which so farre incens'd the Lords wrath and indignation, that nothing could quench the flame thereof, but onely the precious bloud of his deare Sonne.

Secondly, when we see the Minister distributing the Bread and Wine, wee are to consider, that as those outward Elements are offered unto us by Man; so Christ Iesus, with all his benefits, is offered unto us by the blessed Trinitie.

Thirdly, when we reach forth our naturall hand to receive the Bread and Wine, we must withall reach forth the hand of Faith, to apprehend and lay hold of Christ.

Fourthly, in eating the Bread, and drinking the Wine, we must apply Christ, with all his merits, particularly unto our selves; and be assured, that as that Bread & Wine are made the nourishment of our bodies, so Christ his body and bloud are made the nourishment of our soules; and as certainly as the Bread & Wine are made one substance with us, to strengthen our bodies, and to refresh our hearts, so surely Christ is made one with us, and we with him: and then our soules shall bee strengthened, & our hearts spiritually revived; either presently in the very act of receiving; or afterwards, in due time, when we shall stand in most need of comfort. And therefore, in assurance of Faith, we should stirre up our hearts, to expect all the fore-named benefits, of remission of sinnes, and sanctification of our natures; together with the fruition of all necessarie outward blessings, and the removall of all hurtfull crosses.

Well were it for us indeed, if we could looke for these things to be bestowed upon us: but the greatnesse and multitude of our sins is such, that we justly feare they will keep good things from us.

This doubt should not perplexe nor trouble us, if wee bee truly penitent for all our transgressions: for Christ hath paid for many and great sinnes, as well as for fewer and leeser; and through him, the Lord is ready to pardon all, and all manner of iniquities, as well the greatest of them, as the smallest: and if once our sinnes be done away, all the fore-named benefits do of right belong unto us.
What is to be done after our receiving?

First, we must give hearty thankes unto the Lord for this inestimable benefit which we have received, in being partakers of the Lords Supper.

Secondly, we must carefully mark how we speed, & what success we finde: and if the Lord afford us present comfort, we must be much more thankfull, and indewy by all good means to nourish and cherish the same: and if we misse of it for that time, we must notwithstanding give God the glory of his truth, in making good his Covenant, and every part thereof; and therefore with confidence and constancy wait and pray for the blessing: resolving with ourselves, (every one in his owne soule) that as sure as God is true and faithful in his promises, we shall in the fittest season, reap fruit and profit by his Ordinance, which in conscience and obedience unto him, we have beene partakers of. In which regard, every particular believer may boldly speake, in this, or the like manner, unto his owne soule: I have with as great uprightness as I could, communicated at the Lords Table, & there received the seal of the everlasting Covenant of grace, and therefore shall it assuredly be performed unto me; and albeit my faith and assurance of God's favour be but weak, it shall be strengthened; and whatsoever Satan, or mine owne deluded Conscience tell me, all mine iniquities are pardoned and covered, and I am at this very instant as free from sin, in God's account, as Adam was before his Fall, and as the Saints and Angels are now in Heaven; yea, as Christ Jesus himselfe is, I being a member of his mysticall Body.

And so for sanctification: though I be tainted with much ignorance, with many errors, with bad affections and evil actions; yet the Lord according to his covenant, will reforme all, and give me a minde to know him, and his will; and a memory to hold fast what I know: he will give me a heart to love him, to feare him, and to obey his commandements. I shall have Christ his Power, to strengthen and uphold mee; his Wisedome,
wisedome to instruct and direct me, and his Spirit to work all needfull graces in me, so that all the powers of hell shall never be able to prevaile against me, much lesse shall the afflictions of this world be able to separate me from Christ Iesus. I need not feare any evill: For all shall work together for the best to me, neither can I want any thing that is good, for God having given us his Sonne, how shall he not with him give us all things?

Thirdly, we must determine & endeavouer to lead a new life, bringing forth the fruits of Repentance, Faith and Love, more abundantly than in former times; as having renewed ou Covenant with the Lord for that purpose: and therfore when we finde any sinfull motions stirring within us, we should reason thus: Did I not at the Sacrament vow & covenant with God to strive against all manner of corruptions? and did I not receive the seal of the covenant in assurance that I should have power & strength against them? why then should I yeeld unto them? why should I be any longer in bondage unto them? nay, I will not serve sinne in the lusts thereof, but will resist it, and by the power of Christ I shall get victory over it: for the Lord hath said, that sinne shall not have dominion over us.

So also when we finde want and imperfections in our best services, as coldnes in prayer, distractions in meditating, unfruitfulness in hearing, deadnesse in singing of Psalms, &c. as also impatience or feaheartednes under crosses, disgraces, Persecutions, &c. Let us then relieve our selves with these or the like meditations; was I not lately at the Lords table, where I received a pledge of my ingrafting into Christ, who is the true Vine? and is there not in him sufficient juyce of all good graces to be derived to every branch that is in him? and is not the second Adam as able to convey his vertues into me, as the first Adam was to convey his corruptions? why then should I not seake to him in assurance of obeying strength to doe and suffer whatsoever he will have me? yes, I will run unto him, & crave power and ability from him, and asking I shall obtaine, he hath said it that will never falsifie the least part of his truth. 

May it not then bee concluded, if immediately unto the receiv-\[\ldots\]
Yes verily: if we be indeed worse, and not in our owne conceit onely, it is sure that there was some sinne or other un-repentent of, lying upon our consciences, which caused Gods ordinance to be ineffectuall. Indeed, the worthiest receivers in their owne imaginations, and through Satans false suggestions, seem unto themselves to be worse, (when in truth they are not so) because they feele their corruptions stirring more violently, and temptations rushing upon them more fiercely than ever before: but this is to farre from being an argument of unworthy receiving, that if they set themselves to resist in this combat, there can be no more evident testimony of their worthy receiving: for now that their sinne hath had a deadly blow, it beginneth (like a mad Bull in the same cage) to rage more furiously: and Satan being dispossesse'd of his holds, plyeth his business with new and fearfull assaults, and therefore such have no cause at all to be dismayed, but rather; very good cause to be comforted.

But (will some say) what shall I thinke of myself in this matter when I finde that whereas I resolved upon new obedience I come still farre short of that which I am desirous to performe?

You need not discourage your heart for all this: the sight of your imperfections argueth that your eyes are more enlightened than in former times, that you have gotten an humble and lowly conceit of your selfe, and your good deeds, which are things very pleasing unto God: neither doth hee require such strict obseruation of the Commandements, as that wee should obey them in perfection, but only that we should consent in our hearts, and labour in our practice to yeeld obedience thereunto: which if we can doe, the Lord will graciously accept of us, and of those duties which wee performe, seeing that we faile not in the Increase of his service; but onely in some circumstances, and that full soe against our wils.
HE drif and purpose of these words, is to
flirre up all men to true Repentance: where-
unto that they might bee the sooner indu-
ced, and therein better directed, hee sets
downe:

First, the miserable condition of impen-
tent persons, whose ptoposrity is to cloake their sinnes: con-
cerning whom he pronounceth, that they that hide their sins
shall not prosper: so long as sinnes covered, it prospers in the
soule: and so long as sinne thrives in the Soule, there can bee
no true prosperity in the state, either for inward or outward
things.

Secondly, the happiness of penitent persons: they shall finde
mercy: whatsoever their iniquities have beene, they shall bee
received into Gods favour, and finde all the fruits thereof, so
that they testifie the foundness of their Repentance by the
performance of these duties following, to wit,

First, that they come to a plain and sincere confession, which
is opposite to the former hiding, [but hee that confesseth, &c.]
Secondly, that they grow to a generall reformation, imply-
ed in these words [and forsaketh them.]

Ver. 13. He that hideth his sinne shall not prosper, &c.
From these words this Doctrine evidently riseth: that

THE
FIRST SERMON OF
THE LORDS SUPPER.

He that hideth his sinnes shall not prosper: but he that confess-
seth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy.
the harbouring and hiding of sinne hindeth all true prosperity and mercy.

Wheresoever sin hath allowing and entertainment in the heart, sound happiness is as far from that Party, as he himselfe is from uprightnes and goodnes: God never casteth away his kindness upon them that indceavour not to cast all sinne out of their foules. This point is made cleare unto us in the Psalme, where the Prophet describing a righteous man, and shewing that he, and he alone, is a blessed man, sets him out by this, that in his spirit there is no guile: Thereby implying, that guilefulness and blessednesse never go together. He that with a false heart favours himselfe in any sinne, hath obtained pardon for no sin; neither is he purged from any sin, what shewes foever he may make to deceive himselfe and others. And therefore all his iniquities shall be charged upon him, the least of which is sufficient to make him accursed: and then how far such a one is from happiness and true prosperity, any one may judge that hath the spirit of discerning: and this point David in that Psalme maketh plaine, by giving an instance in his owne person. He was no hypocrite indeed, yet had hypocrisy at that time a great place in his heart, and thereupon he began to hide his sin, and to invent shifts and devices to cover the same: but what followeth hereupon? when I held my tongue (faith he) (to wit, from confessing my sin, as afterwards by his contrary practice it is apparent) my bones consumed, &c. There he shews in many words what perplexity he was in when he was negligent in searching out his corruptions, and his heart had made a kind of confederacy with sin: that howsoever he was not utterly excluded from right to God's favour and true felicity, yet for that time he could have no sound feeling nor comfort of it, till he betook him to true and hearty confession: but then all was helped and remitted, as in that Psalme it followeth: Then I acknowledged my sin unto thee, neither hid I mine iniquity: for I thought I will confesse against my selfe my wickednesse unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the punishment of my sinne.

To this same purpofe there is a heavy threatening denounced against this devillish cunning and craft in covering of sin, by the Prophet Isaiah, Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their
their counsell from the Lord, &c. They that have such skill and art to hide their wickednes in the dark, and to carry bad matters covertly and closely, what do they get by it? They think thereby to have the credit and reputation of wise men, & deep Polititians: but the curse of God belongs unto them, which there is denounced against them, and shall pursue them, & his hand shall finde them out, with all their wretched and sinfull plots and devices, which they have hatched in the secrets of their braines, and thought to keepe close from God and Man: and hee shall bring to nothing both them and their counsels: for all their deepe reaches God can over-reach them, and his judgements shall overtake and overthrow them.

Agreeable to this is the place of Job, where it is said, That when wickednesse is sweet to a man, and hee hides it under his tongue, and favours it, &c. Then his meat shall be turned into gall of Aspæs, &c. There that holy man of God speweth, that when any one is a favourer and hide of sin, every thing that should bee for his good, shall turne to his hurt; his ordinarie food, his wealth, and substance: and in a word, whatsoever otherwise might be comfortable unto him, all shall go crosse with him, nothing shall bee prospered and blessed unto him. These places doe, in part, manifest unto us the danger of this cloaking of sinne: what misery it brings; what happinesse it deprives us of: yet besides those, there are reasons that may more clearly evict and prove that it must needs be so: for,

First, the causes of this hiding of sinne are naught: which are these following.

1. The first is the love of iniquitie: for sin is of that nature, that it will never tarry but where it is loved and much made of: it is such a guest as rough entertainment would drive away in a short time.

And that such do love it, is very evident in that former place of Job: where it is said, that first, wickednesse is sweet, and then they hide it. Looke what appetite and eager desire any one can possibly have after pleasant meats and dainty dishes: the fame or greater have they after sinne, the love whereof must needs be odious, because it is Gods utter enemy, and therefore the hiding of it must needs be dangerous.
Thus a second cause of this, is Hypocrifie; that men would faine seeme better than they are: and therefore they hide that naughtines which is in them indeed, and make a shew of that innocencie which they are farre from. This was the cause that made David to dissemble and cloke his great offence in the matter of Vriah; as the Holy Ghost testifieth in the Booke of the Kings: where it is said, that Abiams heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as the heart of David his Father, who did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and turned from nothing that he commanded him all the dayes of his life (to wit, of set purpose, and against his conscience, with any allowance and approbation), save onely in the matter of Vriah the Hittite. As if he should have said: Therein indeed he was false-hearted; and that was the reason why he was so long ere he acknowledg'd his grievous sin, and why he fell to devising of naughtie shifts for the covering of his wickednesse, which brought him little prosperitie: nay, so farre was he from gaining anything by it, that even one yeares cloking of sinne, procured him many fore and grievous troubles, inward and outward, for many yeares together. Thus we see the causes are bad, to wit, love of sinne, and damnable hypocrifie.

Neither are the effects any better: for, whosoever doth thus cover his sinnes,

1st. He cannot pray: for (faith David) If I regard wickednesse in my heart, God will not heare mee. Sinnes acknowledg'd and bewayled, quicken us to prayer: but sinnes allowed and maintained, utterly disable us for prayer; for they make a separation betwixt God and us.

2ndly. Such a one can have no benefit by the Sacrament; as we see by Judas: who, being a cunning Hypocrite, and a hider of mischievous Plots against his Master, whereas he was divelish enough before, he was wholly possesst by Satan after the eating of the Pasleover, and the receiving of the Lords Supper: For so the Evangelist testifieth. That after the sop (as also after the other Sacrament, ministred at that same Meale) Satan entred into him; meaning, more fully than ever before. The like may be said of Simon Magus, Acts 8. verse 20. &c.

3rdly,
3 Thirdly, the Word is altogether unprofitable unto such: it is choaked in the heart, that is, corrupted with sinne: it is even like pure Seed cast into a filthy Sinke. Thus we see, both by the causes and effects, how hurtfull a thing this hiding of sinne is; and how it stands in the way of all true prosperitie, to keepe the same from comming unto us.

But against this it may be objected, That it seemes to be untrue, that those that entertaine and nourishe sin in their soules, shall not prosper; for none prosper more than such: they commit hainous and scandalous evils, and boast of them, and yet have the World at will, and more than their hearts can wish. And on the contrary, David faith, When I declare my paine, and am sorry for my sinne, then mine enemies are alive, and are mighty, &c.

But for the satisfying of this doubt, we must know, that howsoever these ungodly ones hold up their heads, and prosper, and bring many of their purposes to passe, yet none are more wretched and miserable than they. There is no more certaine signe of Gods heavy displeasure, than for one to thrive in his ungodly courses. That Child whom the Father loves, he will correct betime; and so dealt God with David: There were many greater offenders than he in Israel, and yet none was so much scourged, because none was so well beloved. But for one to escape the Rod, and to be still further given up to his owne hearts lust, to commit sinne with greedinesse, this is the most heavy stroke and searefull judgement that can possibly fall upon any man: For by this means he still heapeth up wrath against the day of wrath, and the declaration of the just vengeance of God upon all unrighteous and unholy persons, when the Lord shall pay him home at full for all his evil thoughts, words and works.

Since then it is plaine, that hiding of our transgressions stops up the passage against all true prosperity, this makes for the reproofe of 4 sorts of men that offend in this point: namely,

1 First, of those that are altogether blinded with ignorance, and know not sinne, nor the differences of sinne; which are greater, which lesser. For, till the Lord informe men by his Word and Spirit, they can never see these things; never discover...
cerebetwixtgoodandevil,norbetwixtevilleandevilwhich
ismoreorlessoffensive. Foritislightthatdiscoversdark-
ness, andthereforetheybeingdestituteofthetrueunderstan-
dingoftheWord, andsoconsequentlyoftheSpirit,must
needsfaileinthediscerning, andsoalsointhediscoversing
and laying open of their corruptions; and therefore faile of found
happinesse.

2 Secondly, this is for the reproofofanother sort that are
worse than the former, who having the knowledge of sinne,
dodyet deny their faults when they are told of them, as Ana-
nias and Saphira did, and as Gehezi did when his Master exa-
mined him. Those sinnes that are smothered and carried so
closety, God will manifest and discover as openly as he did
theirs: laying upon the one, the punishment of a sudden and
strange death: and on the other, the Leprosie of his flesh, as a
means to cleanse his Soule.

3 Here also are another kinde of hiders to be condemned,
that will not grossly deny the fact, but will cloke it, and dis-
guise it, and give good names to foule faults.

Such are they that would have their gaming, and unthrifti-
ness, and conuenance, to go under the name of recreation; and
all their lewd meetings and abuse of the creatures of God, and
of the glorious and fearfull name of God, under the title of
good-fellowship, and merry meetings, &c. And so for other
notorious and grievous sins, which they paint over with faire
colours: but do such prosper? When they get a little money,
donottheynot lose more in their soules than that comes to? and
do they not bring upon themselves hardnesse, and profanen-
esse of heart: blindness and stupiditie of mind: untrustiness
and unfitness for any good thing: unwillingnesse to reade,
heare, meditate, and conferre of holy things? are they not a-
fraid to come into Gods holy presence in prayer, to be in the
company of such as will admonish or rebuke them; to be a-
one in the night, at such times as the Lord doth waken their
drowsie conscience? to say nothing of many foule brawles,
and other hainous evils, which do usually accompanie such
exercisces.

So others, when they are passionate and distempered; tell
them of it, and their answer is ready; What would you not have a man angry with sin? O this is base hypocrisy, and sinful disguising of your fault: for tell me, you that can be so eager against small offences in others, when they concern you selves, do you not bear with greater faults both in others and in your selves, when they do more neerely touch the glory of God? your owne heart tells you that it is so; and therefore never suffer your violent distempers and outrages to go under the vizard of zeale against sinne, but let them go for hatefull passions as they are.

Others we shall finde that will tearme their covetousnesse frugality, their pride in apparell comelinesse and decency, and the like: all which persons little consider what great injurie they do to their owne soules this while: for now the Word cannot cure them of those sins which they would faine thinke (though their hearts tell them otherwise) to be no sins: they can never humble themselves by repentance for them; and therefore they stand guilty before Gods judgement-seat to answer for them, besides all the hurt they shall in this life sustaine in regard of them.

4 A fourth sort that come under this reproofe, are such, as therein shew themselves to be clokers of sinne, that they do not use diligence to finde out their sinnes; such as are partial in dealing with their owne soules, and in searching to finde out their corruptions; that are loath to dig too deep, and throughly to ransacke the loathsome corners of their hearts. He that doth not his best endeavour to come to the sight of his secret sinnes, is esteemed of God to be a hider of them, and shall be destitute of that happiness and comfort that otherwise he might enjoy; and therefore, as David exhorted his enemies for their good, to examine their hearts upon their beds, that so they might desist from standing out against him: so he prati- ted it himselfe for the good of his owne soule, that he might not long go astray from the ways of the Lord. I have con sidered my ways (faith he) and turned my feet into thy Testi monies.

Secondly, this serves for our instruction: if we finde that we do not prosper in the things of the Lord, or of the world, let
When we prosper not, fail to examination. Let us examine if there be not some secret sin that is the cause of it. One comes to the Word preached, and finds no help thereby, against the corruptions unto which he is inclined; nor for the practice of good duties, unto which he is exhorted; he cannot perceive, that there is wrought in him any great love unto the Saints, to the Ordinances of God, or to the coming of Christ, &c. But he is dull and heavy when he is at it, and as dead and lumpish when is gone from it. Let him search, and he shall find, that there lies in his heart some sin or other unrepented, or the guilt of some duties unperformed, the venome whereof doth so poyson his conscience, that the Word of life can finde no place there; for when the Word comes to a pure heart, it will enter, and work effectually.

Another comes to the Sacrament, and finds no benefit thereby. Let him looke, if there lurke not within him some hidden corruption, that is the cause hereof: for the Sacrament is mighty in operation, if it be received with a pure and holy affection; it is the very communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. And therefore search and cast forth that ill Leaven that hath infected thy heart, and hindered thee from the comfort of this excellent Ordinance of God. And the like may wee say for Prayer, and any other of Gods Ordinances.

Likewise for the things of the world: Do we not prosper in our estate, in our Bodies, in our Children, &c. Let us make triall, if there be not some wickednesse that hath countenance with us: and if there be, thence (may we be sure) comes all our woe. They that will not grieve for sinne, because it is sinne, shall be driven to grieve for it, by many sore troubles: and they that are insensible of it when it is committed, shall be made sensible in the end, by feeling it punished. And this is a good use that is made of the troubles of Gods Church, in the Lamentations of Jerem. Wherefore (say they) is the living man sorrowfull? Why doth he turmoyle and vexe himselfe? Man suffereth for his sinne. What is the conclusion? Let us search and try our wavies, and turne againe unto the Lord, &c. We have sinned and rebelled, therefore thou hast not spared, &c.

Objection. But we know no speciall sinne, that should procure this hand of God against us.
Trie your owne hearts and wayes diligently: and then, if you finde no such iniquitie, your croffe is in Mercy, and not in judgement; for Triall, and not for Punishment; a Medicine, to purge and cure; and not a Poyson, to infect and destroy. But if we will have this comfort, we must strive to finde out what is principally amisse in us; for the heart is deceitfull above all things, and the Devill would make us thinke that great faults are but small faults, and that small faults are no faults. Let us therefore bring our soules to the Touch-stone of Gods Law, and then we shall not be deceived: as he himselfe faith; I the Lord search the heart: So his Word is a discerned discoverer of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and will make us able to descrie the same. And this let us be assured of for our comfort, That he that is truly desirous and withall industrious to finde out his speciall sinnes, he shall have them discovered unto him; because that is the end why God smiteth him (as may appeare by that former place of the Lamentations) that he might be brought to the sight and sense of his transgressions, and to found humiliation for them. And therefore, they that upon a good and conscionable search made, can discerne of no groffe or presumptuous sin in themselves, may be comforted, notwithstanding their crosses, and rest fully assured, that God will not lay any thing to their charge, because they are enemies to sinne, and not lovers or maintainers of the same. And thus much for the first Point. It followeth.

[But bee that confesseth.] This is contrary to the former hiding of sinne, when we so search and lift our hearts, that we come to the knowledge of our offences, and the acknowledgement of the same before the Lord. Whence this Doctrine may be gathered: that,

Whoever would finde pardon for his sinnes, must confess the same.

He that looks for remission on Gods part, must bring confession for his part: wherever sinne is unacknowledged, there it is unpardonned: no mercy, till there, bee a sight and confession of iniquitie.

Therefore Daniel confesseth his owne sinnes, the sinnes of the
The people and the sinses of their fore-fathers; and aggravates the same in many words, saying; We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, yea we have rebelled and have departed from thy precepts, and from thy judgements. We would not obey thy servants the Prophets that spake in thy Name, &c. Into us appertaineth open shame, to our Kings, to our Princes, and to our Fathers, &c. For we have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, &c. Yea, all Israel have transgressed the law, &c. Therefore the curse is poured upon us.

And thus doth Ezra likewise in the behalfe of the people that had taken strange wives: for having rent his clothes and his garment, he fell upon his knees, and spread out his hands unto the Lord his God; and said, O my God, I am confounded and ashamed to lift up mine eyes to thee my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, & our trespass is gone up to heaven, &c.

The same course doth Nehemiah take: for thus he speaketh in the name of all Israel, We have grievously sinned against thee, and have not kept thy Commandements, nor the Statutes, nor the judgements which thou commandest thy servant Moses, &c. So those that believed, Acts 17, 19. came and confessed and shewed their workes.

And there is reason to prove that this confession is verie necessary, if ever we would finde favour with God: for,

1 First: without it we have no promise belonging to us: as God cannot in justice with-hold mercy from such as plainly lay open their transgressions before him: so can he not without violating his truth, vouchsafe mercy to those that smother and hide their sinses from him: for thus runnes the promise; If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousnesse. Whence we see that where there is a true acknowledgement of sin, there is promised both a true remitting of sin, and purging from sinne: but where that is wanting, no such thing can be expected.

2 Secondly, those mult needs have the gate of mercy shut against them, that do not confesse their faults unto the Lord, because acknowledgement of our guiltinesse is one of the first fruits of true Repentance, and one of the chiefe testimonies of a true penitent heart. As is manifest in David, who,
when his heart smote him after he had numbred the people, deleth plainly with God; O Lord (faith he) I have sinned exceedingly in that I have done: Now O Lord I beseech thee, take away the trespass of thy servant, for I have done very foolishly. And all those that are truly and thoroughly wounded in their soles for their offences, as David then was, will inforce themselves to doe as he did; for till men frame to this confession, it is certain they are not yet at warre with their sinnes.

3 Thirdly, to the intent we may the sooner be perswaded hereunto, we must understand that this is a very soveraigne preservative against relapses and backslidings: for he that hath once done this peneance before Gods Judgement-seat, it will be such a corrosive unto his heart, that he will hardly fall into those open and grosse sins twice, which he hath sincerely and heartily acknowledged once. When Peter & David and Paul had attained to this, and laid open their sins in an unfained confession of them to the Lord, they never returned to those ill practices againe. Infirmities and slips they had many in other kindes, but they were so fenced and fortified against those particulars, that they stood strong against them, and never fell againe into them whiles they lived.

4 Fourthly, this is a very effectual meanes to quicken us unto prayer, and therefore still in the Scripture we shall finde that where there hath bene hearty confession, there have followed as hearty Petitions; as we see in the former example of Daniel & Nehemiah. For how vehement their requestes were, may appeare in the places before alladged, by the manner of putting them up, O Lord heare, O Lord forgive, O Lord consider, and doe it (faith Daniel) deffer not for thine own sake, O my God. And Nehemiah commeth with the like importunity, O Lord God of Heaven, the great and terrible God that keepest covenant and mercy, &c. I pray thee let thine ears be attent, and thine eyes open to heare the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee daily, day and night for the children of Israel thy servants. O Lord I beseech thee, let thine eare now hearken to the prayer of thy Servant, &c.

5 Fiftly and lastly, this is a very great meanes to glorifie God in which regard Joshua laid unto Achan, My sonne I beseech
Now if any require, how we by this means should glorifie God: I answer, that we give him the glory: first, of his truth, in acknowledging that which his word chargeth upon us: secondly, of his Iustice, if he should proceed against us: and thirdly, of his mercy, in that we thereby imply, we have hope that he will forgive us. For, if we did expect no favour, we should never discover our filthy nakedness before the eyes of the righteous Judge of Heaven and Earth. Sith then, that without this confession there is no promise made unto us, no sound repentance in us, no ability to resit corrupotion for the time to come: and wherefoever this is (on the contrary side) it puts life into our prayers, and bringeth honor unto Gods name: the point is cleere and evident, that this confession is so necessarie, that without it, there is no mercy to be looked for from God.

Which maketh for the just reproofoe and condemnation of those that faile in this dutie. They pretend they would faine have God to pardon their sinnes, but they will bring no bill of inditement against themselves; onely in generall they will acknowledge themselves to be sinners as they are, but will grow to no particulars at all. They have some wit and skill to set out other mens sins to the view of the world, in every branch and circumstance thereof: so that, many times they make them greater in appearance than they are indeed: but come to any offence of their owne, and if you cannot prove it, they will not confesse it: if you can prove it, they will excuse it: It was not long of them, such and such provoked them, or intified and allureth them: but that would not serve Adamsturne, that Eve perswaded him to eate of the forbidden fruit: neither would that cleere Ahab, that Iezabels hand was chiefe in the murdering and robbing of Naboth. They should rather have harkned to Gods voice, than unto the wicked counsels and perswasi- ons of any: and if they had any worke of Gods spirit in their hearts, they would charge themselves & not others. For grant that the occasions of their fall were from others, yet the cause was in themselves, even their owne cursed corruption, and rebellious
to the Lords Supper.

rebellious disposition. And therefore their labouring to put off the blame and shame of their sins upon others, evidently pro-
claimeth that they have not an understanding mind, nor a bro-
ken and humble and penitent heart. And the like may be said of those that howsoever they will come to a recital of divers 
misdemeanors, either before God or men, or both: as the quali-
tie of their offences require: yet they doe it so slightly and 
coldly, that though they name particulars, it is sure they are 
not touched with them: such a cold confession will bring as 
cold consolation; their faint and careless suing for pardon, is 
the next way to procure them a denial.

Secondly, this is for instruction, that we doe our best in-
deavour to learne this Art of acknowledging our sins aright: let us leave off aggravating of other mens faults, and passe a 
hard censure and sentence upon our owne, for that will pro-
cure us most favour, and the largest measure of mercy from the 
Lord.

With earthly Judges, the more is confessed by a Malcfa-

cor, the worse it is likely to goe with him: but it is otherwise 
with the great Heavenly Judge: the larger and freer our con-
fession is, the easier and surer and speedier shall our remissi-
on be: If wee judge ourselves, we shall not be condemned of the 
Lord.

Now to the intent we may performe this duty the better, it will not be amisse to set downe some rules for our direction 
herein.

We must know therefore that in sound confession, these 
things are requisite:

1 That it proceed from a good roote.
2 That it be performed in a good manner.
For the first: if the root be rotten and corrupt, the fruit 
springing from thence, cannot but be distasteful to the 
Lord.

Now, that the root may be found, these things must be 
looked unto in our confession.
1 That it proceed from a hatred of sinne.
2 From hope of mercy.
Concerning the former, wherefoever the hatred of sin is wanting (as it was in Saul and Pharaoh, when they made acknowledged of their offences) it is plaine that the parties confessing are not weary of their sins, but of their plagues, as Pharaoh was: that their acknowledged proceedeth not from inward remorse for their faults, but from some sudden passion, and from the force of their natural Conscience; as in Saul it is evident: for both of them fell presently to their old works and ways againe, and returned with the Dog to their vomit, and with the Sow to their wallowing in the mire; and so it is with many: when the snares of death lay hold of them, or some heavy plague lyeth upon them, or the flashings of a guilty Conscience begin to scorche them, they are in great perplexity and anguish, even at their wits end, and know not what to doe, nor what course to take for the obtaining of some ease: And then even as a Dog that hath overgorged his stomack, will vomit up that which paineth and troubleth him: so will they in like case vomit out some passionate confession: looke what commeth first to their minds, and most troubleth and frighteth them, out it shall to one or other. But as the Dog when he is eased of his former paine, will return again to his lothsome vomit, and eate up that which before he had rid his stomacke of: so will they betake themselves to their old custom and fashion of life againe, and fall to the fresh practice of those odious and monstrous evils which upon the bed of their sickness, or in the day of their heavinesse, they in a word acknowledged and renounced as vile and abominable. If now of Dogs they had beene made sheepe, they would never have lapped up their filthy vomit againe, that were enough to poyson a sheepe, that pleaseth a Dog.

And as Saul and Pharaoh dealt, so did the Israelites in the same sort: when the wrath of God lay heavy upon them, and he consumed their daies in vanity, and their yeeres in mourning, &c. they returned and sought God early: But how? they flatte-red with their mouth, & dissembled with him with their tongue, For their heart was not upright with him, neither were they faithfull in his Covenant.

When miserie pressed sore upon them, then they seemed to

Note.
fall out with their sinnes, whereas in truth they fell out onely
with their crosses, as the effect shewed, in that when their di-
Stresses were over, they sinned still against God, and provoked
the most High, by their rebellions.

This then is the first thing necessarily required when we
make our Confession, that it proceed from a hatred and in-
dignation against our sins, and against our selves for the same,
2 Corinthians 7. 11.

A second thing is, that it must come from hope of mercy:
For, if that be wanting, our confessing will but be a witnessing
against our selves for our deeper condemnation. And God
may justly say unto us, as he did to that unprofitable servant
in the Gospel, *Out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee, thou
evill servant.* If we plead guilty, and doe not sue for a par-
don (as we will never if we be destitute of hope) our case is so
farre from being made better, that it is a great deale worse. *In-
das confessed that he had sinned, betraying innocent blood; yea
& made restitution also: but it was wrested from him through
the horror of his conscience, & the fearfull apprehension of
Gods wrath, beating upon his sinfull heart: and therefore not
expecting any mercy for his hainous offence, he never offered
any prayer to God, but made a quicke dispatch of himselfe.
Whereas, if his confession had beene joyned with hope offa-
vour, he would have fallen to mourning and lamentation for
his sinne, and so to an earnest craving of pardon for it. Thus
we see what is the root of sound Confession.

It followeth to be considered, how it may be made in a
good manner.

And the first thing in that is, that we confess heartily and
sincerely with sorrow and shame, that we have provoked so
gracious a God: So did the Publican, when he smote upon his
breast, and said, *Lord be mercifull unto me a sinner.* And so did
Ephraim: of whom the holy Ghost speaketh in this manner.
I heard Ephraim lamenting thus: thou hast corrected mee, and l
was chastised as an untamed Calf, &c. Surely after that I con-
verted, I repented: and after that I was instrucced, I smote upon
my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even consumed, because I did
bear the reproach of my youth. Where it is declared, that
that after they had been long and grievously afflicted, and began at length to be soundly humbled, they did not only lee and acknowledge their sins, but were vexed and troubled, and even confounded at the consideration, and in the confession of them; yea, even of the follies and vanities of their youth, contrary to this practise of theirs, is the custome of many, who will reckon up and recount their several iniquities before the Lord; but they doe it so idlely and drowsily as if it were nothing to offend him. Whereas if a child should come with such a rude and bold confession of his faults to his parents; or a wife speake so sleightely of her unchaste and unholy behaviour before her Husband, they would dislike the confession of the faults, as well as the faults themselves: and all that heard them would cry out upon them, there is an impudent Wife, and a gracelesse childe. And we must not conceive then, that God will be pleased with such lame and madmed Sacrifices. Let none be deceived, God will not be mocked: he pronounceth him accursed, whosoever he be that doth the worke of the Lord negligently.

A second thing to be observed in the manner of it is, that we confesse not our sins in the lumpe only, and by whole sale as it were, but that we bring before his holy eyes our particular and speciall sins, which will be to us a testimony of great uprighness; for we are naturally prone, either to content ourselves with a generality of Confession, that we are great sinners, the Lord be mercifull unto us, &c. which we may do for our credit, because we should be esteemed penitent persons: or if we come to particulars, we will rather meddle with any, than with our beloved sins, which are so deeply rooted, that we must breake up the fallowe ground of our hearts, and put our selves to paine before we can be purged from them. This therefore argueth great sincerity, when we can bring our capital and head sins to arraignement: as the holy Apostle Paul did, when once he was throughly converted: I was (faith he) a blasphemer, and a persecuter, and an oppressor. And likewise Ezra, who acknowledged in the behalfe of the people their maine great sinne of marrying strangewives, whose practise if we can follow, we shall have that good evidence
of soundnesse and uprightnesse in our soules that they had.

3 Thirdly, this makes for the singular comfort of Gods Children, that can particularly aggravate their secret sinnes, that no body in the world can touch them for: their beloved sinnes, which heretofore they would not for a Kingdome have parted from. That no malicious revengefull wicked man can so set out the faults of his enemy, whom hee hates with a deadly hatred, as they can the corruptions of their owne hearts and lives.

This is a signe that their Consciences are touched by the holy Spirit of grace, whose speciall and proper worke it is, to convince the heart of sinne, John 16. verse 18. Such have lowly mindes, and broken hearts. The Law may make one confesse his faults to men in a passion, but it can never make a man lay them open before God in true contrition: that is a worke of the Spirit of Iesus Christ. Let such goe on still, and they shall finde good successe; We are given to speake the worst of our adversaries, and to set forth their vile practi- ses to the uttermost, before such are able and ready to take them downe: what greater enemy have we than sinne? And where can we complains better than unto the living God, who is of infinite mercy to pardon, and of infinite power to subdue our greatest and strongest corruptions? Let us make our moane to him, and he will have compassion on us: for he knoweth our hearts, and the venome and strength of our corruptions, better then we ourselves doe; and if we con-

fesse them heartily, particularly, and constantly before him, he hath given us two pawnes, to wit, his faithfulnesse, and his Justice, for the remission and suppression of them: If hee should not forgive us, and heale our natures when wee have done our part, he should forfeit his Truth and his Justice, which cannot be changed, but continue the same for ever-

omore.

[And forsaketh them] This must, and will follow upon the former: and this offereth unto us another point of Doctrine, namely: that,

It is not sufficient to confesse sinne, but we must also leave and forsake it.
We must renounce and abandon the allowance of every infirmity, and the practice of every grosse sinne.

This, as it is commanded by the Prophet Isaiah, who faith,  

Let the wicked forfake his ways, and the ungodly his owne imaginations, &c. So was it practised by those worthy and excellent Converts, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, who did not onely acknowledge their vile and naughty practices, but to shew their thorow detestation of them, and their resolution to forfake them, brought their curious Bookes and burnt them openly, though the price of them amounted to a great value: that so, those that had been witnesses of their sin, might also be witnesses of their Repentance: and that neither themselves nor others might be infected by those Books afterwards: and that those whose hearts were not yet touched with remorse for that sinne, might by their example be drawne to a dislike of it, and to hearty sorrow and repentance for it.

And that a sound confession, and a holy reformation goe together, might be further proved, by the examples of David, of Peter and of Paul, which were formerly alledged, who having once made acknowledgement of their sins, never fell to committing ofthem any more. And reason will shew the same more fully and cleerely: for,

1. First, if there be not a leaving of sin, sure it is, there is no sound Repentance: for, if there were the thorow hatred and unfained sorrow for sinne (before mentioned) it would kill the same at the very root, and then it would dye also in the branches.

2. This redressing of a mans waies, as well as confessing of his faults, it is very needfull, because otherwise one can have no assurance that he hath Faith; for that purifies the heart, and if the heart be cleane, all that proceed from it will be answerable thereunto. A pure fountaine cannot send forth impure streams.

3. Further, hee may be certaine, that the Spirit of Christ dwells not in his heart: for whereoeuer that takes possesion, it expels sinne, and will not suffer such filthy ware to rest in that roome where it doth remaine: and if it be not in the
of the Lords Supper.

Warehouse it cannot be brought forth into the Shop.

This serves for the reproofo of those, that say, and will stand to it, that they have repented, and do repent daily: and why? they confess their sinnes every day. But have they mended their faults that they have so often confessed? Nay, they cannot say so: though they repent every day, they mend no day; then let them looke for no mercy. But to come more nearly to such kinde of men; they affirme they have acknowledged their swearing and blaspheming: their drunkenesse, and swilling: their brawling and contending: their rayling and reviling of such as are better than themselves: they have confessed these and the like to be great faults, and have beene sorrowfull in their hearts for them: but have they left these soule sinnes? O no, flesh and bloud is weake; and all have their infirmities, and so have they infirmities. Nay, there are grosse presumptuous evils, and such as howsoever being weighed in the ballance of the flesh, they seeine light; yet being weighed in the ballance of the Sanctuary, they will be found sufficient to press them downe unto the pit of hell, if they cease not from the practice of them. And where they say that flesh and bloud is weake, let them know, that if they be but flesh and bloud, they can never enter into the kingdome of heaven. They that are Christs, have crucified the flesh with the lufts and affections thereof; neither are wee any longer debtors to the flesh, to live according thereto: but we must mortifie the deeds of the flesh by the Spirit: that howsoever sinne will still remaine in us, yet it may not raigne in our mortall bodies, that we should obey it in the lufts thereof, or that our members should be weapons of unrighteousnesse for the execution of evill any more. And this we may boldly say, that who soever liveth in those forenamed sinnes, or the like, never yet knew what repentance for sinne, and found confession of sinne, meaneth. And therefore what good conceit foever such have of themselves, they do but flatter themselves, and dissemble, and speake with a double heart. If they have had some gripings for their scandalous and sinful manner of living, and thereupon have cast forth some pece of a confession, the best that they can make of it, is but this, that they have beene Dogge-sicke (as was shewed Dogge-sicke. before)
before) and so disgorged their stomackes of that that pained them: not in any hatred of the things (for they return to their vomite againe) but in desire to be exempted and freed from those bitter pangs and hellish tortures which they finde in their soules. At most they are but as the Sow that hath beene washed, seeing that they returne to their old filthines. There hath beene onely a change of the out-side, none at all of the in-side: for, if their nature had beene altered and renewed, their words and works would have been reformed, and that not for a fit, but for ever, in the whole course of their carriage afterwards. They might indeed now and then meet with a rub, and stumble sometimes, but their walke for the most part, should be in the wayes of godlineffe; and though they did fall, they should rise againe, because the Lord would put under his hand.

Psalm 37.

Therefore let all men carefully look unto themselves: if they were swearers before the Sacrament, and be swearers still: if idle persons, unthrifts, scoffers, &c. before they come to the Word, and continue to such still, their case is fearfull. Let them be afraid: how they stand in the courts of Gods house to heare; and how they draw neere to the Lords Table to receive the holy things of God. For if they come not to be helped against those grievous sinnes which heretofore they have lived in, let them know, they shall finde no mercy: and if they finde not mercy, they shall be sure to meet with judgement: they shall not misse of one. And howsoever they may bragge that they trust to be saved as well as the best, when their lives are as bad as the worst; yet they shall find at the time of death and when the horrible terrors of their guilty conscience shall surprise them, that all such boasting hath been vaine: and that true repentance consists in a change of the life without, as well as of the heart within: and then if they have not forsaken their sinnes, they shall be in danger, and in feare to go from the bitter pangs of death to the everlasting paines of hell.

In the second place, seeing it is so dangerous to make semblance that we are touched with repentance for sinfull courses, when we proceed not to a reformation of the same, therefore it behooves us to use all good meanes, whereby we may attaine to this reformation: such as are these that follow:

Vse 2.

Means to attaine to reformation.
of the Lords Supper.

First, we must constantly and carefully avoid all the occasions of those sins which we pretend that we have been humbled for. If one would not be a Gamester any more, let him avoid the company of Gamesters: if one would not be overtaken with incontinency & intemperancy, or the like, let him never frequent such places, nor associate himselfe with such persons, as that any temptation should by such means be offered unto him. Our nature is as Tinder: if others do but cast the least sparke upon us, we are in danger to take fire presently: and therefore as we will not set flax, or any such combustible matter neere the Chimney, for feare of the worst: so let not us adventure to thrust our selves into any place where there is perill of infection: but bee jealous of our selves in eyewching all inducements, as unto any, so especially unto our owne finnes, and those vices that we are most prone unto.

Secondly, as we ought to forbeare all meanes of evil, so we must use all meanes of goodnes: not one or two of the meanes, but every one of them in their places: for otherwise if we refuse all of them, or any of them, it is a righteous judgement of God that we should live and die in our sins. Therefore let us give our selves to reading, if we can; to hearing, if we cannot reade, and to meditate on the Word: chiefly on such places as make most against our owne corruptions; fast, pray, receive the Sacrament, use godly conference, and then using these meanes conscientially, we shall finde that every one of them will worke some Grace, and minister unto us strength and vertue against our speciall sins, and all rightly used, will make us conquerours over all our finnes.

Thirdly, if at any time we be overtaken by infirmity (as who is not often? for in many things we offend all) let us lament and bewaile our offences, and that presently upon the committing of them: for if sinne be quickly and heartily lamented, the course thereof will be speedily stayed, and we shall gaine by an infirmity, which is by that means soundely healed. For our experience of our owne weaknesse, and so our humility will be encreased: our discerning of the subtleties of Satban, and the deceitfulnesse of sinne, and our care and wretchfulness to resift it hereafter, will he thereby augmented.

Fourthly,
Fourthly and lastly, if none of these means will serve the turne, we must bind our selves by a solemn vow and covenant to labour and strive against our principal and most dangerous corruptions; and to abandon them whatsoever become of us. And though we may be tempted, and that often and strongly, yet we must resolve (by God's grace) never to yield unto them again. If we could thus earnestly set against our sinnes, Sathan's assaults would be nothing so strong: for if we did manfully resist the Devil, he would flee from us like a Coward: and his instruments seeing us resolute, would have no heart to meddle with us, and if we should fall once or twice afterwards, the breach of our vow would so pierce & wound our hearts, that it would make us much stronger against new assaults. And the true reason why the Devil is so violent in tempting, and we so weak in resisting, is, because we hang off, and half between two opinions as it were, and have such faint resolutions of forsaking our sinnes, and do seldom and slightely make covenants for the repressing of them.

Thirdly, this is for exceeding great comfort unto those of God's children that have attainted to such a measure of sound godly sorrow, that for their great and grosse sinnes, they have (by God's mercy) left them all, so that they would not commit them againe for a thousand worlds. This is an infallible token of an upright heart, and such may be sure that they have a portion in the mercies of God, which he promiseth to his chosen people, who confess and leave their sinnes.

Oh, but they finde many passions and infirmities still.

Be it so: yet if they cease to love them, and to give entertainment to them, all is well. For presumptuous and offensive evils, we must cease to practise them: but for humane frailties, it is impossible that the most penitent man should be quite freed from them. If our hearts check us, and we desire to have others reprove us, and use the means before set downe, whereby more Grace may be every day conveyed unto us, though we be overtaken many times, as a Bird in the snare, before we be aware, and have a sudden flashing in our affections, that is ready to shew forth it selfe in our outward actions; yet our hearts are sound and sincere notwithstanding.
neither should we keep from our foules that comfort which
doth belong unto us.

[Shall finde mercy.] Here is the promise of God upon our
obedience: and this we may be assured of. Whence the Do-
crine is:

That whatsoever we have bee, or whatsoever our sinnes
have bee, if we can bring confession and reformation, we
shall finde mercy: God will pitty us, and have compassion on
us (as the word signifieth.) 1. First, we shall have remission
of sinnes. 2. Secondly, the healing thereof, that we shall never
be under the bondage of it any more. 3. Thirdly, the Lord
will accept of us, and of our services, and make all the meanes
comfortable and profitable unto us. When we come to the
Minisitry, he will write his Lawes in our hearts. When we
come to the Sacrament, we shall not onely receive the blessed
Bread & Wine, but we shall have communion with the Sonne
of God. When we offer up our prayers, God will heare in hea-
ven, and have mercy upon us, and fulfill our hearts desire. All
these things are promised in the Covenant set downe Ezek.
36.25. and Jer.31.31. as also Isa.1.18. which Text is hand-
led in the next Sermon; and therefore to that place, the larger
handling of this point shall be referred. Onely a word or two
for the use of it.

Which is for very great consolation unto Gods Servants; who
need not be discouraged by any of their former sins, but
may make full account, that if they have acknowledged their
evill works, and cleansed and redressed their sinfull wayes,
God will be (nay is already) reconciled unto them. When the
prodigall Sonne resolved to come home unto his Father, and
to take new wayes, and though he had been an unthrift before
yet he would now mend and reforme all: his Father never
charged him with old matters, neither needed he because he
charged himselfe. If an earthly Father will and should deale
thus, how much more will the Father of all mercies deale gra-
ciously with his children, that humble themselves before him
and remove their sins out of his sight: especially sith the grea-
ter mercy he sheweth to his owne children, the more glory
he shall gaine to his owne Name.

There-
Therefore let us make full reckoning that we shall not only meete with Gods Ministers at the meanes, but with God himself who will pardon that which is past; and conforme and strengthen us unto every good worke for the time to come: who will give us the power of godlinesse, & the life of grace: who in a word will grant us (and there conforme his grant unto us) the right unto, and use of all his mercies & blessings whatsoever, with the removall of all hurtfull crosses. When the first Adam did but once eate of the forbidden fruit, it was enough to infect him and all his posterity, though there were but one threatening annexed to it, and none did taste of it but he alone. And why should not we expect on the other side, that when our second Adam, Iesus Christ, hath eate of the commanded fruit, and hath sanctified it unto us by his example, word and prayer, and annexed many promisses unto it, and we our selves also do often receive it: why (I say) should not we beleve that it shall be more sufficient and forcible to minister holinesse and happinesse unto us, than was the forbidden fruit, to bring sinne and misery upon us? especially since it is certaine, that none ever sped ill at the Sacrament, but they that came with ill and hypocritical hearts thereunto: and as every ones confession and reformation hath beene more sound and faithfull, and his resolution to cleave unto God more firme and constant: so his comfort hath been more large and durable.
THE SECOND SERMON of the LORDS SUPPER.

Isaiah i.

Ver. 16. Wash you, make you clean: take away the evil of your works from your eyes: cease to do evil.

17 Learn to do well: seek judgement, relieve the opprest; judge the fatherlesse, and defend the widow.

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins were as crimson, they shall be made as white as snow, though they were red like scarlet, they shall be as wool.

19 If ye consent to obey, ye shall eat the good things of the Land.

In the former part of this Chapter, the Prophet hath charged these Iewes, that though they carried the name of Gods children, and of Gods people, and thought themselves in very good case, yet they were indeed notable Traitors and Rebels against him; which rebellions of theirs is set out by two comparisons: for first, he compares them with the Oxe and the Ass; which though they be of the dullest sort of creatures, yet the one knowes and remembers his owner; and the other his Masters cribbe: and where they have received kindness, they will acknowledge it, and do service for it. But these Iewes, though they had beene fed at full, and received innumerable blessings from the Lord, yet they were unmindfull of God, and of his favours, & more unteachable, untractable, and unserviceable than were the Oxe or the Ass.

They
They consider not whence, nor why, they had those many
mercies which they enjoyed, and therefore did service there-
with, not to God, but to their own lusts.

2 Secondly, having compared them to the dullest Beasts,
and proved them to be inferior unto those unreasonable cre-
atures; He after makes comparison betwixt them and the vilest
sinners in the world; to wit, the Sodomites: to whom they
were so like for their idlenes, pride, excess, and cruelty, that
he calls them by that name, Verse 10, saying; Heare the word of
the Lord, O ye Princes of Sodome: hearken unto the Law of our
God, O people of Gomorrah.

But against this they might except, and say to the Prophet,
you do us wrong in thus charging and vilifying us: we are
other manner of people than you take us for, and would make
us seem to be: we have many things to commend us which
neither Beasts nor Sodomites have: for we offer multitudes of
Sacrifices, and observe solemn days and Feasts, the new
Moones, and Sabbaths, and make many prayers, &c.

This he yields they did, but thence taketh advantage, and
doubleth his accusation against them, turning all these things
to their deeper condemnation, ver. 11, 12, 13, 14. What have
I to do with the multitude of your Sacrifices, saith the Lord? I
am full of the burnt-offerings of Rams, &c. When ye come to ap-
pear before me, who required this of your hands, to tread in my
Courts? Bring no more Oblations in vain: Incense is an abomina-
ition unto me: I cannot suffer your new Moones, nor Sabbaths,
nor solemn days (it is iniquity) nor solemn Assemblies. My
soul hateth your new Moones, &c. And there is reason why
God should thus abhorre both them and the worship they of-
fered unto him. For (it is added) ver. 15. when they stretched
out their hands to prayer, their hands were full of blood, that is,
they were full of revenge, full of cruelty and contention, and
therefore they must needs performe those Religious Exercises
hypocritically and carnally: in which respect they were worse
than Sodomites: for they did but abuse their time to idlenesse,
their apparel to pride: their Dyet to excess, &c but the
Jewes abused the Word, and the Sacrifices, and the Sab-
baths, and other ordinances of God: and therefore as much
as spiritual things are better than natural; so much worse were they that prophaned the former, than the Sodomites that abused the latter.

Thus having shewed them how bad they were, he leaveth them not here, but telleth them how all might be amended.

\[\text{Verse 16. Wash you, make you clean, &c. as if he should have said, I have shewed that you have polluted and defiled your selves beyond the Sodomites, and so are become exceeding unclean, and unholy; yet if you will take my advise, and follow my counsell, I will shew you a way how you shall helpe all, and that is, to wash and cleanse your selves from this your filthiness, by godly and hearty sorrow for the same: and whereas you will be ready to conceive that this is a matter easily and quickly done, I tell you that it is otherwise, and therefore bid you wash you, make you clean: purge your hearts and your hands, and wash and wash, againe and againe: and never leave washing till you have made your selves thoroughly clean.}\]

Then further, that they might not deceive themselves, he declareth unto them more particularly what sins they should wash away: \[\text{Take away the evil of your works, &c.} \]

Herein including an answer to another objection, that the hearts of some might make, concerning their Sacrifices and their Prayers, &c. before mentioned: for they might reply upon the Prophet in this manner; you finde fault with our Oblation, and tell us that God loathes our Sacrifices and services; what then would you have us doe? should we leave off these works of Pietie, and quite give over serving of God?

Not so (faith the Prophet: but) \[\text{Take away the evil of your works:} \]
do the works still, but remove that which God hates in them; retaine the matter, but reforme the manner of them.

Now, whereas some might be so shamelesse as to lay, we have done so already, and doe so still: who can charge us with the evill of our works, or with holownesse and hypocrisy in the performance of them?

To that he makes answere in these words, \[\text{Take away the evil of your works. (from before mine eyes.)} \]

As if he should say, if you might be judged by men, like your selves, you would make a faire shew: but in religious exercises you appeare before
fore the Lord, who hath fiery eyes, and espieeth the least blemish in our services: and therefore looke that he see nothing in them displeasing unto him: for otherwise, howsoever men commend you and your workes, God will reject both them and you. After this he proceedeth, and sheweth, that if they must take away the evil of their best works, much more must they desist from their evil works: and therefore he addeth, Cease to doe evil.

And yet this is not enough, but he exhorteth them further, do well: and because they were ill Scholars, and altogether unskilful in heavenly matters, he bids them [learne to do well] as who would say, You are naturally witty to invent mischiefe and iniquity; but for good you have no wisedome, nor found understanding, you know not what to doe, nor how to doe: you have neither a good judgement, nor a pure affection, and therefore learne to do well.

Then for their better direction, he commeth to the particular, Seek Judgement, &c. as if he should have told them in more words; you have beene given to oppression heretofore, and have done much wrong to poore men, that could not make good their part against you: this hath beene your sinne, to deale craftily and unrighteously: but now take a better course; Seek Judgement, that is, labour to finde out what is right; and when you know it, practize it accordingly; and deale with others, as you would be dealt withall: give over your cruelty, and exercise mercy: and be so farre from oppressing any more, that now yee relieve the oppressed: and so farre from doing hurt hereafter, that you forthwith strive to doe good: especially to the poore, and such as stand in most need of your helpe and reliefe: not such poore as by their owne lewdnesse and misdemeanour have cast themselves, and doe still plunge themselves farther into miserie: but judge the Fatherlesse, and defend the Widow; and stretch forth your helping hand to relieve such as are most worthy of it, and have most need of it.

Having thus urged them to found Repentance, to the end that they might have no pretence to keepe them from setting upon it; he removeoth certaine doubts that might arise...
in their hearts to hinder them, *Verse 18.* And before he commeth to them, hee maketh preparation thereunto, saying, *Come, let us reason together.* As though he should say, now I have plainly proved that it stands you upon to repent, and have shewed you how you should repent, I know you shall have divers reasons from your selves, and from the world to the contrary: but hearken not what your flesh, or Sathan, or men can say, but what God faith, *Come, let us reason together.*

Now, the first Objection to keepe them from turning unto God (as may appeare by the answere here set downe) is this: You have charged us to be worse than Beasts or Sodomites, to be full of cruelty and bloud, and our consciences tell us no lesse: seeing then we are sunke so deepe in our iniquities, it seemes our state is unrecoverable, and so it is bootlesse for us to set up on the worke of our repentance.

Nay (faith he) not so, for though you be so stained with sinne and impietie, as I have said; that not onely your hands, but your soules & bodies, & all be wholly imbrued with bloudy and cruelle dealing, & your sins be as red as Scarlet or Crimson, which are double dyed, and dyed in the wool, so that you thinke it impossible to be brought to any whitenesse and purenesse againe (as indeed, in regard of men, it is impossible) yet God is able to make you as white as snow. Albeit you have received a double dyes of sinne, one in your conception, and another in the whole course of your conversation all your life long: yet the Lord is of that power, that he is able to make you as white as wool. There is no sin so hainous, no sinner so abominable, but upon his humiliation and conversion, he can and will make him as cleane and as pure; as just and as righteous as *Adam* was before his fall, and as if he had never transgressed at all. Not that he shall be without infirmities: but in Gods account, and acceptance through Christ, he shall be as pure as the Angels are now in heaven, or as he himselfe shall be, when he is an heire of glory in that blessed kingdome. *Psal. 32.*

For wheresoever sinne is pardoned, there it is covered from Gods eyes: he will except neither against the greatnesse, nor against the multitude of them: but where sinne hath abounded, grace
grace shall much more abound. So much for the first Objection.

The second might be this; if we should get a pardon for all our transgressions, and be at peace with God, and our owne consciences, yet the Law is so perfect, & we so imperfect, that so holy and pure, and we so unholy, and impure: that we shall never hold out in a constant course of obedience thereunto, but shall presently soule our selves againe, after that we have beene washed; and therefore as good never a whit, as never the better: as good never to beginne, as not to continue.

To that he answerereth: that if they doe but consent, and be willing to obey (for so it is in the original) they shall eat the good things of the Land, Which is in effect, as if he should have said: When once you have truly and thorowly repented you are not any longer under the rigor of the Law, but under Grace; you come not to a rigorous and severe Judge, but to a mercifull and kinde Father, that looks not for perfect obedience, but accepts of a minde that is willing to know and keep the Commandements; who doth not require of penitent sinners that they should fulfill the Law (for that Christ alone could doe, and did in our behalfe) but onely that they should labour & strive to doe their best, and where they come short, acknowledge their fault. And that God will take in good worth this kind of obedience, he will testify and make cleere not onely by bestowing inward blessings upon the Soule, but also outward blessings for their estate. You shall eat the good things of the Land.

But in the third place, some might object and say, it were well if we could frame to be religious: but I hope God will shew mercy, though there be no such washing and such adoe made about our sins, and therefore I meane to take my liberty still, and never to trouble my selfe about the matter.

To this he makes answer, Verf. 20. telling them that if they refuse to obey, and to do the former duties, They shall be devoured with the Sword: that is, they shall have some fearefull judgement or other to overtake and consume them; for under that one particular of the Sword, is implied any other plague wherewith God would visite them, if they persifted in their disobedience. And to prove all, he brings one maine Argument.
of the Lords Supper.

Argument, The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. As if he had said: Though those that repent, see little likelihood of recovery, let them not despair; and though those that be impenitent, see little danger of an overthrow: yet let them not presume; for the Lord will assuredly bring to passe that which he hath promised to the godly in mercy, and that which he hath threatened against the wicked in judgement.

So that you see the summe of these words is,

An exhortation to repentance, and an offer of reconciliation and salvation to all repentant sinners. Wherein is shewed:

1 First, what they must doe; to the 18. verse. Namely, that they ought,

1 Bewail their sinnes, and forfake them. i 6.
2 Learne their duties, and doe them.

2 Secondly, reasons to stirsre them up so to doe.

1 One, taken from the benefit that will redound unto them, if they practise the former things; to wit, that they shall be sure of the free and ful pardon of all their sinnes; and they and their services shall be accepted, and blessed of God.

2 Another, taken from the danger they are in, if they refuse to doe this; they shall surely taste of some fearefull vengeance of God: Yee shall be devoured by the Sword.

Wash you, &c. In these words he alludeth to the custome of the Ceremoniall Law, mentioned in Exodus; where God expressly commanded, that before the people should heare the Law delivered from Mount Sinai, they should sanctifie themselves, and wash their cloathes. Whereby two things were signified:

1 First, that all in themselves are unclean, and so unfit to present themselves before the eyes of the holy God.

2 Secondly, that (notwithstanding this) if they indevour to wash themselves, the Lord will be pacified towards them, and receive both them and their services. Now this washing which he exhorts them unto, is, that which was figured by that outward washing & cleansing of themselves, and is to be performed of all that hope for mercy from the Lord: and this
must be done, by lamenting and grieving for their corrupt and
sinful nature and behaviour, whether against God or men. This is all the washing that we can attaine unto, or that God
looketh for at our hands. For to speake properly, nothing can
cleanse us but Christ his bloud, which is therefore called clean-
water, Ezek. 36. 25. And none can performe that worke, but
God alone. And therefore in that place he appropriated that
action unto himselfe, saying; I will poure clean water upon
you, &c. From all your filthinesse, and from all your Idols will I
cleanse you.

Here then the purpose and drift of the Prophet is thus
much; namely, that we should joyne with God as working
Instruments, in reforming our hearts, & redressing our waies.
Whence ariseth this point of Doctrine. That whosoever
would have God to wash them by the bloud of his Son, must
wash themselves by godly sorrow.

Before the Lord promiseth any cleansing on his part, he re-
quireth this kind of purging on our part. This is cleare in the
Epistle of James; where he urgeth them to draw neere unto the
Lord, (to wit, in the Ministerie of the Word, in partaking of
the holy Sacrament, in faithfull and fervent prayer, and the rest
of Gods Ordinances) and then he telleth them, that God will
draw neere unto them; namely, in his mercy and goodnesse, and
in all the fruits and effects thereof. But then they must wash
themselves; for he is a God of pure eyes, and cannot indure
iniquity: and therefore he faith, Cleanse your hands, ye sinners,
and purge your hearts, ye Hypocrites. But they might reply and
say, Is it so easie a matter to cleanse our hearts and our hands?
Doth not sin cleave fast, and sticke close unto the soule?

It doth so indeed: and yet if they would follow his direc-
tion, he sheweth them a way how they might quickly be rid of
their corruptions, so that they should not raigne over them,
though they did remaine in them; and that is, Afflict your
selves, and sorrow and weepe: let your laughter, and jesting, and
foolish sporting, be turned into mourning; & your joy, into heavi-
nesse & lamentation for your iniquities & provocations, wherby
you have incensed the Lord: And then, though they were
brought never so low, yet if they begin to cast downe them-
selves
of the Lords Supper.

selves before the Lord, he will assuredly raise them up, as there it followeth.

This duty is further commanded in the Prophet of Jeremi, where he speaketh to the whole Church of the Jews in this manner: O Jerusalem, was thy heart from thy wickedness, that thou mayest be saved? How long shall thy wicked thoughts remain within thee? In which place is declared what they must wash, even their hearts: For they being made clean, whatsoever proceedeth from thence, must needs be suitable thereunto. Secondly, from what they must wash them, from their wickedness. And lastly, to what end; that they might be saved. As if the Prophet had told them in plainer terms: God is readie to give you salvation and deliverance, both from your sinnes, and from your miseries; but your owne backwardness hindereth good things from you: you doe not your duty, and therefore God withholds his mercy: And therefore wash thine heart, O Jerusalem, that thou mayest be saved.

And that they needed this washing, he proveth by this evil fruit that did continually spring out of their sinfull heart, laying. How long shall thy wicked thoughts remain within thee? As if he had said: If you doubt of the badnesse of your hearts, looke what thoughts you entertaine therein; in the night and in the day; when you are at home, and when you are abroad; on the way, as you ride or walke; on your beds, as you sleepe or wake, &c. Consider how many vaine and idle thoughts, how many worldly andcovetous desires, how many lustfull and carnall, yea wicked and impious imaginations you have swarming; & as it were mustering together by whole troopes and armies within your minds, and within your hearts; every one of which is a sufficient summons, to put you in mind to cleanse your soules: for if they were pure and undefiled, such cogitations and affections would not be stirring there, neither so often nor so much as now they are.

The Prophet Joel in like sort urgeth the same upon those of Joel 2:13; his time, saying, Rent your hearts and not your cloaths, &c. But how must that be done? he had told the in the verse immediately going before; Turne unto the Lord with all your heart, & with fasting, & with weeping, & with mourning: which is thus

E 2 much
The effect of godly sorrow.

Ezek. 36. 25.

Verse 12.

Then for the good effect that should follow thereupon, it is contained & expressed, Chap. 13. verse 1, the words are these: 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. Whence it may be gathered, that when once we fall a-washing in this sort, we shall not long wash alone, but God will join with us, and open a Fountain of mercy unto us, to wash away all manner of sins, whatsoever they are, or have
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have been; and to give us grace instead thereof. And this promise is made not only to the house of David, that is, to strong Christians; but also to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that is, to weaker Christians. Till such time as we finde this work of the Spirit in us, albeit wee be of the number of Gods elect, we have nothing to do with that Fountaine; no Key can open it, but this alone, of true and hearty greife and remorse for our cuill workes, and wayes which are not good.

This point may be further confirmed unto us by plaine reasons drawnne from the Scriptures of God: for

1 First, there can be no found repentance without this religious and holy mourning. Therefore, when Ephraims fell to repentance, God himselfe witnesseth, that he heard him lamenting and bewayling his former sinfulness, and the folly of his youth. Till then, though there bee many requests for the obtaining of mercy, yet they proceed from the lips, not from the heart; and till such time as men bee wounded in their soules for their sinnes, they and their prayers shall be rejected. For, The Sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit; a contrite and broken heart he will not despise, And when Davids sinne troubled him, and was ever before him, being as painfull unto him, as if his bones had beene broken in pieces, and the splints thereof runne into his flesh; then hee might boldly and comfortably beseech the Lord (as hee did:) Wash mee thoroughly from my sinnes, &c. And againe, Purge mee with Hope, and I shall be cleane; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. For then he might bee assured, that hee came not to God as an hypocrite, with a double heart; but as a true penitent person, with a troubled heart.

2 A second reason to shew the necessity of this inward touch for sinne, is, That without the same it is impossible we should have any Faith: for the promise is made to them that are weary of their corruptions, as a poore prisoner is of his Bolts and Irons; even to them that account sinne to be a bondage, and a captivity unto them. And none have any warrant to come unto Christ, but those that are weary and heavy laden. If they feele not their sicknesse, the Lord Jesus Christ is not a Physician for their turne; he will not bind up the wounds,
nor cure the maladies of any, but of those who are touched and pained with the sense and feeling of the same.

For reproofe of those men and women that are audacious and venturous enough to come before God, and to preffe into his presence with these or the like requests; Lord be mercifull unto us, Lord wash us from all our sins, &c. and yet they themselves never labour to make their hearts cleane, but rather cloake and cover, nay, excuse and defend their faults. Such do but take the holy Name of God in vain: They make not prayers of Faith, that shall prevail for them; but prayers of sinne, that shall stand in record against them, being sinfull and abominable in Gods sight: They draw neare with their lips, but their hearts are farre from God; and therefore in vain they worship him.

Hence it commeth to passe, that many offer themselves to receive the Sacrament, the Seale of the eternal Covenant; and come to the Word, to heare the promises of life; and yet depart without all comfort & assurance of Gods favour, because they never came with teares for their transgressions and rebellions against the Lord; nor with that piercing sorrow, which would go as neere them, and be as effectuall in them, as if they shed abundance of teares: because we will not do the lesser which belongeth to us, God will not do the greater which pertaineth to him.

Secondly, seeing God would have all to wash, the best as well as the worst; let us be instructed, if we would have fellowship and communion with God, to search our hearts; to the intent we may finde out the hidden corruptions thereof, and bewaile the same with a sound and earnest lamentation: And then if we do but ask mercie, we shall have it; otherwise not. For, if one of our Children have fallen into some great and grievous fault, we will not forgive him, till he first humble himselfe, as the Prodigall Sonne did: if there be in him no remorse for the offence committed, but he continue proud and stubborne still, the Father should spoyle his childe, if hee should shew him favour; the best course hee can take with him then, is to carry a heavy countenance towards him, and a strait hand over him, that so he may recover him, and
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save his soul. And even in like sort will God deal with us; where he loveth most, he will check and rebuke most, till they grow to that reformation which he requireth, and aymeth at in their correction.

Now to the end we may the better get this holy affection of sorrow into our hearts, we must use all helps needfull for this purpose.

And first, because it is a supernatural work, we must entreat the Lord, according to his promise, Zach. 12, to put his Spirit into us, and thereby to mollifie our ftony hearts, as he hath covenanted, Ezek. 36. Otherwise, we may toyle out our selves in vaine; and after a long and tedious strife, be as farre, nay, farther from a tender heart, than we were at the beginning.

Secondly, as we must crave assistance from Heaven, so we must use the means that God hath appointed: namely,

1. First, to call to minde our many and great offences against his Majestie; and to lay before our eyes, in as particular manner as we can, our corruptions both original and actual, before and since our callings: considering how grievous they have been; many of them being committed against our knowledge, and consciences: yea, and Covenants made with the Lord, for resifting and forsaking of them. Further, we are to recount with our selves, of how long continuance they have beene; how offensive; how pernicious and infectious to others; how many we have poisned by them; of whose recovery we are altogether uncertaine; some of them (for ought we know to the contrarie) being already in torments in Hell-fire, for the sinnes where-into we have drawne them, and others (perchance) likely enough to go the same way after them, if the Lord do not in mercie prevent them by his grace, &c.

These, and the like meditations will cause our hearts (if they be not past sense and feeling) somewhat to relent. Thus did Nehemiah aggravate their sinnes that lived in his time: and so did David his own corruptions, endeavouring in many words to make them odious in his owne eyes: acknowledging, that he was conceived in sinne (which was the fountain of all) and brought forth in iniquitie: That God requireth truth in

Prayers for it.

Aggravate our

sinnes.
the inward parts, but he had beene hypocritically and falsely hearted: That God had taught him widsome in the secret of his heart, but he had put that out of his consideration, and cast it behind his back, when it should have restrained him from all those ill courses that he tooke. These and many other circumstances are either plainly expressed, or by consequent necessarily implied in that 51 Psalm; whereby hee labours to set out the haughtynesse of his offence, that his owne soule might abhorre them, and all the world might see his utter de
testation of them.

Another excellent means is, not only with patience to endure, but with earnestnesse to entreat the admonitions and reproves of those which have been and are acquainted with our courses: for we are so full of selfe-love, that others may easily discerne more evill in vs, than we can espy in our selves: and those, of all other, are the best and most faithfull friends, that will mercifully and wisely (though sharply and roundly) tell us of our faults: as Nathan dealt with David, when his heart had been a long time hardened, by lying in sinnes unrepentent: Which private admonition of his (as wee may observe) was a more effectuall means for his rowling out of that dead slumber, than any, or all the publike Ordinances of God, as the sacrifices of the Law, and Sermons of the Prophets, &c., which all that while he had frequented. And sometime it is found by experience yet still, that a wholesome, and found, and wise reprooue of a Minister of God, or some Christian friend in private, thoughly set on, and effectually applied, hath done that (through Gods blessing) that many holy and excellent Sermons could not effect and bring to passe, for the reclaiming of divers from the by-paths of iniquity, wherein they had a long time wandred and gone astray. Which is not spoken, as if this private dealing were to be preferred before Godspublike Ordinances, but that we may have each of them in due estimation: that as we should not despise Prophecying, but suffer the words of Exhortation in the Assemblies of the Saints, so we should admonish one another, and be admonished one of another, daily, in private, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sinne.
3 In the next place, when we by our owne searching and examination, and by others plaine and faithfull admonition, have found out a great Sea of our corruptions, then let us inwardly and seriously ponder upon the infinite mercies of the Lord our God, in giving us his deereely beloved Son; and the inconceivable love of the Sonne, in submitting himselfe to become a sanoame for us; and that without any entreaty, de- fert, or desire on our part; yea, even then when we were his mortall enemies. This was it that caused them in the twelfth of Zachary, so to mourne and lament because they considered what Christ had suffered in their behalfe. And this should breake and melt our hearts (as it did theirs) that we wounded and peirced our deere Saviour by our transgressions: for, the Chastisment of our peace was upon him, & by his stripes we were healed. If he would shed his precious blood for us, why should we thinke it much to shed a few teares over him? And so the meditation of the severall sufferings of Christ, and of Gods gracious promises made unto us, in and through him, should cause our hearts to be dissolved into godly sorrow.

4 Fourthly, we must as often as fit occasion is offered, goe unto the house of mourning; where we may be put in minde of our wofull estate, by reason of our wicked nature and sinfull carriage, in violating the Lords holy Precepts and Commandements. And this is commended as the part of a godly wise man by Salomon in Ecclesiastes, where it is said, The heart of wise men is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. And the reason why this is a part of wis- dome, is rendred in the 4 verse, It is better to goe to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting, because this is the end of all men, and the living shall lay it to his heart. And if others chastisements should affect us, much more of our owne, should Gods correcting hand upon ourselves, move us; and when he smiteth us, we should joyne with him, and take his part, and smite our owne hearts; and then if Gods strokes on others, or on our selves, doe make us mourne for our rebellious behaviour against the Lord, happy and blessed are wee: for so saith the Prophet; Blessed is the man, O Lord, whom Hal.94.123. thou chastisest; and teachest in thy Law: And our Saviour also; Blessed!
Blessed are those that mourn, &c. Therefore when we find our selves inclined to heavines, in respect of any outward course that lyeth on us, or on our friends; let us take hold of the occasion, and turne the course of our grieafe another way: Which if we can attaine unto, and make our sinne to be our greatest sorrow, Christ Jesus shall be our greatest joy: And we being inourners of Sion, shall be comforted in due season; our iniquities shall be removed as a Cloud, and scattered as a Miste, and we received into everlasting favour.

Thirdly, this is for the singular comfort of Gods Children. What though they have beeene like the people of Sodome, and of Gomorrah, and have lived like Beasts all their life long? Yet this is their hope, that they shall not be cast off: Nay if they can once begin to rince and purge their hearts, though their sinnes have beeene never so horrible, and odious, and abominable, they may be assured of the free and full pardon of them all. Neither need they make any doubt at all hereof: for if such kinde of sinners might not attaine to this, it were in vaine for the Lord to exhort them to repentance. But we see here, that though these fewes had received many Blessings, heard many Instructions and Threatenings out of the Word, and felt many Corrections from Gods owne hand, and nothing would drive them from their accustomed course of Rebellion: Yet notwithstanding all this, it now at last they would grieve their hearts in good earnest, and not passe over the matter with some slight mourning (for so farre wicked Saul went, when David had told him of his fault, in pursuing him that was innocent) but strive for a loaking and working sorrow: If, I say, they would labour for this, the Lord offers them mercie; so that they should forthwith be disbursed of the guilt, and freed from the punishment of all their former wickednesse. For when sinne is once cast out of the heart, God hath no quarrell against the partie: and it can never lurke there long, except it be fed with excuse and allowance. It never stickes so close, nor cleaves so fast, but godly sorrow will make a separation betwixt it and the soule, and crush the very head thereof. That giveth life and root unto it, and makes it grow and bring forth abundance of fruit, when we love it, and can say some-
somewhat for it. But if we do not nourish it in our soules, but banish it thence, we shall be accepted, whatever our life hath formerly beene: for, as God will never sprinkle the Blood of his owne Sonne upon a carnall, and proud, and prophane heart; so he will never deny to give the Merits of his Sonne unto an heavy, and sorrowfull, and contrite spirit.

[Take away the evil of your works from before mine eyes.] As if he should have said: Hitherto you have but dissembled in the duties perform'd by you: Which hollownesse of yours, though men could not so well see and discern, yet the Lords eyes have beene and are still cast upon your doubling & halting, and false dealing. And therefore, if you would have him to looke favourably upon you, take away from his sight that which causeth him to frowne upon you; not onely your evil works (for so hypocrites may do) but the evil of your good works. For here (we must understand) God did not ayme at the subversion and overthrow of the former duties of Religion, but wisethem to do the same works of Pietie still, but in a better sort then they were wont to do them. Whence this Doctrine offereth it selfe for our learning: that,

A Christian must not onely do good things, but, must do them in a good manner: other wise, God may and will reject the works, and confound the doers of them.

This people here had many outward Observations, as doth appear from Verse 12, to the 16. Yet because their services were not performed in Faith and Love, God did utterly abhorre and detest them. They would keepe the Sabbaths, and frequent the solemn Assemblies, but they would learne nothing at all: Though their Bodies were there, their Hearts were not there; but either about their Business in the Family, or their Affaires and dealings in the World; or thinking how to revenge such or such an Injurie: how to relieve themselves in such or such a necessitie, or the like; or, perchance, worse matters. They would make long Prayers, but their Hearts were full of wrath, and their minds full of doubting; and to in other exercises of Religion, still they mingled their owne corruption, insomuch that God could have no liking of them. Such were the Scribes & Pharisees also, who used to preach, to
give much almes; to pray, and fast often; and had a very smooth outside: for so much Christ grants them, that they were painted Sepulchers, faire to behold and looke upon; and Graves so covered over with Greensward, that one might walk over them againe and againe, and yet never perceive any rotten bones therein. Notwithstanding all this, the vengeance of God is denounced against none more often and earnestly by our Saviour, than against that kinde of people; as appeareth plainely in the Gospell. And why? because they tooke not away the evil of their works: for which cause the Lord Jesus tells them, Ye are they which justifie your selues before men, but God knowes your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abhorrenable in the sight of God.

And the like the Prophet Haijah layeth unto the Iewes charge elsewhere, saying, Thus people come neere unto me with their mouth, & honor me with their lips, but have removed their heart farre from me. He blameth them not, for that they came not to Church, or that they refused to make an outward semblance and shew of worshiping him either in word or deed (for herein they were very forward) but for that they brought a lame Sacrifice, or rather a dead carcasse; presenting before God the outward man, but not caring to bring before him the inward man, which hee cheifiely regardeth and looketh after: and without which the other is of no reckoning with him, but is esteemed to be a vaie and sinfull worship.

And the same detestation of such hypocriticall serving of him, the Lord sheweth in another place of this Prophecy; where first he declareth what kind of worshipers hee requireth and delighteth in; To him will I looke (faith he) even to him that is poore, & of a contrite spirit, & trembleth at my words. Thus ought all to bee disposed and affected, that expect any favour from the Lord; that because hee is so holy, and mighty, and glorious, they must come with feare and trembling, through a sight and feeling of their owne basenesse and unworthinesse: which if they strive to doe, the Lord promiseth, that hee will looke upon them with a mercifull and gracious eye. Then in the next verse, he setteth down what account he maketh of ceremonious worshipers, that contented themselves
felves with offering Oblations of Bullockes, and Sheepe, &c., thinking, that God was beholding to them for the same: they trembled not at the word, neither were sorrowfull, nor heavy hearted for their sinnes: yet because they were at cost & charges, to serve God in Sacrifices and Incense, they thought themselves as good as the best. But the Lord sheweth there, that he condemneth and abhorreth them and their Oblations, saying, *He that offereth a Sacrifice, and doth not offer himselfe, it is all one as if he were a murderer (for to that effect are the words)*.  

*He that killeth a Bullock, is as if he slew a man & he that sacrificeth a Sheep, as if he cut off a Dogs necke, which was then an unclean Beast, & rejected (amongst others) by the Levitical Law)*.  

*He that offereth an Oblation, as if he offered Swines blood* (which was likewise forbidden at that time, and counted an abomination to be offered to the Lord.) And as for their incense and bowing downe in Gods house, he sheweth, that it is as if they bowed to an Idol, and blessed it; it was as hateful and loathsome in Gods eyes, as the most vile and monstrous Idolatry that was. For he required of them, in those outward Oblations, that they should have spiritual affections; without which, the other were so farre from pleasing him, that they grievously provoked him. Hee that did bring a Beast to bee killed, was thereby to profess before the Lord, that he deserved for his transgressions to be killed himselfe. Now, when he could stand by, and see the Beast slaine, with a bold face and a senselesse heart, not trembling at the consideration of his owne wretched deserts, the Lord professeth, that he will never looke with a pittifull eye upon such an one, but esteeme him as a notorious malefactor, and punish him accordingly. And that he was of power so to doe, he maketh it evident in that place by this, That his hand had formed the Heavens, and fashioned all the wonderfull workes that are on the Earth: and they were not so wittie to deceive the Lord, as he was wise and mighty, both to hunt them out, and to execute strange and fearfull judgements upon them.

Besides these places, there are Reasons to confirm this Doctrine: for,

1. First, God doth as strictly command the manner of our *Reasons*.
The second Sermon

The second Sermon

obedience, as the matter of it; and lookes as much that it should be well performed, as that it be performed. Hee joynes the Minister not only to preach true & sound doctrin, but to divide the word aright, & to apply it wisely and fitly, giving every one their portion in due season. He commandeth the people, not only to come to the Sermon, (for so the wickedest may doe) but to come with a good and honest heart. He biddeth us not onely to pray, but to pray in the holy Ghost, (as Iude speaketh) and to pray fervently, as James faith, The prayer of the righteous availeth much, if it be fervent; and to lift up pure hands in prayer, without wrath or doubting. And so for all other duties, he would have us to be carefulll how we doe them, as well as that we do them.

2 Secondly, God is a Spirit, and therefore will be worshipped, not in outward ceremonie alone, but in spirit and truth: give him the best words that may be, if we do not give him our hearts, all is nothing worth.

Iudas dealt best with Christ, of all the Disciples, in appearance: for when all shrunke from him, he stuck to him, came and bowed himselfe before him, saluted and kissed him. Who would not say now (had he not been privy to Judas his heart) that he was the true and faithfull friend above all the rest, that would shew himselfe thus friendly in the time of adverstie? Yet the Swords and Staves of those that apprehended Christ, were not so odious unto him, as was Judas his kisle that betrayed him, because he had an ill and corrupt minde, and a treacherous and false heart in that which he did. And such are the services of all hypocrites, even Judas his kisles; and therefore they shall be requited with Judas his reward, except they reforme their hearts, and amend their workes.

This makes for the just reproofe, not onely of grosse sinners, and of hollow-hearted dissemblers, but even of Gods owne servants: For, none can say he is altogether innocent in this point, but at one time or other, in one dutie or other, he hath failed more or lesse; if not in the matter, yet in the manner of performing the same. This will be more evidently seene in the particulars; and therefore my purpose is to speake of foure kindes of workes: namely,
And first, to give instance in the exercises of Religion; who can cleare himselfe therein? For, if men come unto Sermons, and offer unto the Lord their bodily presence, doe not the most think they have acquitted themselves well? Albeit in the meane while they be altogether negligent in making preparation for this worke, by searching their soules, to call out the Leaven of corruption, which will hinder the powerfull operation of the Word; & by getting that sight of their wants, that might cause them to come with an eager appetite unto Gods House for comfort and supply. They feldome, or at least very coldly, pray unto the Lord to give them an understanding mind, and a teachable heart, to profit by the means: but for the most part, thrust in themselves rudely with a proud & unprepared heart, and with unruly and distempered affections, that when they stand in Gods holy presence, are wandering from the duties in hand, & running after their covetousnes, or after their delights; and so if the Word come in at the one ear, it flyes out as fast at the other. And they doe not mingle it with Faith as they should doe, but with their owne corruptions, which hinder the effectuall working of it; and so scales up unto many their own just condemnations, in stead of being an instrument of God for their edification and saluation. And as for Gods own children; instead of those excellent graces that might be thereby wrought in them, it oftentimes hardens their hearts, and fits them for sharpe correction, by reason of their negligence and carelesnesse in dealing with it.

So for Prayer; whereas they should lift up pure hands, without wrath & without doubting; many never care what manner of Sacrifice they offer unto the Lord; but are full of passion, which distracts them; & full of unbelief, which excludes them from having interest in Gods blessings; and so their prayers tumble downe againe upon their heads, and bring upon them judgements in stead of mercies. They may truly say, that they have sought for helpe often, and have had no
Evils to be removed by Communicants.

Ignorance.

Unbelief.

hearing; but it is long of themselves: for the Sea is not more full of water, than God is full of mercy to all that call upon him in truth: and if they could put away their unbelief and hypocrisy, and other evils that are mixed with their suits and supplications, they should finde that none is so kinde a Father, as God is; and they should not be so ready to ask, but he would be more ready to give, if so be they did come in faith, and ask aright, as God requireth. The like may be said for the Sacrament of the Lords Supper: Divers there are that partake of it as often as their neighbours doe, but they are so farre from receiving benefit and comfort there-from, that it proves hurtful and uncomfortable unto them: and why? because they put not away the evil of this worke.

But what are those evils (may some demand?) They are divers:

One common evil is grosse and palpable Ignorance; that men come, not discerning the Lords Body and Bloud; that is, not being able to put a difference betweene the blessed Elements, and common Bread and Wine; and so comming unto it, no otherwise than to their ordinarie food: not conceiving, much lesse well considering, what they are to receive from God, what from man; what examination is to be used, that they may be worthy receivers of it; what judgements are to be feared, if they be unworthy receivers: and so they feele those judgements, before they feare them.

2. A second evil to be removed from this worke, is Unbelief; which hinders us, that we cannot finde the inward vertue of those holy Mysteries. For when we draw neere to the Lords Table, we should make reckoning of greater benefits than all the Kings and Kingdomes of the Earth can afford us: for there, God the Father is the Feast-maker; he giveth us for our entertainement, the Body and Bloud of his own Sonne, to feed upon: he offereth us, and would exhibite unto us (if we had faith to apprehend it) Christ his perfect righteousness, and increase of our true holinesse; and intitleth us to all com forts in this life, and to the crown of glory in the life to come. This, many know; but they want faith, to make application of it to themselves: And thence it commeth to passe, that their soule
Soules are so barren of grace, notwithstanding their often communicating at the Lords Table.

The Woman in the Gospel that was troubled with a bloody issue, said in her heart before she came to Christ, if I may but touch the hem of his garment only, I shall be made whole, and according to her Faith, it was unto her: For that touch healed both her Soule and Body; yet she had no speciall commandement to come, nor promise of good success if she did come, nor experience of any in her case that had sped well before her: If she were thus confident, having had so few means to confirme her, what strength of Faith should we come with-all, and what a steadfast expectation of mercy should wee have setled in our hearts, when we come to Christ Jesus in this his Ordinance? Seeing that we have both a Commandement and a promise, and the examples before our eyes of such as have found unspeakable good by this holy Sacrament: and there is more reason why our Saviour should pitty us, then why he should pitty that woman: for we have a more dangerous issue of sin in our soules, than shee had of bloud in her body; and many of us have bin longer troubled with it, than shee was with hers: and hee came rather to heale the sicknesse of the soule, than to cure the maladies of the body. And besides all the former, he shall have more glory by saving us from sinne, then by healing her from a bodily infirmity: and the taking, and eating of the blessed Sacrament of the eternall Covenant, is much more effectuall to draw vertue from Christ, than the bare touching of his Garment was: and hee is neerer unto us now in his gracious presence, than he was unto her then, in his bodily presence.

This we should beleev and rest upon: and if we doe not, we offer unto the Lord the greater injury: for hee purposeth to bestow that upon us in truth, which hee makes offer of in shew: even to give us a full communio with the righteousnesse of the second Adam, as we had with the corruption of the first Adam. Even as the branches doe partake of the sap of the Vine: and the members of the body, have life and motion derived unto them from the head: for shall we receive grace
grace and life from Jesus Christ, in, and by his holy means, so often as we doe thankfully use them.

3 A third evil that must be put away, when we are to be partakers of the Lords Supper, is uncharitableness, and unmercifulnesse: For this is a Feast of Love, where we are to receive further assurance of Gods love to us, and an increase of our love to God & Men. And how can we look for mercy if we shew no mercy? Or how can we expect from the Lord a general acquittance for all our debts and trespasses, when we will not passe by small matters of offence in our Brethren? Therefore as we would finde any favor in heaven, let us put away from us that unloving disposition that is naturally ingrafted in every mans heart; and strive to get in our Soules, and to expresse in our lives, a true love and Christian affection. And to the end we may shew indeed that we have this excellent vertue in us, let us practice these two rules:

1 First, if thou hast a grudge against any, labour from thy heart to forgive, and for ever to forget, whatsoever injurie or indignity hath beene offered unto thee.

2 Secondly, if thou thy selfe hast done wrong to any other, seeke to undoe it againe. Many when they have bin injurious unto their neighbours, and revenged themselves upon them, will be ready to plead for themselves, and say, I am satisfied, I hope, I need not seeke reconciliation with him, for I beare him no malice. But have not you given him cause of griefe? Have not you spoken words that sticke in his stomache, and wound his heart? If you have, goe and reconcile your selfe unto your Brother; else your Sacrifice cannot be accepted: Though you have nothing against him, yet if he have somewhat against you, the rule of love requireth that you should seeke peace with him, if he will not seeke it of you.

The like may be said of singing of Psalms, men will use it for fashion sake, because they would not seeme to reject any religious Service: But if they would have any edification or consolation thereby, they must sing with the heart, as well as with the voyce: and make melody inwardly to the Lord, as well as outwardly before men.
And as these and the like corruptions are to be separated from the works of piety towards God: So,

Secondly, There are other evils to be removed from our works of mercy, and of love towards men. As in the manner of Almes: If we think to merit thereby, as Papists doe; or seek vain-glory thereby, as Pharises doe, we put not away the evil of that works, and therefore God will reject the worke itself.

So for admonition and reprofe, they are very necessary to be given: yet if men doe these duties in wrath and dis-temper, they shall doe more hurt by their bitterness and passion, than they can possibly doe good by their admonition.

Thirdly, concerning the works of our ordinary callings, we must cast off these evils that usually cleave unto them, as,

First, for Masters; It is their duty to deale with their Servants by admonishing them, and by reproving them; yea and if need be, by correcting them also: which is as necessary for them as their meat and drink: but then they must beware of wrath and outrage; of bitterness and cruelty, and do as the Lord doth here: He telleth the Jews, that they were worse than brut beasts, and nothing inferior to the Sodomites in sins and impiety: But how; doth he leave them here? Oh no, he deals mercifully with them, and shewes them how they may amend all, for otherwise they would have fretted, or despaired. So must masters deal; not minister a sharp and biting reproof, and then sling away from their Servants in a passion, for that were not to deale as a Surgeon that comes to heale; but as a robber, or a thief that comes to kill: that give, a gash, or a wound, and so away: Nay, we must shew them their sickness; so we must give them a medicine: tell them where they goe out of the way, and direct them into the right way: yea, and befeech the Lord also, of his owne mercy and goodness, to guide and order them better hereafter; but if we come in fury and passion, not to edifie them, but to ease ourselves on them, they will hate the reprover, and despise the reprofe, but never leave the fault reproved. And thence it is that there are so many complaints; never man nor wo-
man was troubled with such Children, or such Servants: Why, what is the matter? Oh we have reproved them, and told them of their faults so often, and so earnestly, and yet there is no reformation nor amendment of anything: But looke back to your selfe now, and perhaps the greatest blame will lye upon you.

You are still exhorting, and still crying out against them for their misdemeanour, but how? Is it not done in a passion to ease your selfe, and not in compassion to helpe them? You have given them divers bitter and cutting speeches, but how many fervent prayers have you made for them in secret? You have often bin grieved at them, and rebuked them, & do still chide them very sharply for sayling in your worke, but how many teares have you shed for their sayling in Gods Service, and grievous offences against his holy Majesty? If you cannot bee thus spiritually affected, nor afford them your prayers, as well as your rebukes, you may spare a labour for any good that is likely to come of all that you doe.

Therefore let Masters of Families, and Parents (likewise husbands when they are to deale this way with their wives) be careful to doe this duty in wisedome and moderation, in love and tender affection to the Soules of the parties offending. If the faults be private, let the admonition be private: If they be great, bring strong arguments to convince the offender, and to beat downe his sin: but spare tart, and bitter, and reviling speeches, that will rather exasperate, than worke any cure upon them that are faulty and blame-worthy.

So for labouring in our vocations. It is good to rife early; and to doe the duties belonging unto us, with all diligence, and faithfulness; but then we must take heed that we labour not for covetousnesse, nor in desire of filthy lucre, but in conscience and obedience to God: For otherwise, we shall bee froward and distempered when things goe croffe with us: and lust after the world, and dote upon the vanities of the world, when things goe well with us. If we serve the world, our selves in the paines that we take, we shall be vexed and disquieted with continual discontentments; and ever turmoyle and
and tossed with some inordinate affection of other; if we can get advantage by doing of wrong, wee shall not much stick at it: and if a commodity lye in our way, wee will not bee afraid to seeke our owne gaine, though it be to our neighbors great losse. Whereas if we aymed at Gods glory in our dealings and affaires of this life, we would rather suffer wrong, than doe wrong: and helpe others, than hurt them, knowing that when we doe best, we alwaies speed best.

And as Masters must herein looke to themselves: so must servants in their places; they must beware of eye-service: for many there are, who when their Masters eye is cast upon the, will bestir them very busily, and do much: but when his eye is off them, and he absent from them, they will either do nothing at all, or very little in comparison of that they might & ought to do. Such must remember that they should serve the Lord Christ in their places, whose fiery eyes are still upon them, to reward them if they be industrious and painefull, and to punish them, if they be carelesse, idle, and wastfull.

Fourthly and lastly, for our recreations, which being lawful and warrantable in themselves, yet seeing they are mingled with many horrible corruptions by the users, or rather by the abusers of them, we must be likewise carefull to put away the evils of them: As,

First, the evill end that is propounded by those that are much addicted thereunto: And what is that? For the most part, not to refresh themselves, but to gleane money from their companions, unto which they have no right at all, either by Gods Law, or by Mans: neither shall they ever bee able to answer the losing or getting of such money before Gods Judgement-Seat. Yet that is the Devils favve whereby their recreations are usually sweetned, which else would not be so wel pleasing unto their fleshly taste: which is a sufficient argument to confirme the unlawfulnesse of such exercises, to those that use them, because that this mixture, with all or most of their games and sports, is that which the worst doe most delight in, and without it, count their recreation but an idle thing, nay, a meere vexation and torture.
A second mischief that usually accompanyeth such exercises, is misspending of too much time in their vaine delights: which may well be called vaine, when they either wholly, or for the most part hinder men from God's service, and from the works of their callings, and make them altogether vaine, and idle, and unprofitable burdens of the Earth. Satan that old Serpent (whom they serve that are thus in bondage to their fond and wretched lusts) hath many cunning wiles and crafty fetches, both to allure them into his snares, and to hold them fast when he hath intangled them: and this is one amongst the rest, that when one gets and feeleth it coming, he stirreth up in him such a lust after gold and silver, or whatsoever they play for, that they cannot make an end in any time. And if any one lose, he perswades him (though indeed there needs not any great ado to perswade them, their owne corruptions carrying too great a sway over them in this respect) to play one game more, to trie if he can recover that which he hath lost, and not to let the winners give over with such damage unto him, and advantage unto themselves: and so let slippe many a precious houre, wherein, if they were well busied, they might get more good unto their Souls, than all the World is worth.

And as in gaming, so in other pastimes (as they call them) they are so excessive in respect of time, that instead of the right end of them (which is to quicken and revive the Spirits, and to fit men for matters of greater importance) they pervert them to a quite contrary end, and make them meanes to weary and tire out themselves: so that they are for that day, utterly disabled for any worke of Religion, or of their callings.

Yet it is strange to heare how those that carry the name and profession of Christianity, will shift off every wholesome admonition and rebuke, that is brought against them, with this; What, will you not allow us recreation? But it might be demanded of many of them, to their shame, what is your vocation, that talke so much of recreation? what sore labour have you undertaken so to weary you, that you should stand in need of so much refreshing? In truth if things were well examined.
examined, we should finde, that such make their sports to be their vocation (if they have any at all) not their recreation. For they do nothing else, or very little else, but eat, and drink, and sleep, and play, and so consume the days, and spend the greatest part of their life like Epicures, that dream of no other happinesse, but offollowing their delights, and giving themselves over to beastly voluptuousnesse, and sensuality. And whereas recreation should be used only as Physicke, they make it their ordinary dyet. If we should heare a man alwaies inquiring after skilfull Physitian, and calling for nothing else but Physicke, Physicke; we would presently conclude, certainly this man hath a very sickly body: and what else can we think of those men that are still following after vain delights, and in whose mouthes there is nothing so usual as recreation, recreation; what else (I say) can we thinke of them, but this, surely these men have very sickly Soules? There is very little inward joy and spirituall contentment in that heart, where so much is sought for, from these externall things.

A third evil in recreations is, inward fretting, and outward chafing; especially when they breathe out monstrous oaths, & fearfull blasphemies against the God of Heaven; and horrible imprecations, & cursed speeches against his Creatures, which are too too usual in their carding, and dicing, &c. For there are none more outragious people, than those that are carried away with the streame of those unruly lusts. And whereas many of them will confesse, that these things are amisfe, and should be mended, but they know not how to do it: let such know, that how lawfull soever such recreations are unto other, it is sure they are unlawfull to them. For how can they either comfortably pray for a blessing upon that they go about, before they set forth in the morning, when they rush on such occasions (unto them at least) of dangerous falling, & fearfull provoking of the Lord? or how can they return at night, to render thanks and to looke their Father in the face with any comfort, when they have been all the whole day so busily imploied in the service of the Divel, and of their owne sinfull flesh? what lawfull use then can they have of that, which they can neither crave a
The Second Sermon

Col. 3:17.

Note.

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blessing on, before they undertake it, nor give thanks for when
they have finished it: seeing that we are commanded, *Whatsoever we do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God the Father through him.* If such men therefore cannot remove the evils of this worke, it were farre better for them to remove the work it selfe: (which they may well do, and yet have many other honest & Christian refreshings, sufficient for their comfort & contentment) rather than so to misspend their money, and time, and strength, and to cast away their owne Soules in the pursuit of such base trifles, and alluring vanities, that do so bewitch the common sort of men.

Thus we have teene (as particularly as the time would permit) what droffe of corruption is to be purged away from the several actions and duties, wherin upon severall occasions, and according to our seuerall callings, we are to be busied and imployed. These evils therefore we must with all conscionable and faithfull endeavore seeke to remove, and that from before Gods eyes. For, whereas many may have this conceit, No man can charge me, I will never accuse my selfe, and my companions will certainly conceal and keepe all to themselves, and therefore I need not feare the disclosing of my actions and dealings: this will not serve their turnes: for though men cannot touch them, yet there is an All-seeing God, that alwayes looketh upon them: and where his eye is displeased, his hand will surely be avenged. And therefore if we would have any blessing from any of Gods ordinances, let us *wash our hands in innocency when we compasse his Altar* (as the Prophet speaketh) and cleanse our inward parts from that, that God may dislike, as well as our outward behaviour from that which men may disallow of.

Psal. 16:6.

From these words this Doctrine might be raised: That,

*Cease to do evill.* From these words this Doctrine might be raised: That,

It is not sufficient in a passion to be sorrowful for sinne, and hourly to confesse and acknowledge it, but these duties must be so sincerely & effectually performed, that there be a ceasing from evil afterwards. But this point hath been handled in the former Sermon, *Dott. 3.* where the Reader may finde the same prosecuted at large.
THE THIRD SERMON.

Isaiah i. 17, 18, 19.

17 Learne to do well, seeke judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherlesse, and defend the widow.

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lor-d: though your sinnes were as crimson, they shall be made as white as snow: though they were red like scarlet, they shall be as wooll.

19 If ye consent to obey, ye shall eat the good things of the Land.

Eajne to do well.] Having shewed them what they must not do; now he proceedeth to declare what they must doe, and biddeth them do well: And because there was in them no fitness hereunto, therefore he wisheth them to [Learne] to doe well. Whence the Do-

trine is, that,

All godly and penitent persons, while they live in this world, must alwayes be learning to do well: and apply their mindes to know what duties of Religion and of Righteousnesse they ought to performe, and in what manner they must be performed.

So faith our Saviour, Take my yoke upon you, and learne of me, &c. For I am meeke, and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto, &c. As if he should have said: If any take up my yoke, and continue not to be a learner from my Word, how to beare the same, either he himselfe will be weary of it, or others will perswade him to take up the Divels yoke, or mens yoke: (which is much at one: for they are both of one side) therefore learne of me (faith Christ.) And that they might the sooner be drawne thereunto, he removes the rea-

sons that might discourage them. For they might thinke,
Objection. Oh I am so full of corruption, and my nature is so over-grown, and over-run with sinne and iniquity, that if I should come unto Christ Jesus, who is perfectly holy and righteous, he could not but be angry with me, and sharply chide and rebuke me.

Answer. Nay, faith Christ, you need not feate that, for I am meek, and therefore not so prone and ready to fall out with men that are weary of their sinnes, as willing to helpe and heale them.

Objection. Another might say: But alas, I am so blockish and ignorant that if I should come to be instructed, Christ Jesus would despise me.

Answer. For the answering of that objection, he faith, that he is lowly in heart: and the property of those that are lowly, is, never to continue any for their defects and imperfections; but rather to pitty and helpe them: and therefore they may boldly have recourse unto such a Teacher as our Saviour is, and expect to be still further informed by him in all the ways of godlinesse and righteousness.

In this regard Christians are called Christ's Disciples, which signifieth nothing else, but to be Christ his Schollers. And it is given as a note and brand of a forlorn and desperate wicked person, that he hath left off to understand to do good. And on the contrary, it is set down as an evident signe of a marvellous sanctified and holy man, to acknowledge still that he knoweth but in part: that he knoweth nothing as he ought to do: and to cry out, Who knoweth the errors of his life? Cleanse me from my secret sinnes. Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy Statutes, and I will kepe it unto the end: with many the like requests. And it must needs be so; that they that are truly converted, and in any good measure acquainted with their owne hearts, should be thus instant to be still further directed and taught.

Reasons.

I. The Minde is blinde, the Heart deceitful.
God by fervent prayer, and to his Servants to be directed in the right path wherein they should walke. And this makes them so desirous of sound understanding. They wisely consider, that the drift and whole scope of all their actions should be to please the Lord, and therefore they would most willingly be informed what his good will and pleasure is in every thing.

Secondly, he hath commanded them to **grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.** There is no further growth in Faith, or in any other Grace, than there is in Knowledge. A man may know more than he believeth, but he can never believeth more than he knoweth. True knowledge is as it were the chiefe wheele in a Clock, that draweth all the rest of God's graces after it: and if that stand still, all the rest must needs stand still with it. And therefore it was, that David prayed so often, and so earnestly, **Teach me thy Statutes: open mine eyes that I may see the wonders of thy Law, &c.** Why (might some say) was not the Prophet well taught when he was a teacher of others, and one of the holy men of God, whom the Spirit used as an instrument to pen a great part of the Scripture? Yes surely, few were better instructed than he was: yet he found such great blindness of minde, and deceitfulnesse of heart still, when he came to matters of practife, that he never ceas'd crying for more understanding of heavenly things. As also the wise-man exhorteth, **to call for knowledge, to seeke her as Silver, and to search for her as for Treasures.** That as covetous men never thinke they have gold and silver enough: So Christians must never thinke they have heavenly Wisedome enough, but still covet more and more after. **Spiritual things.**

**Here are those sharply to be reproved, and much to be** condemned, who are too too well conceited of themselves, and of their owne wits: that will brag and boast, that they are not so simple, but they know well enough how to serve God, and to do the duties that pertaine to them in their Families: they have not beene so many yeares married, nor lived so long in the World, but they know sufficiently without teaching, what belongeth to the dutie of an Husband, of a Father, of a Master,
Master, and all other things that a Christian man should know. These foolish men in saying thus, do little consider what they speake against themselves, and how farre they discover their owne nakednesse: hereby they make it apparent, that they have in them no Christianity at all: for, what are they wiser than all the Prophets and righteous men that lived in ancient times? They saw and acknowledged their great want of the understanding of holy things: and that not for modesties sake, but they and others rued it, and felt the smart of their defects that way. How foulely was Eli over-taken through ignorance, in cenfuring and condemning good Hannah for drunkennesse, when she was powring out her Soule before the Lord, because she moved her lips onely, and uttered no words in his hearing, but spake in her heart unto God? And the like might be said of many indiscreet speeches and actions of the Disciples of Christ before the resurrection, and till they had received the Spirit of understanding in a more plentifull measure.

Want of wise.dome.

And to come more particularly to our selves: who hath that wisedome to make so good use as he should of prosperity or adversity? To profit by Gods hand in mercy, or in judgement, upon our selves or others? Nay, who hath attained to that soundnesse of judgement, as to understand the Scriptures so well as he should, when he readeth them, or heareth them read by others? Or to make a right use of them in applying them to his owne Soule, when they are plainly and soundly preached, and expounded unto him? He that thinketh that he knoweth any thing fully and perfectly in these matters, lett him be assured, that he knoweth nothing as yet as he ought to know: and as for him that is wise in his owne conceit, there is more hope of a foole, than of him. For a naturall Foole, though he be not capable of instruction and advice, yet by the whip may be kept within some compasse: but nothing will be available with a conceited Foole: Though thou shouldest bray him in a mortar (as the wise man speaketh) among wheat brayed with a pestle, yet will not his foolishnesse depart from him: you may sooner drive his Soule out of his Body, than you can drive folly out of his Soule.

Prov. 29.11. 2 Sam. 1.11. 13, 14.
2. This is for our instruction: that if we would carry the Name of Christians, and be such indeed, then we must learne our duty, to the intent we may doe it; and every one strive principally to know what he himselfe should be. Many labour to speake well, and to have words of discourse; but let us learn to [doe] well: which if we indeavour to doe, then we shall be blessed in our worke.

3. Here is matter of great consolation for us: For hereby we may gather good assurance unto our owne hearts, of the soundnesse of our repentance, and conversion unto the Lord. This being here in the Text set downe as an infallible note of those that have indeed turned from their evill waies to serve the living God, that they learn to doe well. Therefore they may take this for their comfort, who are still proposing of good questions, what they must doe, and how they must do it? By what meanes they may get out of this or that sin, and attaine to such or such a grace? How they may bee most profitable, helpefull, and comfortable to themselves and others? This was the practife of the Publicans and Souldiers, and of all sorts that were inwardly touched in their conscience by the preaching of John Baptist: every one of them came unto him, laying, What must we doe? And of the Taylor, who when once he began to be humbled, came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, laying, Sirs, what must I doe to be saved? For howsoever Gods servants have learned for the most part, what things in generall must be done, yet still they need to bee informed of many things; as whether such and such things come within the compasse of their callings? What warrant there is for it in the Word? Whether it may bee done at such a time, in such a place, before, with, or amongst such persons? What circumstancies they must observe in their proceeding? What affection they must carry in the matter? and the like. For they finde such ignorance and corruption in their hearts, that they thinke they are never sufficiently furnished with viledome & goodnesse for the performance of holy duties, but are still jealous and suspicious of themselves, lest they should be led aside with by-respects.
Howsoever such men and women think, and speak hardly of themselves, and are still bewailing their manifold imperfections and failings in every good exercise; yet the Ministers of God find, that of all others, they are the worthiest hearers, and practitioners of the Word, and receivers of the Sacrament. Many count them learned Christians, that have gotten such knowledge, as that they can say much: but they are in truth the best learned, that have obtained grace to do much according to the exhortation of the Prophet in this place, *Learne to doe well*.

*Seeke judgement.* Now because men will very easily shift off general precepts, he contenteth not himselfe with the former exhortation, but as he had bidden them to *doe well*, so here he commeth to particulars, and sheweth them wherein their chiefest and principal care and endeavour should be, to *doe well*: *Seeke judgement*, &c. He had before charged them, that their hands were full of Bloud, and that their great men, and men of authority were notable oppressors and spoylers of their brethren and neighbours that were meaner than themselves: following after rewards, and not judging the Fatherlesse and the widow, nor suffering them to have equity according to the goodness of their cause: but rather abusing their authority to the hurt of the good, and to the maintenance of the bad, in their lewd and sinfull practices. If honest men had never so good a Cause, and never so good a Conscience, yet if they brought them no bribes, they were like to goe by the worst: and if sinfull and wretched persons had never so ill a Cause, yet if they presented them with great gifts, they should carry it from all others. Now the Prophets purpose being to bring these men to repentance, he faith, *Seeke judgement*, that is, Search diligently what ought to be done according to your places; and when you know it, see that you practice it. Whence ariseth this point: That,

It is a note of true repentance, and of an honest and sincere heart, to discharge the duties that belong unto us in our places and callings. For looke what is here said of Magistrates, and men of higher places, that if they would manifest the soundnesse
foundnesse of their repentance, and the uprightnesse of their hearts, they should leave off their oppression, and fall to equall dealing betwixt man and man: the like holds in all other callings, and among men of all sorts and degrees, to wit, that they put to their utmost indeavor, to finde out what are the works of that vocation wherein God hath set them, and accordingly to doe the same, reforming the speciall things wherein they have faulted heretofore.

This *Job* lets downe as a marke, that he was no hypocrite, (though his friends injuriously charged him to bee such a one) because hee was carefull of those good duties that did pertaine to him in his place, both as he was a Magistrate, and as hee was a rich man; in both which respects, hee shewed all good faithfulness: for as hee was a Magistrate, he faith, I relieved the poore that cried, & him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, & I caused the widows heart to rejoyce: I put on justice, & it covered me: My judgemeet was a robe and a Crowne, &c. Neither would he shift off matters to ease himselfe, and to free himselfe from paines and troubles; but (faith hee) If I knew not the cause, I would search it out diligently: and though the prey were in their hands, nay, as it were in the mouthes of those that were strong, and fierce as Lyons: Yet hee faith, that hee would breake the jawes of the unrighteous man, & pluck the prey out of his teeth. He would adventure himselfe for the innocent in a righteous cause, though it were with as great danger, as for a man to pull the prey out of the jawes of some hungry and savage wild beast, that would be ready to devour any that should come neere him.

Then as he was a rich man, he shewed that hee disposed his wealth to that end, whereunto God hath appointed it: I was (faith he) a Father unto the poore. I restrained him not of his desire, nor caused the eyes of the widow to fail. I did not eat my morsels alone, but the fatherlesse did eat thereof. And from his youth he grew up with me, as with a father, &c. I saw none perish for want of clothing, nor any poore without covering; but their loynes blessed me, because they were warmed with the fleece of my Sheepe.

Further
Further, that this faithfulness in a man's own calling, is a notable testimony of an upright heart, and of a good conscience, it appeareth by the speech of our Saviour, where he approveth himselfe, and his actions unto his Father, saying, 

"Father, I have glorified thee on Earth: how proves he that I have finished the work which thou gavest me to doe. Many times men set upon workes which God never commanded them to doe, but which their owne Flesh and Satan bad them doe: or if they begin to goe about good works that the Lord commandeth, they doe not goe thorow with the fame, as Christ Jesus did: and therefore they neither bring glory to God's Name, nor comfort unto themselver by that which they doe: but this is it indeed which will stand men in stead, when they shall come to make their accounts before the Lords Judgement Seat, if they can truely say, Lord I have done the worke that thou didst appoint me; I have bin exercised in those businesses and affaires which thou didst injoyne me, and have gone thorow with the fame. So, when Christ Jesus would commend a worthy servant; what is the Commendation that he hath given him? That hee hath faithfully employed those Talents and gifts, that his Master committed unto his trust, unto his best advantage. And this (as the Apostle speaketh) is required of disposers; that every one bee found faithful: that is, that they discharge every one the duties that pertaine unto them in their places, with all due care, and conscionable regard.

This serves for the just reprooche of those that make some shew of Christianty, and would faine goe under the Name and number of sound professors of the Gospell, and yet are most unfaithfull in their owne charges. Many are good Neighbours abroad, and bad Governours at home. They can advise others for the best, but they have no care at all to order their owne Families in the feare of God. Many husbands are kind, and courteous abroad, but churlish and unmercifull to their Yoke-fellowes, and to their Children and Servants at home. Many wives will seem religious, who yet are not helpes in their Family, nor seeking in all good and lawfull things
things to content and please their Husbands, but are disobedient and undutiful unto them. Such Masters, and Husbands, and Wives, can have little comfort of their faithfulnes, when they faile most in those things wherein the power of godliness should most shew itself, namely, in discharging a good Conscience, where they are tyed so to doe by the nearest and strongest Bond.

And this is a great fault in divers Servants, who when they have gotten a little knowledge of Religion, and can discourse of some points thereof, begin to thinke, that then they have a dispensation to be idle and slothfull, head-strong, and masterfull, tyrannical and impatient when they are told of their faults; and the like. Oh, this is a woeful use that they make of their reading & hearing the Word of God! If they had well observed that which most concerns them, they should have found, that the Lord commandeth Servants, To please their Masters in all things, not answering them again, & to shew all good faithfulnes, that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. And againe, Servants be obedient unto them that are your Masters according to the flesh, with fear & trembling, in singlenes of your hearts, as unto Christ. And no lesse effectually is that other place of Paul to Timothy: Let as many Servants as are under the yoke, count their Master worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his Doctrine be not evil spoken of. And they that have believing Masters, let the not despise the, because they are brethren, but rather doe service, because they are faithful & beloved, and partakers of the benefit. And that was a thing worthy singular commendation in Iacob, that he served Laban (though a covetous, deceitfull, and hard Master) with all his might: being in the day consumed with heat, and with frost in the night; his sleep also departing from his eyes. And therefore those Servants are much to be blamed, that make Religion an occasion of their unfaithfulnesse, which, by how much it is more thorowly and deeply rooted and settled in the hearts of any, should and will make them more true and trustie, more conscientious and faithful to their Rulers and Governors. And the like may be said of Children: What gifts of knowledge and speech soever they have, they can have no comfort of the same, unless they give all hon-
nour and reverence, and shew all duty and obedience unto
their Parents, as the Lord commandeth them.

This may be an instruction unto us. Would we be Christ's
Schollers? Then the first Letter & Lesson that we must learn,
is, To doe well in our places. Are we Children? Let us labour
by searching of the Scriptures, to know our duties, and to doe
them. Are we Servants? Let us get understanding of the
things that doe most concern us in all our places, and let our
practise be answerable to our profession, & then we shall shew
our selves to be truly religious indeed. And the same exhor-
tation might be given to all others, in their severall Vocations:
Which if we can follow, whatsoever our Callings be, we serve
the Lord Christ in them, & shall be sure of full reward fro him.
Oh, but my Calling is meane, and my service base. Though
your worke be base, yet is it not a base thing to serve such a
Master in it. They are the most worthy servants, whatsoever
their employment be, that do with most conscionable and du-
tiful hearts and minde, serve the Lord, where he hath placed
them, and in those works which he hath allotted unto them.

[Relieve the oppressed.] Having in the former words shewed
them, that they must doe that which is just and right, he
commeth now more particularly to declare unto them where
in that consisteth; namely, in shewing mercy to such as are
in misery, and in being means of comfort unto them that are
in discomfort, and griefe of heart. Whence this Doctrine may
be collected: that,

It is a most acceptable service unto the Lord, to comfort &
relieve his people when they are in misery and distresse.

This is a work so well pleasing unto God, that he pronom-
ceth them happy and blessed, that consider wisely, and judge
charitably of the poor and needy: Though they have no abi-
ity to helpe them, or to direct and counsel them, yet if they
can but prudently and mercifully consider with themselves;
Surely this man or woman have carried themselves so holyly
and blamelesse, that this stroke is not fallen upon them for
their wickednesse, nor for their foolishnes, but for their good
and comfort, as in the end it will appeare. This mercifull
judgement and censure concerning those that have many, &
strange and heavy crosses lying upon them, is a thing that God much regardeth, and recompeneth in all that are so affected towards his poore distressed servants. This also the Apostle James yeeldeth, as an undoubted marke of true Religion, saying; Pure Religion, and undefiled before God, even the Father is this, To visit the Father leffe and Widows in their adversity, and to keepe himselfe supported of the World. His meaning is not, that it is Religion itselfe (for that is a thing belonging to the first Table) but a signe of the same, when our faith in God, and love unto God, maketh us pittifull and liberall towards the Children and Saints of God, and such as he would have respected and relieved.

So, at the great and generall Day of Judgement, when all the World shall come to receive Sentence according to their works, whether good or evill; what is the matter of commendation that is given to the Elect, and the most evident marke of difference between the Sheepe and the Goats? even this, That they desired to doe good, not in some one or two, or in some few, but in every work of Mercy, and of Charity: That they fed the hungry, gave drinke unto the thirsty, clothed the naked, visited the sick and imprisoned. And on the other side, the Reprobate shall not be charged and condemned justly for this; That they did not the good that they might have done unto poore Christians in their wants and miseries.

And further, this sheweth it to be an excellent service, for one to stretch forth his hand in relieving the needy, and in succouring distressed soules: that whatsoever kindness is done to the least of them, Christ sets it on his Score, and counts it as done unto himselfe; and he will acknowledge it, and reward it, both in this present life, and in that which is to come.

Every one will come to this, That if Christ Jesus should re- paire unto their houses, hungry, or thirsty, or cold, or naked, they would with all their hearts part with any thing they have to refresh and relieve him: let such heare then what Christ himselfe faith to them that shew mercy to the poore Saints; In as much therefore as ye have done it to one of the least of these: my Brethren, ye have done it unto me, Math. 25.

Which is first for the great condemnation of them that do
altogether shut up their bowels of compassion from God's children in their sorrowes, and temptations, and afflictions, Whosoever hath this world's good, & seeth his brother have need, (faith the Apostle John) & shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? This goeth therefore against such: for in not loving his children, they proclaime unto all the world, that they love not God himselfe, and therefore are not beloved of him. And if it be so with those that doe not make manifest their love, by shewing mercy; what shall we think of those, that are so farre from pittyng and relieving the distressed, that they are ready to add affliction to the afflicted? It is just upon you (they say;) your indiscretion and want of wisedome (in that you made more adoe then needs, & would be more precise than wise, & more forward then your neighbours,) hath brought you to all this woe & misery. This is cruel and unmercifull dealing: if they would doe them no good, they should doe them no hurt. Yet this was the case of Job, and of David in their great calamities and perplexities; and we may reade of the lamentable complaints that both of them made in that respect. If it be a marke of a damnable person, to withhold mercy from the sorrowfull and heavy-hearted, then what shall become of them, that lay heavy burthens on those that are pressed downe too low before? If there shall be judgement, without mercy, to them that shew no mercy; much more fearefull shall their state be, that are so full of cruelty towards them, whom the Lord so tenderly respecteth?

Here is a singular comfort for God's children, that are in many wants and necessities: So long as there is any godly man or woman, that will doe any thing for Christ his sake, & for their own comforts sake; they shall not be destitute of reliefe: For God hath commanded his servants to succour them, and hath made many gracious promises to such as are mercifull, & will bear the burden of others. And if men should faile them, the Lord himselfe will looke unto them; who beholds their troubles, and sees their teares, & is acquainted with all their griefes. And he that bids others to be mercifull, will not be unmercifull himselfe. And therefore it is, that men doe deny us helpe and comfort many times, because God would have us draw
neerer unto him; whose eies are ever upon us, and whose eares are always open to heare the cryes of the poore, and of those that are humbled before him.

Therefore let the Saints of God make full reckoning that one way or other they shall be provided for; if men will not, God will. Onely let them be sure that they be found in the number of those that be humbled in spirit, & broken in heart, for to such alone do the mercies of God appertaine. If one be a Gamefter, or an unthrift, or a riotous person, or a Drunkard, or given up to any such reprochfull vice: or if there be any that will not take pains to get their living, by diligence and labour in their honest calling, but give themselves to idlenesse and sluggishtnesse, God himself will not (in mercie at leaft) and his children must not relieve such kinde of persons: He that will not labour, must not eate. And the best almes for such is, to give them nurture and correction, that they may desist from their lewd behaviour, and betake themselves to better courses.

18 [Come now, let us reason together.] Here the Prophet prevents an objection, that they might make. It it long ere men be brought to the sight of their sins: but when they come once to perceive the multitude, and grievousnes of them, they begin to thinke their case remediless, and that it is in vaine to hope for pardon: but God bids them make no such conclusions, and therefore he faith, [Come now, let us reason together:] which is in effect, as if he should have said, If you harken what the Divell, and the flesh can say, then will you rather despaire, than beleive: and therefore heare you withall what I can say: which if we could do, we should easily see, the arguments of Satan, and of our owne wretched carnall reason, are but delusions, and that Gods arguments must swallow them up all, even as Moses true Serpent did the Serpents of the Sorcerers. Hence we may learne this Doctrine: That,

They that will come to the Lord, and do him service, must not hearken what Reasons flesh and Blood can yeeld them against it, but what Reasons God can give them for it.

The Devill will have much to say against goodnes; and our own fleshly wisedome will have as much, and the world will be as great a pull-backe unto us, if we will give it the hearing: but
but if we can lend an attentive care unto the Lord, we shall finde that he will bring better arguments to persuade us to goodness, than all those our Enemies can, to dissuade us from it. And therefore it is that men are so often, and so grossly deceived, because they heare what the one side can say to discouragement and hinder them: but not what the other can say, to hearten and draw them onward in good ways. For if they did bring a spiritual care to receive the proofs that are brought from the word, they would be more forcible to bring them to God, than any other means could be to allure them to forsake God, and to embrace this present world. Therefore when the Lord would have men to practice any duty, or to forbear any sin, we see what strong reasons he bringeth for that purpose: as is evident (together with innumerable other places) in the second and in the fourth Commandment. And hence it is, that men do so commonly, and so wretchedly transgress those Commandments, because they do not well weigh the Lords reasons to the contrary: for if they did, they would never incline so much to Superstition and Idolatry; nor ever so give themselves to the profaning of the Lords Day, but know that it is farre better to procure Gods blessing by keeping it, than his curse and vengeance by the violating of it.

Holy Job (we see) tooke that course that the Lord would have us take for the repressing of all inordinate lusts and affections. I made (faith hee) a covenant with my eyes; why then should I thinke on a Maid? A carnall sinfull man would have thought this too much curiositie and niceness: What, not to looke on the beauty and comely visage of a Woman? At least, not to take some liberty for thoughts tending that way? It is too too much preciseness: who can take any notice of such things in us? Oh (said Job) What portion should I have of God from above? And what inheritance from the Almighty from on high? q.d. I durft not give any way unto the Flesh in any fort; for that were the directest course to deprive myselfe of the comforts of the Word and Spirit here, and of the Crowne of happinesse, which is reserved for the Saints in the World to come. Albeit I should speed little the worse with men, yet I should be sure to come short of many speciall favours & blessings.
things of the Lord. And further he addeth, *Is not destruction to
the wicked, and strange punishments to the workers of iniquities?
q.d. Suppose I should escape the censures of men, yet hath not
the Lord means that I cannot conceive of, for the punishment
of rebellious sinners? And though things may be smothered for
a time, cannot he bring secret sins to open shame? Grant that
it be kept close from the eyes of the World? yet, *Doth not he
behold my ways, and tell my steps? Though the eyes of men
take the view onely of the outward actions, yet he looketh up-
on the inward disposition, and affection of the heart; these and
the like reasons he used to keep himself in order, and to fright
his conscience from all manner of sin and impietie, as is more
fully described unto us in that Chapter.

And good reason there is, why we should esteeme Gods arg-
ments above any other, because he is Wisdom itself, and
therefore saith what is best for us; and he is Love itself, and
therefore will direct us in the way, which shall appear to be
most safe, and most comfortable in the end, what stumbling
blocks and rubs soever we finde therein for a season.

The Divell, the World, and the Flesh bring onely shews of
reason, and pretend love unto us, when they meane nothing
lesse, as the event will plainly manifest: but Gods reasons will
hold out when they are weighed in the Ballance, and what he
faith shall stand, when heaven and earth shall fall: and if we
take those courses that he would have us, we shall plainly per-
ceive at last, that he meant us more good in so advising us, than
we could possibly thinke or imagine.

This sheweth and condemneth their folly, who, when they
have motions or persuasions to undertake any good thing, or
any purpose to become more sober & staid in their carriage
and course of life, will first heare what their carnal freinds can
say, and what the World, and their owne Flesh can alledge.
Alas, these men are more likely a great deale to renounce all
goodnesse, than to continue in the practice of any godlinesse.
If once they give eare to the reasons of the devil, and of the
Flesh, they are gone. For as the persuasions of God, by his
Word and Spirit, should make us begin, to must they cause us
to hold on, or else we should faint in the mid-way, or rather

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turne aside, and walke in a quite contrary way.

And as this is true in generall for the profession of Christianity, so is it as true in all particular duties; as to give instance in some: those that have to deale in matters of strife and contention, for the most part are possesse with the conceit, that if they should not answer like for like, and returne one disgraceful speech for another, and requite one injurious action with another, every one would in a short time grow bold with them, and be ready to wrong and abuse them. But where doth God say so? Nay, the very truth is, that when they seeke by such means to right themselves, and by such a shield to defend themselves, and to repell their adversaries, whereas they had men onely against them before, now they have three for one against them, to wit, God and men, & their own consciences, whereas if they would follow Christ his rule, to bless those that curse them, and to do good to those that hate them, and to pray for those that hurt and persecute them, and so overcome evil with goodness, they should certainly have the Lord, and their owne consciences on their side, and it may be also make their foes to become their friends by that meanes. For the wisdom of God telleth us, that this is the way to heape coals of fire upon their heads: which shall either melt them, and turne their affection to us, or burne them, and leave them more inexcusable before God, and their owne consciences, and so hasten his judgements upon them. If men can be patient, and content to sit down by wrongs offered, God will stand for them, and revenge the quarrell of the meeke. And however in our corrupt judgement we thinke, that by passing by offences, and patient bearing of injuries, we shall expose our selves to all manner of indignities & losses: yet by good experience we shall find that saying of the holy Ghost to be true, The meeke shall inherit the earth: and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Others there are that thinke: if we should make conscience of religion, & begin to reade the Word, to frequent Sermons, to have prayer in our Families, and the like: this would make us to be scoffed and mocked at, and to be termed precise fools for our paines. But let such heare what the Word saith, that pronounceth them blessed, that delight in the Law of the Lord, and
and meditate therein day and night, and that seek him with their whole hearts: Yea, albeit they should meet with some disgrace and opposition in the world: Blessed are ye (faith Christ) when men revile you, and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely, for my Name sake: Rejoyce and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven. Is it not better to induce a little mocking from men for a time, and that for well-doing, than to undergo the wrath of God for ever for ill-doing? Consider in particular what benefit we may reap by the Ministry of the Gospel. Hear (faith the Prophet Isaiah) and thy Soul shall live. Receive the Word with meekness (faith James) which is able to save your soules. Blessed is he that readeth and heareth the words of this Prophecy (faith the Spirit in the Revelation) and on the other side; He that turneth away his care from hearing the Law, his prayer shall be abomination (faith Solomon;) and againe the wisedome of God speaketh thus, Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and none would regard: But ye have despisèd all my counsell, and would none of my correction: I will also laugh at your destruction, and mocke when your fears commeth. These, and the like places, if we could thorowly consider of, they would work more powerfully with us to cause us to desire the Word, and to retaine, and keepe our hearts still in the love and liking of it, than all their reproaches, and persecutions in the World could, to with-draw our affections from it.

But for want of this, many fore and dangerous; yea, sometimes desperate evils do befall men: for if we consult with Reason, it will tell us that either our sins are so great, that they cannot be pardoned; or else so small, that they need not to be repented for. This made Cain and Judas, those cursed & damnable reprobates, to despaire, and cast off all hope of mercie, because they would not hearken what God, or his Servants could say, but only what Satan, and their own Flesh could say: whereas if it had bin possible for them to have looked into the Promises of Life, made unto grievous sinners, and in assurance of Faith have craved remission and pardon for their offences, they might have bin forgiven; even Cain and Judas, as well as Peter and Paul: for they had all committed damnable sins in them-
themselves; and that repentance which prevailed for Peter and Paul, would have beene as effectuall for the two other, if they had attended to Gods voyce, and humbly, and earnestly fought for mercy at his hands.

This serves also for our instruction, that in all our greifes and miseries, we should reason rather with God, than with Men. For if we be in distresse for our Estate, or in sicknesse of body, or in perplexitie of Soule; in any of them, or in all of them, let us go unto Men, and they will most commonly serve us, as Jobs Freinds did him; lay forer burdens on us, rather than ease us of those we carry already; and make our case: a great deale worse than it is, rather than minister any help and comfort unto us.

But if we can heare and beleeve what the Scriptures of God tell us; we shall find that our state is never unrecoverable: but that if we can be truly, and soundly humbled, there is hope and helpe for us, that God will give us an happy end of all our sorrowes, and make us great gainers by all our afflictions and temptations.

Though our sinnes were as crimson, they shall be made as white as snow.] In these words, the Prophet hath reference to that that went before, where he had charged the, that their hands were full of bloue, Ver. 15. For hereupon they might reply: If we be such grievous sinners, how can we dare to come unto God for favor? Is it not a terrible thing to appeare before him that is so just and holy? How then can we look that he should be mercifull unto us? Say not so (faith the Prophet) that is but a reason of the Flesh: As if God were no fuller of mercy than mortall men are: Or as if he could do no more than they can: Yes, we must know, that howsoever men be unable to change Crimson, or scarlet colour into white again, albeit they should lay all their wits and endeavours together, and pull one threed from another: Yet God can make your sinnes that are as crimson, and as scarlet, to become white as wool; yea, as snow it selfe. If we once fall a washing of our selves, God will set in with us, and never leave till all our iniquities (even in our own apprehension and feeling) be quite & cleane removed from us, so that none of them shall be imputed unto us, but all set upon Christs Score.

They
They that wash themselves by godly sorrow, the Lord will wash them from all their sins by the Blood of his Sonne: that whatsoever offences we repent for, we shall be sure to have a pardon for.

So that the question is not, what our faults have beene, but what our repentance is. If we be truly dejected on our part, it is all one with God whether our transgressions have bin more or leffe, greater or smaller: If we repent truly we shall be pardoned fully, be our finnes what they can be, secret or knowne. So that though we see spots in our selves, yet God will see none: Nay, when we see our deformity most, God will make it most cleare unto us, that his eyes are quite turned away from the same. This is evident in the Prophet Jeremie, where he speaketh thus concerning them that should be made truly penitent for all their evil wayes and works, after their seventie yeares captivity: In those daies, & at that time (faith the Lord) the iniquitie of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none: And the finnes of Judah, and they shall not be found, for I will be mercifull unto them whom I reserve: And the fame is promisèd in another place, where the holy Ghost speaketh thus: If we acknowledge our finnes, he is faithfull and just to forgive us our finnes, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousnesse. And the like is covenanted in Ezekiel, where the Prophet bringeth in the Lord, speaking in this manner: Then will I powre cleane water, and ye shall be cleane, &c. where God himselfe undertaketh to be the Washer, and the Blood of Christ is the Water.

Now there are two things which terrifie penitent sinners, and cause their hope of obtaining mercy either utterly to faile, or at least in a great part to faint and waxe feble: Concerning both which, the Lord in this place giveth them comfort.

One is the multitude and exceeding great number of evils whereof they are guilty: Now for that, he telleth them, that he would wash them from all their filthinesse, without exception.

Another thing that doth usually disquiet the hearts of those that are turning unto God, is, that their finnes have beene hainous and extraordinary, and many of them such as have broken the Covenant, of which fort is Idolatry: Concerning which
which, he addeth, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you: And in another place, he promiseth to open a Fountaine of Grace to wash them from all sinnes, even from sinnes of Separation, and such presumptuous offences as deserved Excommunication from Gods People; yea, and to be cut off by the Sword of the Magistrate.

And there is no cause to the contrary, but that God may remit and pardon one sinne as well as another, and all as well as one, if they be repented for.

Reason 1. Because Christ Iesus hath satisfied for all alike: For the greatest, as well as for the smallest: For every one as well as for any one: For so saith the Prophet Isaiah: He hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows, &c. He was wounded for our transgressions, and broken for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, & by his stripes we were healed.

All we like Sheepe have gone astray: We have turned every one to his owne way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all. Whence it is plaine and evident, that Christ hath payed our whole debt, and not a piece of it onely: he hath discharged our pounds, as well as our pence: and hath suffered for our most horrible and fearfull rebellions, as well as for our smallest slips. And therefore as an honest Creditor, when the Suretie hath satisfied him for all that was owing, will not come with after-reckonings, nor challenge any thing of the Debtor: So neither will the Lord lay any thing to our charge, his Sonne Christ Iesus having laid down the full price for our iniquities, whereby his wrath is appeased, and his justice perfectly satisfied. This is one reason on Gods part, why he must of necessity blot out of his Booke, and out of his remembrance, all the offences of repentant sinners, without any exception at all.

2 Another reason there is on our part, and that is, that he that repenteth truly for one sin, doth repent as truly for all the rest: and though none do particularly know and discern all the errors of his life, yet if we make a particular confession of those we know, and a general acknowledgment of those we know not, God will graciously accept us, and will shew himselfe more pleased with our humiliation, than he was offended with our disobedience: So that from both these layd together
(that neither Gods Justice is unsatisfied, nor any sin unrepented in those that labor to wash their foules by true and godly sorrow) it is apparant, that there is no transgression, no, not the most hainous, that shall stand in record against them, but all shall be remitted and covered from Gods sight, that hee shall never looke upon them in anger and indignation any more.

Indeed, those that have fallen into more notorious and grievous Crimes, cannot ordinarily get the assurance of their reconciliation unto the Lord; so soone as others that have not beene so great offenders, but the cause hereof is in themselves: in that such open and scandalous offences do make an exceeding great breach into their Faith, and bring marvellous great hardnesse upon their hearts; & they are very unwilling to set their Conciences upon the rack, and to sift and examine their owne soules, to the intent their hearts may be pierced and wounded for their sinnes: but they will rather hide their iniquities, & put off their humiliation as long as may be (as David did, Psal. 32.) So that it is a wonder they ever get out of the snares of the Divell, till God either by some sharp rebuke, or by some sore affliction doe rowse them, and as it were by violent hand pull them out of the fire.

But if once they come to due sorrow for their sins, and in humblenesse of heart, and assurance of Faith, can make clayme to the bloud of Christ, they shall be discharged and freed from all their transgressions, and be brought to that purity and whitenesse, which they never dreamed such miserable creatures as themselves could have attained unto.

For confutation of that wretched error of the Papists, that would beare men in hand, That there is a Purgatory, where some men, after this life, must have a further purging & scouring than here they have attained unto: but see here what the Lord faith, Though men have broken forth into never so many abominations, though their sins were as Crimson, and as Scarlet, yet if they would seek to wash and cleanse themselves by the meanes that God hath appointed, hee giveth them his faithfull promise, that they shall be made white as Wool, yea, white as Snow, as if they never offended at all. To what end then should men appoint a second washing, when God himself...
else hath undertaken to wash us from all our filthinesse, and from our greatest corruptions? (as hath been more largely declared before.) What an absurd thing is it, to imagine, that we must go thoro' a strange invented fire, which may more thoro'ly purge away the dross of our corruptions? as if Christ's bloud were not sufficient to make us white as Snow? This is but a carnall conceit of mans foolish braine: for if fire and torments could have scowred off sin, the Reprobates in hell should have been purged there-from long agoe. But God alone hath cleane and precious Water, & a skilfull and powerfull Hand, to effect that Worke. And in the Revelation, Christ Jesus, the true and faithfull Witnesse, tel thee how all our uncleanesse may be covered from Gods eyes: I counsel thee (faith hee to the Church of Laodicea) to buy of me white Rayment that thou mayest be cloathed, and that thy filthy nakednes may not appear. Nakednesse there is in the best; but Christ his righteousnesse is that Garment which must cover it: & then God will never in anger and displeasure look upon it, but in mercy and goodnesse looke upon the holinesse of his Sonne, wherewith our soules are invested, and all our iniquities hidden and covered.

Secondly, here is matter of great comfort unto those that do in good earnest set upon this worke of cleansing and purging themselves: they shall not be destitute of company to joyne with them; for God himselfe will assist them, and give most happy success to this their endeavour. And therefore this should encourage us unto the exercises of humiliation, and of examination and judging of our selves: For are not a few teares well bestowed upon God, when he will thereupon bestow on us the Bloud of his owne beloved Sonne?

Many are afraid to adventure upon the work of repentance, lest they should be driven thereby to desperation; but let us never feare that, though our uncleanesse be never so great: Though we be stayned and dyed from top to toe, within and without, in every part & power of soule and body, by reason of our originall corruption, and actuall transgressions, so that all the men in the world cannot take away the soule spots and horrible staines offin that cleave unto us, and are setled in us; yet the Lord of Heaven, who hath all sufficiencie of power in his
his hand, can and will (without any difficulty) purge us from every one of our iniquities, by sprinkling on our hearts the precious Blood of his owne Sonne: which is, as it were, a soveraigne Bath, ordained for the cleansing of the soules of his Elect from that contagious Leprosie of sinne, wherewith they are wholly over-spread. And therefore let none be discomfited in regard of his many and grievous offences, seeing that the Lord hath entred into a sure covenant with us, for the pardoning and healing of them all; who can as easily cure the most deadly wound, as the smallest skarre; and the harder the cure is, the more he shall be glorified, in shewing forth the riches of his mercy towards poore sinners that stand in need thereof. Our greatest extremity is Gods fittest opportunity.

Now the chiefe meanes that he useth for our cleansing and sanctifying, are two:

One, is the Word; which being received into the heart by Faith, doth purifie the same: according to that of our Saviour to his Disciples; Now are ye cleane, through the word that I have spoken unto you.

Another meane, is the Sacrament: wherby God is ready to convey unto us the merit and vertue of his Sons death, by the effectuall operation of his Spirit, that Christ may be unto us holinesse for our sanctification, as well as righteousnes for our justification. God doth not offer unto us onely the outward elements, but he is also more willing to give unto us the things signified thereby, than any earthly Father can be to give food unto his hungry Childe, that cryeth for some reliefe at his hands, when he hath all plenty and abundance wherby to supply his need: I say, he is so much more willing than any earthly Father, as God is kinder than man, & his store more plenteous, and it is lesse cost, & lesse paines unto him, and yet more for his praise, to refresh the thirsty soules of his poore servants, than for a mortall man to satisfie the appetite of his hungry childe: For (as the Prophet speaketh) Mercy pleaseth him. There is none that can take more delight in following after their recreations & pleasures, that do most affect them, than the Lord doth, in shewing himselfe favourable unto thole that seeke mercy and grace from him, in the use of his Ordinances.
The next thing that might hinder and dismey them from turning unto the Lord by found repentance is, that he is so holy and righteous, and his Law so strict and rigorous, and they so smiull & rebellious, that it were in vaine for them to goe about to yeeld obedience thereunto, they should never attaine unto it; and therefore as good for them never to begin the worke, as not to accomplish and finishe the fame. And thence it is, that a number sit downe as sluggards, and never set one foot forward in the way of godliness, because they imagine, that there is a greater difficultie in Evangelical obedience, than indeed there is; little knowing what Gods meaning is, when he calleth upon us to be obedient. For his purpose is, not to urge us to a perfect fulfilling of the Law, such as was required of Adam before his fall; but onely that we should doe our best endeavours, & labour to conforme our selves to his will as neere as we can: if there be a true sincere love, and a hearty consent, to shew our selves dutifull and loyal subjects to him in all things, it is as much as he exacteth of us. The Doctrine to be learned from hence, is this: that, God accepteth of penitent persons, the will for the deed. As for the fulfilling of the Law in absolute perfection, that Christ alone hath performed; he hath paid our debt, & cancelled the Bond, and taken away the Hand-writing that was against us. Now this only remaineth for us, that we have a good inclination and a willing minde to performe our duty, & labor to the utmost of our strength so to doe; seeing & bewailing our manifold imperfections, errors, & failings in every one of our services: which if we can doe, God will be as well pleased with us through his beloved Sonne, as if we had kept the whole Law, without any declining fro it at all, either to the right hand, or to the left, that which is spoken in the matter of communicating unto the necessitie of the Saints, in the Epistle to the Corinthians, (to wit, if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, & not according to that he hath not) holds as true in all other services; that we are accepted with the Lord, according as we are inwardly affected, albeit our actions be not answerable to our desires: For he that hath a ready mind to doe what he can, and doth the same, would be as ready to doe a great
great deal more, if his ability did serve: And therefore the Lord will shew his gracious acceptance of that which is done by him, though it be never so little, as well as if it had beene a matter of farre greater worth.

Now that the true purpose and intent of the heart, is that which God principally regardeth in his Servants, may bee made yet more cleere by examples taken out of the Scriptures. We may read in Genesis, what God faith of Abraham: By my selfe have I sworne (faith the Lord) because thou hast done this thing, and not spared thine only Sonne, therefore I will surely blesse thee. And yet Isaac was not slaine: But Abraham withdrew his hand from him, and spared him: Yet because he was content to kill him, and made all things ready for the sacrificing of him; God accounted it as good, and rewarded it as well, as if he had killed him indeed.

So David had but a purpose to build the Temple; which work he was afterward laid upon Salomon, and by him performed: Yet the Lord giveth him a good testimony, and a large reward for his readiness that way: Hee was content to spare him, because he had beene at great paines before, in shedding the bloud of many enemies of the Church, and some remained yet still to be subdued by him: Yet this he telleth him for his comfort, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my Name, thou didst well that thou wast so minded. And besides this, he biddeth Nathan to carry him this message, that the Lord would build him an house, and would raise up his seed after him, and imploy his Son in that honourable service of building an house unto the Name of the Lord, and that he would establish his Throne for ever. And there is reason why God should accept of the will as well as of the deed: For,

First, Why doe we thinke he will have regard unto the deed? Because it is his owne worke: And is not the will his worke as well as the deed? That is most certaine: For the Apostle faith to the Philippians, It is God that worketh in you, both the will, and the deed, of his good pleasure. And therefore if we can beleeve that hee is pleased with our good actions, wee may bee as well perswaded that hee is delighted with
good motions, and holy desires that are stirred up in our hearts by his owne good Spirit.

2 Another reason why God taketh such small things in good worth, is, because he is both in Name and Nature a Father, ye, & an heavenly Father, and therfore hath compassion of those that fear him, even as an earthly Father taketh of his child that serveth him. Now he that is a mercifull, and wise, and loving Father (as those will ever be most mercifull to others, that have tasted most of God's mercy to themselves) when he seeth that his Child doth as well as he can, though it bee but simply and poorely, yet he will shew his liking of it, and commend him for it: And so will God dole with us; though we cannot do things perfectly, yet if we do them obediently, he will shew his love and approbation of us & of our workes. When a little Child doth cheerfully ayme and shoot at the Marke which his Father proposeth unto him, though by reason of his weaknesses he shoot very wide and short; yet it is as well accepted of his Father, as if he did hit the white: And the like fatherly dealing shall we finde in God: That if we be faithfull in a little, he will esteeme of us, as if we performed a great deale more. Indeed when we have put off the Image of the first Adam, and have put on the Image of the second Adam, and have changed the Earth for Heaven, then we shall not only obey truly, but perfectly: But here it is in truth (and so it must be esteemed) one degree of perfection, to see our owne imperfections. And that was in Nehemiah, and in those of his time: O Lord, I beseech thee, let thine ear now hearken to the prayer of thy Servant, and to the prayer of thy Servants, who desire to feare thy Name. He could not say, they did so feare his Name as they should; but this they could say, that they desired to doe it better; which desire was a Fruit of the Grace it selfe.

This should instruct and incourage us still to be doing in the services and workes of God.

Oh, but we finde many imperfections, and many wants, and weaknesses in our selves.

What of that? If we ayme at perfection, and have respect
to every commandement of God, and come as near the Marke as we can, the Lord will accept us according to that we have, and not reject us for that we have not. If we could obey perfectly, to what end were Christ his obedience? And if God should looke after none, but those that can fully please him in all things, he should be a Lord, and a Master, without Subjects, and Servants. If thou, O Lord (saith David) shouldest marke what is done amisse, who should stand?

Therefore though wee cannot pray with that feeling, heare and reade with that profit, sing Psalmes with that joyfulness and cheerfulness of heart, as we should: Though we cannot forgive our enemies, long for Christ his comming, have such a tender feeling of the afflictions of the Saints, nor attaine to such heavenly Meditations, night or day, as we doe desire, and as God doth command; yet let us not be discouraged: If wee strive to bring our wicked Flesh to the performance of these duties, and though we have much adoee with it, yet if we draw it as a Beare to the Stake, unto Gods worship, and to the performance of good duties in publike and private: And when we feele most backwardnesse and untowardnesse in our Nature, yet wee consent in our very Soules, that the Law of God is holy, and good, and just: And that our wils and affections are indeed very corrupt, and rebellious; but wee would rather than all the World, that things went otherwise with us: That sinne might bee subdued, and grace planted in stead thereof: And it is our continuall grieve, that God should be so gracious, and kinde, and liberal to us, and we can be no more obedient, and loyall, and serviceable unto him: If (I say) we finde such a heart within us, we need not be dismayed, but may cheerfully go on, with full perswasion and undoubted resolution, that the Lord will be mercifull unto us, and take our obedience in good worth.

Onely that wee may not deceive ourselves, let us bee evermore carefull to use the meanes whereby we may grow better; and avoid the meanes whereby wee may bee made worse. (As was more largely taught in the former Sermon, in the end of the third Doctrine.) For if one say that hee de-
The third Sermon

fireth Heaven, and yet will never frequent Sermons, nor good Company, where hee may be instructed: nor use any private, or publike Exercises of Religion, whereby hee may be edified; he is no more to be regarded, than a sluggard that pretendeth that he means to have a good crop, and yet will neither manure, nor plow, nor sowe his Ground; but when others are labouring, he is sleeping, or loytering: As no man will ever looke that the one should have a plentiful harvest of Corne; so will no wise man beleive that the other shall obtaine a plentiful crop, either of Grace here, or Glory hereafter.

[Te shall eat the good things of the Land.] Before hath been shewed, that all Sinners that repent, shall have the Bloud of Christ to wash and cleanse their soules: Now in these words is declared, that they shall not onely have spirituall Grace, but also right unto, and the right use of all the benefits of this life. Whence this doctrine may be gathered: That,

True obedience to Gods Commandements, though it bee not perfect, brings the blessing of God upon us for outward things, as well as for inward.

This is promised in Deuteronomy, where Moses speaketh thus unto the People of Israel, "If thou shalt obey diligently the voyce of the Lord thy God, and observe and do all his commandements, which I command thee this day, then the Lord thy God will set thee on high, above all the Nations of the Earth. And all these blessings shall come on thee, &c. Blessed shalt thou be in the City, and blessed also in the Field, &c."

And so hee goes on, shewing that true and faithfull obedience is that which bringeth all manner of blessings for Body and Soule; for name and estate, yea, and for Seed and Posterity also: And therefore the Apostle telleth Timothy, that godlinesse is great gaine, and that it hath the promises of this life, and of the life to come: In which regard, David faith, "I have beene young, and now am old, yet I saw never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread. He had seene (and so may we) that Children of Great men have broken forth into many horrible sinnes, and to have been brought to a strange, and miserable, and violent death,
and to many woeful straits and extremities before their death: But he never saw (neither saw we see) the godly Seed of Godly men, for taken of God and Men, and left as Vagabonds to begge their bread: But God hath ever had (and still will have) a speciall care of them, and ever made all necessary provision for them: Either he himselfe by a more particular providence of his, casteth sufficiency of these outward things upon them; or blesseth their labours, so that they are made a meanes of maintenance unto them: Or if they faile that way, he moveth the hearts of some or other of his Servants, to pity them, and to supply their wants: So that whatsoever their necessities be, they are freed from that Curse that is denounced against the Seed of the wicked, to wit, that they should wander up and downe as Vagrants, begging their bread, and making a trade of that vile wretched course of life.

And there is a cause why we should rest fully resolved of this point, that none of Gods houehold shall ever want necessarie reliefe. Because all will yeeld that God is the Governor of Heaven and Earth, and the disposer of all things in them both: And then they must grant further, that those that are best, and do best, shall speed best; because God loveth them most: And how then can we make question, whether or no, the Lord will bestow upon them a competent measure, and a comfortable use of these earthly blessings, seeing all is in his hand, and he wishes so well unto his owne People? Especially seeing he hath straitly charged us, Not to care what we shall eate, or drinke, or what we shall put on, but first to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, promising us faithfully that if we do so, all other things shall be cast upon us.

And as he hath promised this, so hath he from time to time performed it: As we may observe thorow-out the Booke of Judges, of Samuel, and of the Chronicles: For there it is to be seene, that when godliness prospered in the Soules of Gods People, they prospered in their outward estate: And when sinne (on the other side) had made havocke in their Soules, then the Madianites, and the Philistims, and other...
Enemies, made havocke in their Countrey: When they and their Kings thrived in piety, and did grow in the knowledge of God, and zeale of his glory, then it went well with them for outward plenty and abundance: But when Idolatry and Impiety began once to thrive in their hearts, and in their Land, they never had long, nor setled prosperity, but their enemies Hands and Swords prevailed against them for the taking away of their lives, and the ruinating of their estates.

Here is matter of terror for all wicked Worldlings, that thinke to advantage and advance themselves by sinfull and naughty courses: that is an ill way to rise: For, the riches of Iniquity shall not prosper. Though they build their houses never so high, and advance their nests unto the Starres, yet the Lords hand shall pull them thence, and cast them downe into the very dust. They thinke their Houses, their Names, and their Substance shall remaine for ever, and that they shall make themselves and theirs, by joyning House to House, and Land to Land; by oppressing the poore and needy, and by defrauding the fatherleffe and the widow, and such as cannot right themselves. But alas, they little consider in the meane while, that God is the Judge of the World, and that he will reward every man according to his workes. They imagine their Estate shall be according to their Wealth: And so it might be indeed, if God were not the Governour of the World: But sith he is so, it shall go with every one according to that he is, and not according to that he hath. And therefore as God would have it proclaimed to the Godly, Say ye, Surely it shall go well with the just, for they shall eate the fruit of their works. So he would have this denounced against the Ungodly, Woe be to the wicked: it shall be evill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him. They shall reape that which they have sowed. It were an abfurd thing for one that hath sowed nothing but Cockle and Fitches, to expect a good crop of Wheat, or Barley, or such like Corne: And as contrary to all reason is it for them that sow iniquitie, to thinke they shall reape any thing but affliction. They may delude themselves with vaine hopes and bragges as much as...
as they will: But do we thinke such proud, and malicious, and cruel men, shall obtaine any happinesse, and prosperity from the Lord? Nay surely, he hateth both them and their practises, and therefore they and their wicked seed shall be rooted out: As we may see it verified in many of the Kings of Israel, as in Jeroboam, Ahab, Baasha, &c. and most notably in that place of Jeremiah concerning Jehoakim the sonne of Josiah: Woe unto him (faith the Lord) that buildeth his house by unrighteousnesse, and his chambers without equity: He useth his neighbour without wages, and giveth him not for his work, &c. Shalt thou reign because thou closest thyself in Cedar? Did not thy Father, eate, and drinke, and prosper, when he executed judgement, and justice? &c. Where is declared, in the example of Josiah, the godly Father on the one side, that the true knowledge of God, and the practice of godlinesse, and of righteousness, bringeth all true honour and prosperitie: And on the other side, in the example of Jehoiakim, the wicked Sonne, is shewed, that impietie joyned with oppression and cruelty, with fraud, and deceit, and injurious dealing, doth bring the curse of God in life and death: That it maketh a man live a base and dishonourable life, and dye a shamefull and ignominious death: That while he is in the World, he shall live undesired: And when he goeth out of the World he shall dye unlamented.

This is also for our instruction; If we would have the good things of the Land, and eate of the same, that is, have the comfortable use and enjoyment thereof, then let us yeeld our free consent to be dutifull and obedient to the Lord. Otherwise a man may have the things of this life, and yet not have his part in them: He may have much meat and drinke, apparell, and riches, and honour, and yet have no found comfort in any of them all. A poore man that feareth God, though he feed on coarse bread, on greene hearbes, or on pulse, as Daniel and his Companions did, yet may receive his food more cheerfully, and looke a great deale more freshely, than wicked unregenerate men do, or can do, when they have all abundance and variety.
Therefore let this encourage men, if they would have good things either in right, or in possession, to labour to get Religion into their hearts: and to be as much afraid of sinne, as of miserie: and as desirous of grace, as they are of prosperitie. Which if we could do, we should finde Gods eyes open to consider of us, and his hand to relieve us continually in all our wants and necessities.

And as we should be thus careful for our selves, so we should be also for our children. There is no good Parent but would wish his children might be provided for, and live in the World in good sort: Now here is the way to purchase them a good estate in the Earth: We the meanes to bring them unto the feare of God, and to have faith in God: For when the Lions that are full of might, and rage, and crueltie, do lacke and suffer hunger; Then they which seeke the Lord, shall want nothing that is good. God will have a care that his Sheepe shall have convenient pasturie, and be in good liking, though the Lions be pined and hunger-starved; and when strong and mighty men are in miserie and debt, in want and necessity, ever shifting and toyling, and yet getting nothing: Then Gods poore and weake Servants shall have that which will satisfy and content them: For God hath said, that he will never leave them nor forsake them. Therefore are they the most provident and wise Parents, that bring up their children in the instruction and information of the Lord: For such shall possess the earth; and the generation of the righteous shall be blessed. Children are not always the better for the goods of their Parents, but they are always the better for their goodnesse: For when it is said in that 112. Psalme that they are blessed, it is more than if it had beene said, they shall enjoy honour, credit, wealth, and whatsoever outward blessings else can be named: For that implyeth thus much, that they shall have the good gifts of God so farre as they are needfull for them, and that they shall have the right use of them.

But this may seeme quite contrary: For commonly wicked and profane persons live in all manner of plenty, when the godly sustaine penury and scarcity: And therefore in appear-
appearance, godliness is not the best course to procure a happy and prosperous estate.

For the removing of this doubt, we must consider, that howsoever the wicked of the world seeme to thrive best, and to enjoy great matters, in comparison of that which good Christians have; yet in truth their case is nothing so good as is the case of Gods Servants, but in the midst of all the things that they possesse, they are very miserable: for,

1. First, they have right to nothing, but are meere Thieves and usurpers, and shall answer for laying hold of those things that are in truth none of their owne. A Thife may breake into the Kings Treasurie, yet it is none of his, but he shall quickly be thrust out thence: And so may a Moth crepe into a velvety gowne, yet hath it no right there, but may be bruft out at the owners pleasure: And the same is the case of all unregenerate persons; they are intruders into other mens possessions, and the great Landlord of the World may thrust them forth when it seemeth best unto himselfe, and call them to a reckoning for medling with those things that they could lay no lawfull claime unto, by any one Clause or Title that is contained in Gods Law.

2. Secondly, as they have no right to have any thing; so neither have they any comfortable use thereof. There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God. But they are like the raging waves of the Sea, that cannot rest, but are still tossed to and fro, from one side to another; and cast up filthy mire and durt. And when they are most lowd in their laughter, and seeme to be most pleasant and merrie, even then their mirth is full of hollownesse and discontentednesse: For, let them but have some apprehension of death, or of any sudden and extraordinary judgement likely to befall them: nay, let them be but a little crossed, and disgraced by any of their Companions, they will be suddenly distempted, and much daunted, and many times fall a trembling, everie joynct of them, as Belshazzar King of Babel did at the sight of the Handwriting on the wall. And if no such thing do betide them, yet they are still pursued by such Enemies, as will suffer them.
them to have no great quietness, nor comfort in the things of this present life which they do possess. If we should see a Bucke hunted through a greene pasture, where there is much fresh grass, and many sweet and pleasant flowers, and springs of water: we would not thinke his case very happy, nor that he had any great inheritance there, when wee perceived the Hounds following close at his heeles: Yet such is the state of all sinners, that have a large and pleasant walke in this world, they are still hunted with many noytome lusts, of covetousnes, and pride, and filthinesse, and the like: and Satan & the world have them ever in chase, and shall pursue them still, till they have driven them into Hell it selfe, if they alter not their pro-

phane and wretched course of life.

Further, they have the wrath of God lying on their Bod-
dies and Soules, which poyseneth and invenometh all that be-
longeth unto them. His terrible and unavoydable curse shall ever close with sinners: So that though they eate and drinke, and wallow in their pleasures, yet they can finde no found delight; nor turne contentment therein: Because being pos-

fessed with hardnesse of heart, and blindness of minde, and be-
ing given up to a reprobate tense, all things that they have are imbittered by their owne sinne, and Gods heavy curse clea-
ving unto them.

Put case all a mans bones were broken, and one should put on him a Velvet coat, beset with pearles and diamonds, in the most rich and costly manner that might bee: And he should begin to think, and say, Now I trust I shall be at ease, and shall have no more cause of complaint: Every wise man would see his folly, and testifie against him, that his rich attire cannot take away, nor abate his paines: Even so fareth it with the un-
godly: Sinne hath set them out of joynt; nay, it hath to wrought on all the powers, and parts of Soule and Body, that it hath, as it were, cruft all their bones in pieces: and what found peace, rest, or comfort can they finde, from all these outward things of the world that are cast upon them, till there be some cure wrought on their Soules.

But it is quite contrary with Gods children: though they be
be pressed, and pinched with many distresses and wants, and driven to many extremities and straits; yet they may be fuller of joy in the midst of their afflictions, than the wicked are in the midst of their jollity. Paul and Silas were fuller of gladness, and of true contentedness in the Dungeon, when their feet were fast in the Stocks, than Herod was on his Throne, having all his Flatterers and Sycophants about him, to extoll and magnifie him. The very teares of the people of God, are sweeter and more comfortable, than the greatest joy of carnall and wretched sinners: For the Lord is with his in mercy and goodnesse; whereas his face is bent against the wicked and impenitent: And hence it is, That a little that the righteous hath, is better than great riches of the ungodly. Better is a dinner of greene hearbes seasoned with the blessings of God, than many dainty dishes, poysoned with Gods wrath and malediction.

And albeit, the Saints of God be sometimes deprived of these transitory things; yet they shall never be deprived of Gods favour: and that want of outward things shall be supplied with inward graces. They have a sure promise, that they shall have sufficient: and God never giveth lesse than he promiseth, but many times he giveth more than we expect. And if that which is wanting in dross be paid home in good gold we need not to complain, as if we were losers by such an exchange. Therefore let us shut up all with that saying of Solomon: Walke thou in the way of good men, and keep the maies of the righteous: For the just shall dwell in the Land, and the up-right men shall remaine in it. But the wicked shall bee cut off from the Earth, and the transgressours shall be rooted out of it.

But if ye refuse, and be rebellious, ye shall be devoured by the Sword. This maketh for the preventing of a third objection. For some might say, it were good indeed in these regards, if we could repent for our sinnes, and wash our selves from our filthinesse; but if we do not, we hope we shall do well enough while we live, and be saved when we dye: for God is not so severe as men would make him, but he is gracious and mercifull: and therefore we meane to take our course, and still to proceed in the same, and yet I trust to speed as well as the best
of them. Nay (as the Prophet doth say) for if ye refuse to obey and be rebellions, ye shall be devoured by the sword. As if he had laid, God indeed is ready to forgive, & to cleanse all sorts of sinners, that see how and wherein they have offended, and are troubled for their offences, resolving to leave and forsake them, and to practice the contrary duties: but they that refuse to obey, and continue in their obstinacy, the Lord will never forgive them, nor purge them from their iniquities: but their names shall cleave as fast unto their souls, as the dye doth unto crimson, or scarlet, that can never by any art, or strength of man be reduced to their former whiteness again.

And therefore the Prophet tells them, if ye refuse to obey, ye shall be devoured by the sword: It is sure some fearful and strange plague or other shall fall upon you, and utterly consume you. As God hath mercy in abundance for penitent sinners: so hath he judgements in as great plenty for obstinate rebels, that refuse to submit themselves unto him.

Now the things before spoken of (both blessings and favours promised to the penitent, and plagues and punishments denounced against the obstinate) he confirmeth by one main argument; The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. As if he should have said, Let men never discourse, nor object on the one side, or on the other: For God hath said it, and he will do it. He is true, and cannot lie; he is wise, and cannot change; he is just, and cannot be corrupted: he is Almighty, and cannot be resisted: and therefore, whatsoever his mouth hath spoken, that his hand will bring to pass.

Hath God then said, Whosoever eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day? Then is it impossible that such should ever taste of God's wrath, or sustain the punishment of eternal death.

Oh, but Christ is in heaven, and we are on earth, and how can we then eat his Body, and drink his Blood?

Faith hath a long and a high reach, and the Spirit of Christ hath as great a reach, to convey the same unto us: and our communion with him is not carnal, but spiritual.

Oh, but having so many corruptions and rebellions, as I have, how is it possible that I should be cleansed?
The mouth of the Lord hath spoke it: and therefore never cavill against it, nor make question of it any more. Indeed unbeliefe cannot see how this should be effected: and therefore ignorant unbelieving Papists have invented a carnall manner of eating and drinking the Body and Blood of Christ: And have found out a Purgatory to scrape off that rust of sin that hath so eaten into mens Soules: But all such devices, for the washing away of sinne, are but as muddy water, that will not make us one whit cleaner, but rather soule us a great deale more. Gods meanes onely are effectuall to make us cleane and pure in his eyes, and able to stand with boldnesse before him, with all comfort and perfect joy.

On the contrary, this is for the terror of those that have their consciences to feared, through long custome in sinning, that notwithstanding all the threatnings denounced against presumptuous sinners, they do continue still in their idlenesse, their prophanes, and all kind of wickednes: Let them goe on, and let them walke in the waies of their owne hearts, and follow their owne counsels, and their carnall and wretched desires: but withall let them know, that for all these things God will bring them to judgement. And if ignorance will not wholly excuse men, but that they shall bee punished for their offences: Then how many and how grievous shall their stripes be, that know their Masters will and do it not? Surely if Christ shall come in flaming fire, to render vengeance to those that do not know him: much more will he come in wrath and indignation against those that do know, & yet will not obey the Gospell. But as for those that see their infirmities, and daily lament, and grieve for them, and strive against them: Let such be of good comfort; for their painfull labor is known unto the Lord; and their earnest desire of faith, and love, and repentance, is a grace well pleasing to his Majesty: And they shall not onely finde mercy for the pardon of their sinnes, and grace for the sanctifying of their soules; but outward blessings for the upholding of their estate; For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

FINIS.
THE
FOURTH SERMON.

2 CHRON. 30. 18, 19, 20.
Verse 18. The good Lord be mercifull toward him,
19 That prepareth his whole heart to seeke the Lord God
of his Fathers, though he be not cleansed according
to the purification of the Sanctuary.
20 And the Lord heard Hezekiah, and healed the
People.

In the former part of this Chapter, is declared,
how king Hezekiah, in a zeale of Gods glory,
and love unto his people, made a proclamati-
on thorowout all Israel, from Beersheba even
unto Dan, that they should come to keep the
Passeover to the Lord God of Israel, at Jeru-
salem: For they had not done it for a great time, in that manner
as God required, because of that Idolatry which had over-
spread the Land of Israel. For this purpose Hezekiah and his
Princes sent Postes with Letters thorowout all Israel and
Judah, even to the ten Tribes also, that were full of sin and mis-
ery, to admonish them to turne againe unto the Lord their
God, that he might returne unto them: and not to be stiffe-
necked, but to humble themselves to serve the Lord, that his
wrath might be turned away from them. But when the Mess-
engers came, a great sort of the Israelites laught them to
scorne, and mocked them: they were so inured unto sin, and
infected with Idolatry, that they set light by, nay, utterly con-
temned, all the wholesome and holy exhortations of that wor-
thy King and his Nobles.

Yet some of them whose hearts God touched, even divers
out of the Tribes of Asher, and Manasseh, and Zebulun came to Jerusalem: and the hand of God was in Judah, so that hee gave them one heart to doe the commandement of the King, and of the Rules: insomuch that there assembled unto Jerusalem much people, to keepe the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

But by reason of the short warning that they had, a multitude of the people of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun had not cleansed themselves according to the Law in that behalf so provided, Exod. 12. Numb. 9. And therefore were in danger to be cut off, Levit. 7. 20.

In this regard they were in great distress, and in a sore strait, yet they thought it better to receive the Sacrament, though they failed in some circumstances of their preparation, than to omit it until the next yeere, having wanted it so long before; whereupon they ventured to eat the Passover: which being ended, Hezekiah, in fear of Gods displeasure, and in commiseration of the people that stood in danger of Gods plagues and punishments, falleth to prayer for them, and is instant with the Lord in that behalf: Hee saw their great desire to be made partakers of it; the paines that they had taken to come unto Jerusalem for that very purpose; and perceived a strange hand of God inclining their hearts so farre, and thereby was he encouraged to become an earnest suiter to God for them: And thus he prayed unto God for them: The good Lord be merciful towards him that prepareth his whole heart to seek the Lord God of his Fathers. The word that is translated [be mercifull] signifieth thus much in effect, as if hee had said, The good Lord pardon and supply that which is wanting in him that prepareth his whole heart. And now they wanted not so much willingness, as time to prepare themselves; and therefore he prayeth the Lord to be favourable unto them. And that hee might have more assurance that his prayer should be effectuall, he buildeth it upon strong and sound reasons taken,

1. First, from the Nature of God, implied in the word [good:] which goodness of his, is never seen so much as in shewing of mercy to them that are in distress. As if he should have
have said, Lord, thou art good in thy selfe, and good unto thy People, and here are such as stand in great need of thy goodness, and therefore be mercifull and gracious unto them.

2 Secondly, from the Name of God [Jehovah] implying his constancy and unchangeableness in himselfe, and in his love, and the fruits thereof toward his Servants. Hezekiah knew that he had been mercifull unto as great sinners as they were, in former times, and that hee was the same God still, and therefore he intreateth him now to manifest so much, in passing by the frailties of these communicants.

3 A third reason is taken from the Covenant, that hee is [the God of their Fathers] by reason whereof hee was bound unto them, and their Children; so that he could not deny them any thing that they should aske in Faith. These arguments are drawne from God.

Another argument there is taken from them, that they sought the Lord, &c. Which seeking of theirs, is set out by the manner of it, that they prepared their whole heart to seek him: Not as if their hearts were so free from sinne, or so full of grace as they should have beeene; but that they were true and plaine, and sincere: Not such as had no sinne (for it is said, they were not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary) but that did love no sinne: Not such hearts as wanted no grace, or preparation for Gods ordinance: But such as were humbled for the want of grace, and of that preparation that they should have made.

This was his prayer, with the reasons of it: The effect followeth. And the Lord heard Hezekiah; that is, to heard him, as that he accepted and performed his request: For it is said, he healed the people; that is, gave them that which God doth offer unto his people in the Sacrament: They received the Seale of the Covenant, and he made good the Covenant unto them, as shall be shewed afterwards more plainly and particularly, in the severall branches thereof.

The summe then of these words is: The godly care of Hezekiah for those that came in part unprepared unto the Pascover. And here we may consider:
What hee did, he prayed for them: where wee may note,
The substance of his prayer, to wit, that God of his rich mercy would supply all their wants.
The persons for whom he prayeth: who are described,
By their sincerity, that they were such as feared God, and sought him with their whole heart.
By their infirmity, that they wanted the legall cleansing.
The effect that followed upon his prayer, which was twofold:

Heard his prayer.
Healed the people.

Ver. 19. [The good Lord be mercifull] In that Hezekiah being appointed by God to be governour, taketh this course of seeking to the Lord for his people, we may from his example learne this Doctrine: That it is the duty of all Governours and Superiours, not onely to teach them that belong unto their charge, and depend any way upon them; but likewise to pray for them.

Good Rulers must not onely informe those that are under them, what they must doe, and stir them to good duties, by wholesome instructions: but they must also become suiter s to the Lord for them, that he would frame their hearts to doe as they are taught; and to pardon them where they come short.

It was well done of Hezekiah, to send abroad Messengers to call the Israelites to the worship of God: but this hee knew was not enough, and therefore he beseecheth the good Lord to shew himselfe favourable unto them. Thus also dealt David (another King, placed over Gods inheritance,) Be favourable unto Zion for thy good pleasure, (faith hee) build the walls of Jerusalem, And so did Moses, that worthy Governor of the Lords people: not contenting himselfe to bee often teaching and instructing them whom he had the charge of: but ever and anon praying for them, as occasion was offered, that God would relieve them when they were in wants: that he would defend them, when they were set upon by enemies: that he would pardon them, when they had kindled his wrath against them, &c. The like is noted of Job, how carefull hee was
was for his children, even when they were in a sort, from under his shadow, and had houses of their owne to dwell in; for it is said, that his sonses went and banquettet in their houses every one his day, &c. and when the days of their banqueting were gone about, Job sent, and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, & offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: For Job thought, it may be that my sons have sinned, and blasphemed God in their hearts, thus did Job every day. Here we must understand, when it is said that he offered Sacrifices for them, that he prayed for them also, (for those two, sacrificing, and praying, ever went together) that God would pardon them all their sins which they had committed, while they were at their feasting merry together; at which times, many faults escape yong people, which they take little notice of: but Job considered throughly of them, & was ever mindful and carefull to use the meanes of God for the remitting and purging away of the same; that his childrens soules might not be infected, nor Gods anger provoked thereby. A rare example, worthy the imitation of all godly Parents, yet imitated but of a very few: for how small is the number of them that are thus jealous, and fearefull of themselves? and if they faile of this godly care for their owne soules, how can they be jealous, with a godly jealousie, of the soules of those whom God hath committed unto their charge? Now the reasons why we must be as ready to speake to God in prayer, as to them in precepts, are these:

1. First, because God hath commanded to pray one for another. Now if those that are not tied unto us by any neere bonds, are to bee recommended unto God in our prayers; much more those whom God hath more especially united unto us, either by nature, or by duty and service, on their part to be performed unto us, Yea, Christ Jesus straitly commandeth us to pray for our enemies. Now if that be a bounden duty; how much more is it to pray for our friends, especially, if withall they bee Gods friends? seeing they by our prayers may bee much helped, and without them much indangered.

The Prophet Samuel understood that this was a duty, when he accounted the neglect hereof to be a sinne against God, as
in that booke it appeareth that he did; for when the people were frightened and humbled, both by the words of Samuel, &c by the miraculous worke of God, in sending extraordinary thunder and raine in the time of wheat harvest: and therupon came unto Samuel, saying, Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we dye not: his answer was, God for b, that I should sinne against the Lord, and cease praying for you.

A second reason is, because except they joyne petitions unto God, with instructions unto them, they can look for no great blessing upon the good lessons they give unto them. All planting and watering is in vaine, except God give the increase: and if we would have any increase, it is good reason we should seek it at his hand by prayer. Therefore both of them must be joyned together: we must doe the best we can, and then say, as Noah did, Lord, perswade Iapheth to dwell in the Tents of Sem. Except the Lord did perswade the heart, as well as Noah did the ear, he knew all that he could doe, was but lost labour.

Thirdly, unleefe they pray for a blessing, they can never be so thankful for any good that is wrought upon such as are under them. They have had no hand in pulling downe Gods mercies upon them, and therefore they have no heart to give him praise for the same, but when any Governour or Superior hath had a strong hand in drawing downe the mercies of God upon any that depend upon him, and seeth the good effect of his prayers; and of his teares, this cannot but make him glorious, and magnifie the Lords goodnesse, for hearing and granting their requests, in remouing evill things, or bestowing good things upon such as are under their jurisdiction.

This serveth for the reprowe of those that thinke they have done as much as they neede, and sufficiently discharged their consciences, if they have called their children, & servants, and whole Family to the Word & Sacrament, and to be examined before they receive the same, though in the meanes while they never call on the Name of the Lord to blesse them, and the meanes: and to be good and gracious unto them where they failed in preparing themselves. When Iacob was to send his tonnes into Egypt to buy food of Joseph, he prayed instantly, that
that God would vouchsafe to be with them, to give them prosperous and good success in the business they went about; God Almighty give you mercy (faith he) in the sight of the man. Now if he thought it his duty to pray for them, when they were to come before Joseph, which was but Under-governor in Egypt: how much more should we count it our duty to pray for such as belong unto our charge, when they are to come before the whole Trinity; even before that God that is the Soveraigne Lord and King of heaven and earth, full of glory, and full of majesty: how much more (I say) should we desire, that they might finde favour in his eyes? especially considering that Jacobs sons went but for the food of their bodies, which they might either have or want, without any extraordinary hurt unto themselues: whereas those that are to bee partakers of Gods ordinances, are to be fathers unto him for the food of their soules, and to bee everlastingly saved, if they can obtaine it; or else take their bane, and be lyable to Gods heavy displeasure, and in danger of judgement inward and outward, in body and soule; not onely in their life time, but for ever after, if they repent not for their disorderly, and contemptuous approaching unto him in his holy services? so that there is much more reason, we see, that Governours should be earnest with the Lord for the saving of the soules of those that are under their roofes, than there was for Jacob, to be earnest for the success of his sons: and therefore let all those bee humbled and reformed, that have been slack and negligent in the performance of this duty.

Secondly, let inferiours here be admonished, that, as governours are to sue unto the Lord in their behalfe (the husband for the wife, parents for their children, masters, and mistresses for their servants and people:) so they on the other side, are to be gentle, and humble, and tractable, that their superiours may have good encouragement, and good success in the sup- plications that they make for them. Wee doe not reade, that Hezekiah at any other time, dealt so earnestly with God in the cause of the people, as at this time he did. And what moved him to bee so importunate now? even this, that hee saw they had hearkened unto his perswasion, & taken great pains to
to come to Jerusalem from all quarters of the Land: and being there, he perceived that they had some sorrow and remorse for their former impiety, and some desire to become better for the time to come. Now when he discerned that they came on so fast, and that they were halfe healed already, he bendeth all the force and strength of his prayers for the obtaining of mercy and favour for them, and so found that good effect that he desired and expected. And that was it that made David to plentifully & feelingly to pour out his heart before the Lord in prayer, and in thanksgiving: for when the Princes and the people had offered very largely, and very willingly, David rejoiced with great joy, and blessed and praised the Lord before all the congregation, saying, Blessed be thou, O Lord God of Israel our Father for ever and ever, &c. Who am I, and who are my people, that we should offer willingly? &c. O Lord God, keep this for ever in the purposes and thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their hearts unto thee. Thus may we observe how the good affections and desires of the people do stirre up and strengthen the hearts of their Rulers to pray for them; whereas on the contrary, nothing doth so kill the heart, and discourage the spirits of Gods servants from prayer, as when they see those that are under them, to be wilfull, and heady, froward, and rebellious, and utterly void of any good disposition unto piety, and religious exercises: They can give no good testimonie of them, but have need to cry unto God, that he would humble them, and convert them: they cannot pray as Hezekiah here doth, The good Lord be mercifull unto him, that prepareth his whole heart to seeke the Lord, &c. but the good Lord give them hearts to preparethemselves, and take away the stony, and unbelieving, and carnal hearts out of their bodies. And indeed many times it is a just judgement of God upon such wretched persons, that his children should have no heart to pray for them, because (as it is said of Eli's sonnes) God hath a purpose to destroy them, or at least grievously to afflict the. And therefore little do these stubborn and obstinate children and servants know, what injury they do unto themselves, by entring into, and continuing in their sinfull courses: for they thereby not onely provoke Gods heavy displeasure against them,
them, which is a burden importable; but also hinder, & it may be utterly cut off the prayers of those that would otherwise cry unto God night and day, for the obtaining of his favour, and the procuring of the light of his countenance to shine upon them, if they might see any signe of grace and goodness in them. So much for the first point.

Now further mark who they be that he praieth for: not pro-

fane or careless persons, but for those that prepared their whole

heart to seek the Lord, &c. that is, which laboured with a true and sincere heart to be partakers of the mercy and goodness of God, which he made offer of in his holy ordinances. In that Hezekiah neither doth, nor dares pray for a blessing upon any, but upon such as were true-hearted; The Doctrine is: that,

Whosoever would have any mercy from God in the Sacra-

ment, must come with a sincere and upright heart there unto. That howsoever he cannot put away all sinne (for who can say his heart is clean) yet he may, and must put away the liking of all sinne, and the purpose of sinning.

So farre as any man hath a love unto iniquity, and an intent of committing iniquity, he is tainted with hypocrisy, & doth pollute and defile every good thing that he medleth withall, and so can have no benefit, but much hurt therefrom.

If then we would have God to meet us in mercy, we must meet him in sincerity: & if we would have him to come unto us in goodness, we must draw neere unto him in uprightnesse. Agreeable to this point is that exhortation to the Heb. Let us draw neare with a true heart, in assurance of faith, sprinkled in our hearts from an evill conscience, & washed in our bodies with pure water. As if he should have said; except you come fitted and prepared with a heart void of guile and deceit, ye offend God by your coming. For God will be so farre from giving countenance, or comfort unto such, that he will assuredly plague them for all their fraud & falsfhood that they have used with him. This we may plainly see in that which befell the ill grounds; there are three sorts of them mentioned (all profec-
fors) that came to the Word of life, and yet had no benefit by it: and therefore by a necessary consequent, they could reap as little fruit by the Sacrament. For the Word must give life and strength,
strength, before the Sacrament can nourish and increase the same. What was the reason why they profited not? because they came not with a good and honest heart, as the fourth sort of hearers did, who received instruction and comfort, and the power of godliness, by the conscientable hearing of the word. But what is that good and honest heart which they are commended for? it is a heart that doth fully purpose to do well, though it faile much in that which it performeth: that resolveth before-hand to avoid the evil that shall be reproved; and to do the good duties that shall be commanded, & to believe and rest upon the promises that shall be pronounced, as far as God shall give ability, &c. Now wherefoever there is such a ready inclination unto goodnes, there will be a bringing forth of fruit; though not in all alike, yet every one will do somewhat: and God will acknowledge them for good ground, and honest-hearted Christians, that yeeld him but a thirty fold, as well as those that yeeld him sixty fold, or an hundred fold: for a lesse measure of fruitfulnesse, is an argument of truth, as well as a greater measure, and therefore shall be respected and rewarde: but as for those that have naughty & deceitful hearts, they shall go away as bad, or worse than they came: and whatsoever faire colours they set upon their profession for a time, yet sooner or later their hollownesse shall appeare to their shame and punishment.

Now the Reasons that make for the confirmation of this Doctrine, That if we would finde acceptance with God, we must bring sincerity with us: are these,

First, without this, we can have neither remission, nor sanctification: and therefore are so farre from having interest in Gods mercies through Christ his merits, that we are liable to his wrath, and lie open to the strokes of his revenging hands. None are pardoned, and blessed, but those in whose spirit there is no guile.

Secondly, except there be uprightness, we can have no hope of good success in any service of God that we take in hand, there being no promise made unto us: for as God heareth not sinners in prayer, so he doth not helpe sinners by the Word or Sacrament.
This is for the terror of those that when they come to the Lords Table, never examine themselves, nor look into the state of their souls: at most they come but with a Pharisaical washing of the outside of the Cup, and of the Platter: As, if there have been, brawls between man and man, there shall be some idle & formal reconciliation: they will be friends and forgive one another, before they receive the Communion: but if there be any difference betwixt God and them, they never look to the inward parts: such can expect no blessing upon their coming, but may justly fear some grievous judgement, because their hearts are unsound & unfaithful before the Lord.

Secondly, if none here have any prayer made for them, but such as bring with them to the Lords house a single and sincere heart: therefore if we would have benefit by any of the means of salvation, let us be sure, that though we be burdened with many corruptions, yet we seek the Lord with an unfained desire of profiting by his ordinances. Now that we may not deceive our selves, but may satisfy our consciences in full assurance that our hearts are right toward God, let us take this direction following:

First, labour diligently to find out (as by searching we may) our special sins; grieve heartily for them: and put them away by true repentance. So faith James, Purge your hearts ye hypocrites: but what must be the purgation and receive which they must take? (sorrow and weep.) That man and woman that hath never done so, is not only stained with hypocrisy, but is a full hypocrite. All men by nature are full of deceit and guile, and till they sit as judges upon their own souls, they cannot be cleansed from the same; but when they have once thorowly sifted themselves, and by godly sorrow laboured to purge their consciences, as neare as possibly they can, from all secret sins, then though they cannot say, I have no sin; yet they may boldly say, I allow no sin: and therefore I am assured that I am no dissembler: and that Gods judgements should never light on me, because I have prevented the same by judging myselfe, and by abandoning those corruptions which might procure his wrath and displeasure against me.

Secondly, let us use the means whereby our hearts may be made
made pure and undefiled; namely, the Word, Sacrament and Prayer: for though we mourn never so much, that is but as it were plowing of our hearts: if there be not good seed also sowne thereupon, we cannot expect any crop of grace: all the sorrow and afflictions in the world, without that, can do us no good, but rather much hurt; therefore it is let downe in the Text, as a note of a true heart, in those Israelites that came to receive the Pascheover, That they did seeke the Lord God of their Fathers, in that means which he had ordained for the helping and healing of them: wherein if we can imitate them, we shall speed as they did, all our breaches shall be made up, and all our deadly diseases shall be by degrees healed, and at length fully and perfectly cured. Thirdly, we must not onely have recourse unto Gods ordinances, but set downe our reckoning beforehand, that we shall assuredly finde the efficacie and powerfull operation thereof: and that God will not mock and delude us with vaine hopes; but look what promise he hath made in his Word, he will accordingly make good the same: and not one word shall fall to the ground, of all the good things that he hath covenanted to bestow upon us. And therefore (as we are exhorted in the former place to the Hebrews) We must draw neere in assurance of faith, & then according to our faith it shall be unto us. And the like we have in the Revel. I counsell thee (faith Christ to the Luke-warme Laodiceans) to buy of me gold tried in the fire, &c. teaching us hereby, that we must highly esteeme, and heartily desire the holy things of God, and be at cost to part with our corruptions, and make account that we shall not be disappointed when we come thus affected unto Christ Jesus. And the he will enrich us, that before were poore; and clothe us, that before were naked; and enlighten our eyes, that before were altogether shut up in blindness & ignorance.

Thirdly, here is matter of consolation for them that can approve the sinceritie of their hearts by the fore-named trials. Who before they dare present themselves at the Lords Table, or presume to ask any comfort from Jesus Christ, do first affliet themselves: and before they intreat the Lord to bind them up, do first seeke to breake their owne hearts by inward remorse and contrition for all their offences; and yet content
not themselves thus to break up the fallow ground of their hearts, but come unto the Lord, as he commandeth them, to beseech him to sow his precious seed upon them; and do rest and relye on him for the doing of it. Let such be of good comfort; for undoubtedly the Lord will not send them empty away, their labour shall not be lost, nor their hope be disappointed: but they shall certainly have good success, according to their expectation. 1. Because they have done what they could for their part. 2. Hezekiah’s prayer standeth in as good force yet still, as it did at that time when it was made: and the same in effect is continually offered up unto God by many of his elect, for such as are so humbled and fitted for that worke: yea, and Christ Jesus also in his owne person hath sanctified and blessed that Sacrament, to all believers that shall worthily partake of it unto the end of the world: and therefore comming thus affected and prepared, they cannot misse of the promised blessing.

(Though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary.) In these words he preventeth that feare & doubt of good success, that might arise in their hearts for want of preparation: for the Law was, that no unclean person should have any thing to do with the Passover: Now divers of them were in their uncleannesse, because they had not time to purge themselves according to the legall rites: therefore Hezekiah here seeketh to helpe the matter, and in effect he faith thus: I confess O Lord, there are divers ceremoniall circumstances wanting in our preparation to the Sacrament: but for the cafe flood with us, that we knew not how possibly to help it, and therefore, Lord, be mercifull unto us in that regard. In that he prayeth thus for them, albeit they had so failed in want of due preparation, that they might justly have beene punished for the same, if they had had time to have done better, and had not this beene an extraordinary case: the Doctrine hence arising, is this: that,

So long as we labour to keepe the substance of Gods worship, though we faile in some circumstances thereof, he will be mercifull unto us.

If we embrace the substance thereof willingly, and faile in the
the circumstances unwillingly, God will never lay it to our charge. Examples will prove this more fully unto us. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job (faith the Apostle James) and ye know what end God made with him.* Now if we read over the book of Job, we shall find, that there was in him a great deal of passion and discomposure, and that he held but very weakly in a great part of the conflict: as when he cursed the day of his birth, and conceived hardly of the Lord, and was ready to dispute and reason the matter with him: shewing much unwillingness to submit himselfe to those strokes which God had laid upon him: for which he was justly reproved both by Elihu, and also by the Lords own mouth: yet because he held out in the substance of godliness, in the midst of all his woes and miseries, and at the beginning thereof humbled himselfe, saying, *Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I returne thither: the Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken it: blessed be the Name of the Lord:* as also afterward he used many good and holy speeches concerning his own ill deserts, and the righteousnes of Gods proceeding, if he should deal in extremity of justice with him: and in the end acknowledged his fault, and desired to lay his hand upon his mouth: because (I say) these good things were found in him, God passeth by his infirmities, and taketh notice of his patience, with high commendation thereof: Setting him forth as a pattern most worthy our imitation, when we are pressed down with the weight of adversitie, as he was. For the Lord in his wisedome considered, that it was not through any stubbornnesse, or rebellious disposition, that he brake out in that manner: but through the violence of his affliction, and temptations, and through the ignorance and indifcreet carriage of his friends, who dealt very uncharitably, and unmercifully with him. In like manner is Rahab commended, as one that by reason of her faith and works, perished not with them which obeyed not, when she had received the Spies peaceably. Yet if we look into the Story, we shall easily discern a great deal of infirmity in that very work of love & mercy, by which she got the testimony of such a notable faith: for she bewraied much unbelief, in making a lie to preserve the Spies in safety. *There came men unto me (taketh she)
but I wist not whence they were. And when they shut the gate in
the darke, the men went out; whither they went, I wot not: fol-
low after them quickly, for you shall overtake them: Every word
she here spake, was false, and favoured of much weakness: and
yet all this God takes no knowledge of, when he is to speake
of her, and of her faith and love. Indeed she was but a new co-
mer on, and had not beene instructed as yet what the danger
of a lye was, &c. and therefore notwithstanding her failing
in that particular, she is brought by the Apostle James, as an
example of one that was justified (or made knowne to be a
just and righteous woman) by her works: none other being
reckoned up, but those which she did at that time.

So the Angel (as is recorded in the Gospel) rebuked those
good and faithfull women, for that they sought the living a-
mong the dead: yet withall he telleth them, Be not afraid, ye
seeke Jefus of Nazareth that hath beene crucified. As if hee
should say, Here is your errorr, that you seek Christ where
you should not: he is risen againe, as hee foretold you that he
would; yet herein doth our uprightness appeare, that you hold
out still in the love and profession of Christ, even now, when
he is in such disgrace and dislike, almost with all men: & there-
fore be not dismayed, but herein take comfort. Thus we may
perceive how favourable the Lord is towards his children;
that offend not upon set purpose, and presumptuously: but
through Satans instigation, or through humane frailty: in
which regard the Prophet Micah bursteeth forth into an ad-
miration of his gracious dealing; Who is a God like unto thee,
that taketh away iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions
of the remnant of his heritage? &c. he will returne and have mercy

This maketh for the confutation of their errorr,

1. That thinke they have no calling to come to the Sacra-
ment, because they see more and greater faults in themselves,
than they can espie, or then indeed, there are in many other
Christians: and it may be, more than heretofore they saw in
themselves. They finde so much hypocrisie, so much pride, so
much vaine-glory and selfe-love: such blindnesse of minde,
drowsiness of spirit, deadnesse of heart, such unwillingnesse

...
to heare, or read, or meditate, to pray, to receive the Sacrament, to sing Psalms, and the like, that they are wonderfully disheartened, & begin to fear that God will in no sort accept of them, if they should come unto the Table of his Sonne. But they must take heed how they give way to such conceits: for the things above mentioned, doe not exclude them from having right unto Christ Iesus, and to his merits, and therefore should by no meanes keepe them from the Sacrament.

But we come far short of that, that should bee in us. What of that? If you have a sight of your defects, and a mourning heart for the same, and a constant ideavor to get the graces that you want, then may and ought you to come to the Sacrament as well as any other: yea, if any have cause to make haste unto it, you are one of them: for the more dangerous any ones sicknes is, the greater speed hee should make to the Physician; and the more grievous any mans wound is, the more neede hath hee to haften to the Surgeon. Neither is their absenting of themselves from the Sacrament, any meanes to better their estate, but the next way to keep them in a bad case still: Nay, to make their condition farre worse than it is, and to haften the plagues of God upon them. By the Law of Moses it was determined, that all those that were negligent to keep the Passeover, should incurre the sentence and censures of excommunication, if they were not in a journey, hindred by inundations of waters, detained by sicknesse, or some extraordinary accident of that kinde. Now if they were so strictly bound to haften unto that feast, when it was to be celebrated at Jerusalem, which was many miles distant from the greatest part of them that were inhabitants in that land: how much more are men now tied to attend upon the celebration of the Lords Supper, seeing they need not undertake such a tedious journey, but may have it ministered unto them neere at hand, and that with lesse cost (& yet a larger blessing) than they could in the daies of the ceremoniall law? Surely if they do neglect so great salvation, well they may escape the punishment of men, but they shall seeke the strokes of God, & shall be cut off from having communion with him, and with his servants: they shull beare their sinne, (as in that place the holy Ghost speaketh)

which
The fourth Sermon

which otherwise by receiving the Sacrament, they might have discharged their consciences of, and put it over unto Christs accounts.

2 Further, those that by reason of their infirmities will forgive that ordinance, doe greatly dishonour God, and lay an hard imputation upon him; as who should say, that hee were such an extreame and rigorous Judge, as will accept of none but of those that have attained to a great measure of perfection.

Besides, such kind of persons doe, as much as in them lyeth, proclaime themselves to be hypocrites: for if they be not such, they have a Calling to partake of the Sacrament; as appeareth in this Text, by the prayer of Hezekiah, who doth in assurance of faith, (as the effect manifeently proveth) make request for all such as prepared their whole hearts, (that is, did their best endeavours with a true and sincere heart) to seeke the Lord.

Lastly, they give very ill examples unto others, and expose themselves to the censures of men, as contemners, or at least, neglecters of Gods Ordinance. And therefor in these regards, let al beware how they withdraw themselves, when the Lord inviteth them to such a banquet.

Secondly, this is for instruction and consolation both together, albeit we perceiv many blemishes, & great imperfections in our selves, yet let us take the Lords offer, when he calleth us to his Table: & come with certain expectation of good successse, as well as those that have a greater measure of repentance, and of faith, and love, than wee can attaine unto. For Christ Iesus the great Shepheard and Bishop of our soules, taketh order, that not only his Sheepe, but his Lambe also may be fed. All the good grounds bring not forth a like quantitie of fruit: yet all agree in this substantiall point, that they bring forth good and ripe fruit; though some doe not yeeld the third part so much as others doe, yet they are grounds blessed by God, and respected of God. He that gained five talents, had the commendation of a good and faithfull servant, and so had he likewise that gained but two talents; so that everyone shall have the praise of well doing, according to the gifts and graces that
of the Lords Supper.

that God hath imparted unto him. Indeed those that doe most and best, as they bring more glory to Gods Name; so shall they have a larger reward from him: yet withall, those that have fewer talents, and doe him lesse service, shall not be despised nor rejected, but according to their works be accepted, & recompened: for one may be faithfull in a little, as well as in a great deale. Therefore let this be an incouragement unto us to draw neer unto God in his worship: if we cannot come as well as wee would, let us come as well as we can, and bring those talents which we have: if we cannot make a long prayer, let us make a short: if we cannot cry fervently unto the Lord, let us sigh that we cannot doe better: if we have but a little faith, let us pray with the man in the Gospell, Lord, I believe, helpe my unbelieve: which if we can doe, the Lord will be mercifull unto us, though we be not fitted in every respect according to that which is required of us.

But my wants are such as I am afraid I shall faile, not only in some circumstances, but in the substance it self: and shall not only receive weakely, but altogether unworthily; how then may we certainly know that our hearts are sincere and upright before the Lord?

By these markes that follow:

First, if we dislike all sin in our selves and others, and desire that all Gods graces might be wrongt in our selves, and others, Hypocrifies will allow foule faults in themselves, and yet seeme to dislike them, and much exclaime against them in others: whereas first they should be humbled and grieved for them in their owne soules, and then proceed to speake against them in others.

Againe, this hypocrifie is in our cursed nature, that, where Hypocrif...
that others should be indued with the like, especially that they
should goe beyond us in doing good, & in receiving praise su-
table thereunto. But this argueth great want of sinceritie: and
if we be not humbled for their corruptions, it sheweth palpable
and grosse hypocrisie; for love envyeth not; but if we carry
an inward hatred of this evill disposition that is in us; and la-
bour to abhorre and seeke to hinder all manner of sins, as well
in our selves, as in others; and in others, as well as in our selves:
and on the other side, if we desire to love, and further good
motions, and good actions, both in our brethren, and in our
owne persons; neither mocking, nor deriding, nor discouraging
the hearts of Gods poore servants from goodnesse, this
is a cleere case that we faile not in the substance of godlinesse,
but that our hearts are very upright therein.

Secondly, if we indeavour still to be better, & to do better
every day than other: never standing upon that we have done,
but pressing hard to the marke: this is an infallible note, that
we are true-hearted. Hee that feeleth but a little faith, a little
love, a little repentance, &c. and would with all his heart have
them increased: and on the contrary, findeth much deadnesse,
much impatience, much unfitness for death, and much unwill-
lingnesse to heare of the comming of Chrift, much distraction
on the holy Seabath, &c. but would most willingly have these
corruptions diminished; these very desires, if they bring him
to the conscionable use of the meanes, are evident signes of a
faithfull and well-affected heart.

A third rule of trial is, if from our hearts we can forgive, or
at least desire and strive to forgive those that have done us
wrong, either in word or deed, and are grieved at wrathfull
and malicious, and revengefull thoughts and motions that do
spring up in our hearts. Forgive (faith our Saviour) and ye shall
be forgiven: and therefore being able to doe thus in some small
measure, we may be assured that the Lord is appeased toward
us, and that we are in his favour; & therefore our hearts with-
out guile in his sight: for a mercifull heart is alwayes a sincere
heart; whereas hypocrites are of a cruel, and implacable na-
ture: so that when any injury is done unto them, either in truth
or in their imagination, they will swell, and fret, and chafe,
vow and protest, (or at least determine and resolve in themselves) that they will not put it up, but one way or other, at one time or other require it to the full: ever an evil heart is a proud and sordid heart, and can endure nothing less than wrongs and indignities.

Therefore if God hath wrought such a great work in our souls, as that our hearts are inclined to forgive and forget abuses that are offered unto us, and wee can pray for our enemies, and long for their conversion, and reconciliation; first unto God, and then unto us, it is a notable testimony that we are truly regenerated, and sanctified.

There are none but they are apt to be angry with sinne, either in themselves, or others: but if we can spend our anger at home, upon the evils of our owne nature, and be more peaceable and quiet abroad; not storming so much that others are so bad, as grieving that we our selves are no better; happy and blessed are we that have gotten such a conquest of our owne hearts; wee may cheerfully and comfortably communicate at the Lords Table, expecting from Christ Jesus a further increase of all holy and heavenly graces. And albeit, others have greater gifts, and fewer infirmities than wee; yet seeing wee joyne with them in the maine matters, we shall be joyned with them in the fruition of that blessing which God useth to bestow upon his people; though we be but buds, yet being in the true Vine, we shall receive sap & juice from the root as well as the fairest, and goodliest, and fruitfullest branches that are in it. And thus much for Hezekiah's prayer, and the parts thereof.

Now the success followeth to be spoken of, verse 20. And the Lord heard Hezekiah, &c. It being a prayer of faith that he made, for such things as God hath promised, and for such persons as to whom the promise did belong, hee receiveth an answer to his request: for so it is said, the Lord heard Hezekiah: that is, accepted and granted his suit: whence this Doctrine may be gathered: that,

The Lord doth accept, and will fulfill every faithfull prayer that is made unto him, either for our selves, or others.

For this reason that he shewed to Hezekiah, & to them for faith granted.
whom hee prayed, is written for our instruction and consolation; to assure us, that using the like means, we shall finde the same good effect that they did. This is promised in the Epistle of John, where the words of this Text are expounded, and the doctrine confirmed. This (faith hee) is the assurance that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. But what is to be heard? he telleth us in the next verse, if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we aske, we know that we have the petitions that we have desired of him. This Gods children may build upon, that if they aske of God lawful things, for righteous persons, in that manner as the Word prescribeth, they shall have a comfortable answer, and speed according to their hearts desire.

The reason hereof is, because God is delighted with the faithfull supplications of his deare children, as may bee collected from the words of Christ to his Spoufe in the songs of Salomon, Show me thy sight, let me heare thy voyce: for thy voice is sweet, and thy sight is comely. So that there is a reason, why Christians should looke up to God, rather than be beholding unto men, and that they should utter their complaints before his Throne, rather than before mens judgement seate: for whereas they many times cannot away with us and our suits, God delighteth to looke upon us; and there is no melodious harmony so pleasant in our ears, as a prayer proceeding from an humble and broken heart, is in the care of the Lord of Hoseafls. Let us present our petitions with our soules full of griefe, and our eyes full of teares unto men, and we shall be tedious and troublesome unto them for the most part: as the woman of Canaan was unto the Disciples: Send her away (say they to our Saviour) for she crieth after us: But Christ hath no greater joy, then to heare and relieve such worthy believers as she was, that can spend so many holy prayers upon him, after so many repulses as she had received. Now sith it is a thing so well pleasing unto him, hee cannot be grant and satisfy the desires of such as faithfully and fervently call upon him.

Here may that folly, and wretched unbelief, that is in our nature, be justly reproved; which appeareth this, that we
are ready to runne to any one, rather than unto God; and to 
seeke to them that are not able, or not willing to hear and help 
us, rather than unto the Lord that hath abilitie and readinesse 
to doe both. James blameth those to whom he writeth, that 
were vexed with their wants; Ye lust, and have not, &c. 1am, 4.2, 
yee fight and warre, and get nothing, and what is the reason? 
because ye ask not. As if he should have told them, you need 
many things, and so you are likely to doe still, except you take 
a better course: for the way to obtaine good things, is not 
to lust after them, and to brawle and contend for them, but 
to become petitioners unto God for them. If children will be 
so foolish, so slothfull, or so prond, that they will not sue to 
their loving and kinde parents that have abundance, for things 
necessary, it is just they should goe without them, and indure 
the smart of their owne folly and stubbornesse: and the like 
may be said of us; if our necessities spirituall and corporall bee 
many and great, and we will not bemoane our case unto our 
heavenly Father that is all-sufficient to helpe us, and most will- 
ing to accept of us, and to relieve us in all our distrefles, it is a 
righteous thing with the Lord, that we should live and dye 
in our miseries and calamities, and so sustain the due punishment 
of our wretched distruftfulness, and sluggishnesse in not 
repaying unto him.

Secondly, here is matter of marvellous great comfort to 
them that betake themselves to this course that Hezekiah did. 
The Lord will not deceive them, nor shut out those supplica- 
tions that they make before him: but (according as they intreat of him) where their faith is weake, he will strengthen it: where their repentance comes short, he will perfect it: where their love is cold, he will increase it: and in a word, where any good thing is wanting, he will supply it.

If Hezekiah, praying for such a great multitude, which had 
beene monstrous Idolaters, and had continued long time in 
their Idolatry, heaping up one abomination upon another, 
and now come to the Sacrament, not of their own accord, but 
by the intreatie and perswasion of Hezekiah and his Princes, 
and being thus come, failed much in the preparation which 
they should have made: if hee, I say, had such good and gra-
cious hearing from the Lord, things standing as hath bin said; then how much more may we expect mercy from him, when we intreat for ourselves, who (through God's wonderfull restraint, and gracious providence) have not fallen into such notorious evils, nor into such grievous and monstrous offences, as they had done? especially if we have this witness unto our foules, that we come voluntarily, and (in some degree) preparedly, unto the mysteries of salvation; and are so farre from looking for intreatie or exhortation thereunto, that (through God's grace and goodness) we would not be restrained from it for any worldly gaine.

For the understanding of this, wee must know, that sinne maketh a wound, and that the Word and Sacrament are meanes and plaisters, as it were, to heale the same, if they be rightly applied and blessed unto the receivers of them.

In that they found this good effect upon the eating of the Paslove, and Hezekiah's prayer made for them: the doctrine hence to be learned is, that,

The Sacrament, worthily received, doth heale and cure. For whence came their healing in this place, but from the vertue of the Sacrament blessed unto them, at the earnest request of that holy King? Hee telleth us not the particular evils, of which they were healed, because we should conceive, that they were in a sort, perfectly and thorowly cured of all. First of the evils that were in their foules: they were pardoned, their consciences quieted, and their hearts bettered: so that they had a greater dislike of their own corruptions, & of Satans temptations, and more power to withstand them, and to overcome them, than formerly they had. Then for outward evils: if there were any sickness, or weakenesse, or any other crosses or calamities upon them, they had the same either quite removed, or at least sweetned, and sanctified unto them, for their profit and comfort. For this is the substance of the Covenant (whereof the Sacrament is a Seale, made unto penitent persons: Ezek. 36, which having been spoken of before, it would be needless at large to repeat the same things againe. Onely in briefe, for the use of this point, let us hence learne to make full account

Doct. 5
The vertue of the Sacrament
count of his healing, when the Lord shall please to make us
partakers of the body and blood of his deare Sonne. For then
that seed is cast upon every faithfull heart, that will spring up
in due season unto everlasting life, and yeeld us such fruit as
we shall have great cause to rejoice, and to magnifie the name
of the Lord, who hath done such great things for us.

Let us then looke for much, and we shall have much, Open
thy mouth wide (faith the Lord) and I will fill it. Therefore
when we behold with our naturall eye, the bread broken, and
the wine powred forth, and offered unto us by the hand of the
Minifter; let us lift up the eye of our faith; and looke upon
Christ Iesus, who is as it were held forth unto us by the hand
of the Trinity, being broken with many forrows and terrors,
in bearing his Fathers wrath, and undergoing the punishment
due unto us for our hainous transgressions: & powring forth
his precious bloud, to satisifie the Lords justice, and to pacifie
his displeasure conceived against us: and as we with our bodily
hand do receive the outward elements; so let us by the hand
of faith lay hold of our Lord and Saviour, and of all his merits:
asuring ourselves, that as the Bread and Wine are made one
substance with us; so is Christ Iesus in a spiritual manner made
one with us, and we with him; he being the Head, and we the
members; he the Vine, and we the branches, &c. And further
let us undoubtedly beleevve, that as by bread and wine our na-
turall strength is increased, and our weary bodies & languish-
ing spirits refreshed; so by those heavenly mysteries duly ap-
plied, our inward man shall be confirmed, and our hearts soon-
er or later comforted and revived. And therfore in assurance
of faith we should stirre up our soules to rejoice and praise the
Lord, giving unto him the glory of his Truth, in resting upon
him for the performance of all his promises made unto us
through Christ Iesus: and concluding every one in his owne
heart, though my knowledge be but small, it shall be increa-
ased; though my memory be weake, it shall be confirmed;
though my affections be out of order, they shall be rectified;
though my frailties be many, the number of them shall be
diminished; and though my graces be but few and feeble, they
shall be augmented; and still further strengthened; I shall
have
have Christ's power to enable me to do good, and to resist evil: his wisdom to direct me in the right way, and to cause me to decline from all by-paths: And in a word, his good Spirit to work all my works for me, and to perfect all heavenly virtues in me.

And when, after we have been at the Lords Table, we find any sinful motions stirring within us, let us reason thus: Did I not lately receive the Sacrament for the curing of my soul? and did not God grant it unto me as a seal and pledge, that he would take away my stony heart, and give unto me a fleshly heart? Why then should I yield unto my corruptions? Nay, I will not do so, but resist and strive against the same, and urge the Lord with his own Covenant, sealed unto me in the Sacrament.

So likewise, when we see our manifold imperfections in God's service; our want of love and good affection unto his servants; our inability to bear crosses, and the like: let us repair unto the Lord, and beseech him that is true and faithfull in all promises, that he will make good his word unto us in those particulars, giving us strength to do what he commandeth us, and to bear with patience whatsoever he layeth upon us. Which if we can do, so often as we come to the Lords Table, we shall receive great help and comfort against all our sins and sorrows, and be much stirred up to love and praise the Lord, for the continuance and increase of his heavenly graces and blessings, which we shall surely gain by the right use of this his holy ordinance.
THE FIFTH
Sermon.

Isaiah 55. 1, &c.

Verse 1. Hoe, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters: and ye that have no silver, come buy, and eate: Come, I say, buy Wine, and Milke, without silver, and without money.

2. Wherefore, do you lay out your silver, and not for bread; and your labour without being satisfied? Hearken diligently unto me, and eate that which is good, and let your soule delight in fatnesse.

3. Incline your eares, and come unto me: heare, and your soule shall live.

In the Chapter immediately going before, the Prophet from the Lords owne mouth pronounceth many gracious promises to his afflicted Church, bidding them rejoyce in regard of the deliverance that the Lord should work out for them, and the many & wonderful blessings that he should bestow upon them: shewing them (to the intent they might give more credit unto his words) that he that made them, is their Husband, & their Redeemer, even the Lord of hosts; who though he had forsaken them, and scattered them for a little while, yet with great compassion would he gather them; & though he hid his face in anger for a moment, yet with everlasting mercy would he have compas-
The fourth Sermon

The confirmation of his promise with an oath, saying, As I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth: so have I sworn that I will not be angry with thee, nor rebuke thee, viz. in wrath and displeasure: and therefore he breaketh out into a pathetical and sweet compellation, saying, O thou afflicted and tossed with tempest, that hast no comfort: behold I will lay thy stones with the Carbuncle, and thy foundation with Saphyres: that is, I will make of thee a precious building for my selfe. And as for their children, he faith, that they taught of God, and enjoy fence: and befarre from oppression, and from the feare of oppressors. And howsoever the enemie would be stirring now and then; yet (faith God) it shall be without me; and whosoever shall gather himselfe in thee, against thee, shall fall: and that, because all instruments of cruelty that could come against them, were ordered by the Lord, as being his by right of creation: and therefore no weapons made against them should prevail. And this he doth not appropriate to them only, but faith it is the heritage of the Lords servants, which they have right unto in all ages: and he addeth a reason, saying, their righteousness is of me: q. d. that which their enemies strike at, is the goodlineffe and goodnesse of my children. Now that proceedeth from me, and therefore I have cause to stand for them that carry mine owne image.

Having thus declared what treasures were laid up for them through the rich mercy of God in Christ; hee commeth in this 55. Chapter to exhort them to lay hold of Gods gracious offer.

And because they were not so sensible nor capable of such spirituall promotions as they should be, therefore doth he go about to waken their drowsie consciences, and to stir up their sleepy affections, to embrace the mercies offered unto them, and for that end doth make, as it were, a Proclamation; [Hoe every one] as if he should have laid, are not these things to be thought of? are they not worth the looking after? shake off the sluggishnes of your sicke, & consider wel of the excellency of them, and bethinke your selves how you may attaine unto them: and that he might more easly draw them hereunto, he
be sheweth what kind of people the Lord requireth that they should be, viz. (thirsty) that is, so pained with their sins and wants, and with a desire of a supply from heaven, as those that are exceeding dry are with thirst, & with a longing for drink, whereby that appetite of theirs may be quenched and allayed: none have a calling to come, nor shall have comfort by coming unto God's ordinances, but onely such. Having shewed what they must be, in the next place he telleth them what they must do (come ye to the waters) that is, unto Christ, as he is offered in the Word and Sacrament: for he is the Well of the water of Life, which is proposed and offered unto all that thirst, Rev. 21.6. Now to the intent that they might not deceive their own hearts, he exhorteth them to shew forth their spiritual thirst by the effect, come and buy: signifying unto us thus much, that even as those that are naturally hungry and thirsty will seek for relief where it is to be found, and if they cannot otherwise get meat & drink, they will be well content to part with their money for the obtaining thereof: even so it is with such as have a spiritual appetite; they will be at cost to buy the graces of the holy Ghost: not that men have anything to give which is valuable thereunto, but they must part with their sins (as afterward shall be more fully declared) which the Lord will take for good & sufficient payment. Then further as they must buy, so must they eat & drink: for otherwise they might die through hunger and thirst, albeit they had great plenty of refreshing before them: now this eating must be by faith, for thereby we feed on Christ, as is evident in the Gospel of John, Chap. 6, for without this we can draw no vertue at all from the Word or Sacraments, or any of God's ordinances: these then are the things required of those that are thirsty, viz. diligence in comming, cost in buying, and faith in eating.

Now left they should feare that they shall not finde full refreshing when they come unto Christ in the use of his means, he preventeth that doubt, by shewing that the Lord would fit every mans turne according to their severall necessities: some have sorrowfull hearts; for such he hath wine to comfort them: some are babes; for such he hath milke to nourish them: others are feeble and weake; for such he hath bread to strenthen them:
them: others look after their commodity; to such he faith, he care that which is good: and lastly, others respect their pleasure, and to them he faith, Let your soules delight in fatnesse, q. d. Here you shall find such pleasant things, as shall fill your soules with delight and contentment. Indeed the things that are offered (will some say) are very pious, and much to be desired: but my unworthinesse is such, that I am even discouraged to seeke for them.

You need not be so; for you are bid, Come and buy Wine, and Milke, &c. without silver, and without money: though you be never so meane & beggerly, in regard of any merits of your owne, yet you shall speed never the worse: for this onely is required of you, to come with a sight and feeling of your wants, and with an earnest desire to have them supplied. But because men are wonderfully hindred from the zealous pursuit of holy things, by their owne corruptions, and the love of this present evill world, therefore he dissuadeth them therefrom, saying, Wherefore do you lay out your silver, and not for bread, and your labour without being satisfied? q. d. there is none of you but would willingly have your hearts strengthened and comforted, and thorowly contented: but these earthly things will not do it, for they are all vanity and vexation of spirit, and therefore it is a great folly for you so much to busie your selves about these earthly things, which will never bring sound comfort, nor contentment to your soules.

Now that which he delivered in figurative speeches in the first verse, and part of the second, he urgeth in plainer tearmes afterwards, saying, Harken diligently unto me: Encline your eares and heare, q. d. though you find great dulnesse and slacknesse in your nature, yet use a holy kinde of violence, and constraine your eares to hearken: and what then? your soules shall live, to wit, both the life of grace, which before they were destitute of, and also the life of glory, which necessarily followeth upon the former.

The drift then of these words is to stir men up to embrace the saving graces of Christ, as they are offered, and shall be given in his ordinances, where is declared,

1. What they must do, viz. get a thirsty and hungry soule, and
and shew it forth by comming to the waters, by buying spiritual food, and by eating thereof.

2. Reasons why they must do so.

1. The first taken from the ill success that would follow, if they did not so: they should spend their money and labour in vain.

2. The second, from the singular benefits that would redound unto them if they did so: all their wants should be supplied, and their souls shall live everlastingly.

Hoe, every one that thirsteth, in that he calleth none to partake of the holy things of God, but those that are thus affected: The Doctrine is: that,

The thirsty soul alone hath interest in the graces of God, and shall reap benefit, by the means of grace.

Those onely that feel their owne barrenness and emptiness, and highly esteeme and heartily desire the mercies of God, through the merits of Christ, they onely (I say) have right unto, & shall have a portion in the same. Therefore when David would move God to bring him againe to the assemblies of the Saints, where he might enjoy the means of comfort and salvation, he useth this as a forcible argument, My soul thirsteth for God, even for the living God: when shall I come and appeare before the presence of God? and againe, My soul longeth, yea, and fainteth for the Courts of the Lord, 

Now the reasons of these points are these.

First, no man hath any warrant to resort unto the means of godliness, but onely such as were before mentioned: for thus the Lord inviteth men unto him: Let him that is athirst come: and let whosoever will (namely, that is so qualified) take of the waters of life freely: so that none are hidden guests but such as have thirsty souls.

Secondly, none else have any promise of speeding well, if they should come: for thus goeth the promise, I will pour out water upon the thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. Till then, we can never have assurance of any benefit by Gods ordinances; but when once we come with a longing heart, that doth as it were gape and enlarge it selfe to take in the raine of grace, as the dry ground doth to receive the showres that fall upon it.

Reason I

Else no commandement. 

Revel. 22.17.

No promise. 

IIa. 44.3.
it, then though we be never so thirsty, we shall be fully satisfied; & though we be never so dry and barren, we shall be made to flourish and grow as the grass, and as the willowes by the rivers of water: and that none other can grow in grace, or gather any spirituall strength by the meanes, it is evident in the Epistle of Peter, where he exhorteth them in this manner: As new borne babes desire the sincere milke of the Word that ye may grow thereby. g. d. You may repaire unto the Word as often as you will, and give as diligent care as you can: but you shall never get any inward growth of grace thereby, until you be desirous for the food of your soules, as little children are for the mothers milke: but when once you attaine to such an eager desire of goodnesse, then you shall grow from a little measure of strength, to a greater, and still increase in the inward man, as children do in the outward: and finde a progresse in grace, as they do in nature.

Thirdly, as those that are destitute of this spirituall thirst, have no commandement, nor promise from God: so neither have they any fitness in themselves, because they want that principall grace, which doth fit men for the entertaining of Gods holy Spirit (which alone maketh Gods ordinances effectuall) to wit, Humility: which proceedeth from a sense of our owne misery, and a sight of Gods mercy: now where this is wanting, there is no place for Gods graces: For God resiteth the proud, and giveth grace, onely, to the humble. Let a man bring unto the Word never so good a wit, capacitie, and memorie, he shall never take profit by hearing, till he get a broken heart, and an humble spirit: but God will ever resist, and crosse, and thwart all his endeavours: because if he should get any benefit by the Gospell, he would have no minde to ascribe the glory thereof unto God, to whom it is wholly due: but to himselfe, to whom no part thereof doth belong.

First, for terror unto such as have no manner of appetite, eagerness, nor earnestnesse for spirituall things, but are altogether bent for profit, and pleasure, and credit, and promotion &c. which carnall desires do utterly kill their appetite unto better things, and extinguish or banish all good motions and affections.
affections, that doe at any time arise in their hearts. These wretched men are in a wofull case, for they rush upon the holy things of God without any commission; and therefore without expectation of good from them. And howsoever they may talke and brag of their profiting by the Word, yet God that feeth and searcheth their hearts, esteemeth of them, but as of unwelcome guests that prophane his holy things. If they would bee partakers of the water of life, they must bee thirsty: and if they would eate of the bread of life, they must bee hungry: otherwise though they be present in the congregation, and heare the Word preached, and see the Wine poured out, and the bread broken, before their eyes at the celebration of the Lords Supper, yet they can have no hope that they shall have one drop of Christ his bloud, to wash away their sins, but may rather expect the viols of his indignation, to destroy their bodies and soules: and it is a just vengeance of God upon such prophane and irreligious persons, that when they come to the Sermons and to the Sacrament, they get no good, but rather much hurt thereby: and have their lufts stronger, their hearts harder, and their mindes farre more blinde, and uncapable of any good knowledge every day than other.

But what is the reason hereof? (may some demand,) Is not the word of God mighty to beat down the strong holds of the Divell? and is not the Sacrament powerfull in operation, and able to worke great things?

Yes, they are so: and why then have such no profit by them? because they are abusers and prophaners, and not meet receivers of the same: because they come not with any preparation, or desire of a blessing upon the meanes, but for custome and fashion, that they might not seeme to be so bad, as indeed they are: nor to set so light by the holy Ordinances of God, as in truth they doe.

Secondly, for instruction. If wee would be welcome to Christ Iesus, when hee inviteth us to feast with him, then let us get a good stomacke to feede on such cheere as he offereth unto us. Otherwise, if wee glut our selues before wee come to his Table, and onely looke on those dainties on which others
The fifth Sermon

others doe feed, it will not be well taken at our hands, but we shall bee as distastfull unto the feast-maker, as his provision is unto us: and those things which are unto others the favour of life unto life, shall prove unto us the favour of death unto our eternall destruction, if our repentance doe not prevent Gods judgement. If Gods owne children comming carelessly and unpreparedly cannot escape Gods hand, I Cor. 11. then what shall become of those ungodly ones, who come not only negligently, but altogether prophanely: and so defile the sacred ordinances of God? (for unto the uncleane, all things are uncleane.) Surely, if judgement begin at Gods House, there is nothing remaining for ungodly men, but a fearfull expectation of wrath and vengeance to be poured out upon them in full measure. In which regard it standeth us upon to look unto our hearts beforehand: and to the intent wee may come with this spirituall appetite, the want whereof is so offensive unto God, and dangerous unto us, let us use all good meanes for the obtaining of it: as

First, to purge away that which may annoy our stomacke, and kill our appetite: and what that is, Peter telleth us when he faith, Wherefore laying aside all maliciousnes, & al guile, and dissimulation, and envy, and evill speaking, as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, &c. As it he had said, so long as you give place unto, and delight in any evill; so long as you carry a bitter & envious mind against your brethren, or an hypocricall and dissembling heart towards God, and suffer your evill affections to break forth into evill speeches, so long you can never delight in, nor be very desirous of the pure Word of God, and therefore cannot possibly grow in the knowledge and practice of the same. And therefore when wee finde in our selves dulnesse and deadnesse, and unwillingnesse unto good duties; let us conclude for certainty, that we stand in need of Physicke for the purging of our soules: for sinne worketh on our hearts, as ill humours doe in our stomackes; it maketh us to loath all spirituall food, and all meanes of refreshing. And this take for an undoubted truth, which though our mouthes will not confesse, yet our hearts must needs acknowledge; when we have no desire to heare the Word preached,
or to receive the Sacrament, when it is to bee administered, there is some sin or other not thoroughly repented of, which doth cloyeth the soule, that it cannot delight in those holy exercises: and as our hearts are more purged by godly sorrow, so will our hunger and thirst after righteousnesse, and the means thereof be still increased in us. This then is the first rule that we must observe for the getting of a spirituall appetite, viz., to put away the practice of all grosse evils, and the allowance of all infirmities, great or small.

A second is, that we must indeavour to know our owne misery, what we are of by nature, & by desert, in regard of our great and grievous offences: that so being poore in spirit, we may sigh and cry for grace, whereas those that are proud in spirit care not for it. We see this by common experience, that the perceiving and feeling of grievous and dangerous diseases and distemperatures of the body, will drive men to the Phystitian to intreat for physicke, that so their sicknesse may bee cured: and in like sort, the discerning and defcrying of the loathsome and noyseome corruptions wherwith our soules are infected and indangered, will drive us unto the LORD to crave mercy and grace from his owne meanes, that our iniquities may be fully pardoned, and our sinfull nature soundly healed. For when nothing is more irksome unto us, nor more feared of us than sinne; then nothing is more desired of us, than grace.

Especially, (if in the third place) we consider the excellencie thereof: how it bringeth with it freedome from all evill, both from the guilt of sinne, and from the power and punishment of sinne: and withall, the enjoyment of all blessings needfull for body and soule, for this life, or that which is to come. If (I say) the setled meditation hereof do but once sink into our hearts, it cannot but set our affections on fire, with an ardent and earnest desire of the same. Nothing makes us so weake and cold in hearing the Word, or communicating of the Sacrament, as that we have not sufficiently tasted how good the Lord is. And thus much of the meanes of getting a spirituall appetite. Now it followeth.

[Come, I say, buy wine and milke.] And verse 2. [Eat that which]
The fifth Sermon

which is good, and let your souls delight in fatnesse. The drift of all these borrowed speeches is to shew that God offereth unto all, and will bestow upon the faithful that seek unto him, such spiritual good things, as shall much comfort and refresh their hearts, and make their souls to live for ever. Whence ariseth this Doctrine: that,

Whosoever commeth to Christ Jesus in the religious use of his ordinances, shall have all his wants supplied, be they never so many, and never so great. Are they thirsty? he hath water of life for them. Are they hungry? he hath all variety of dainties to refresh them. Are they babes? here is milk to feede upon. Are they strong men? yet wearied out with afflictions and temptations? here is bread that will strengthen their fainting hearts. Are they heavy and penitent? here is wine to glad their sorrowfull hearts. In a word, Christ Jesus hath plentifull provision of all sorts, and would have us eate that which is best for us; commanding that our souls should delight in fatnesse, and in the good things that he offereth unto us.

This doctrine is further illustrated and prooved unto us out of Ezekiel: where the Prophet having sharply reproved the Shepheards of Israel, that fed themselves, and not their flocks, that did not strengthen the weak, nor heal the sicke, &c. hee promiseth that God will be a shepheard over the, even Christ Jesus, verse 23. who would performe these two things: viz. hee will feede his sheepe, and bring them to their rest: then he undertaketh in all their miseries and distresses to looke unto them: I will (faith he) seek that which is lost, &c. where observe how he frameth his remedy to their necessity: some feele themselves lost, and unable to seeke him as they should: thofe hee will seeke, and not lose any of them, whom he hath so dearely bought. Some are as it were driven away by strong corruptions, & violent temptations: thofe hee will bring again, though they be carried never to farre. Others have been cruished and broken with many sorrowes & miseries, even with one breaking upon another, by reason of their owne sinnes: thofe hee will bind and cure all their wounds. Others againe are weake and full of imperfections, thofe hee will strengthen by the power of his might, and at length make them strong men in
in Christ. So that we see, every one according to his need, shall receive comfort and relief from him: and there are reasons hereof.

The first is taken from the infinite power of Christ, whereby he is able to save and succour his people, whatsoever their estate be. If the first Adam being only man, were able to destroy and overthrow all mankind, then much more is the second Adam, being God and Man, of sufficient power to recover his elect: especially seeing that the means he uses are more forcible to repair our breaches, than Adam's means were to make them: and more effectual to work out our happiness and salvation, than his were to procure our misery and destruction.

The second is taken from his readiness, being every whit as willing as he is able to do this for us. As God, the Father gave him a charge, so he undertook it, and accomplished the work which he gave him to do. It was his Father's will that he should save his people, & he willingly performed whatsoever was required of him in that behalfe; and therefore before he yielded up the ghost, he uttered these words: It is finished: signifying, that he had gone thorough with that painfull work which the Lord had imposed upon him: now having done the greatest for us, he will not fail us (we may be well assured) in smaller matters which depend upon the former; He that was willing to give his blood for us when we were his enemies, will deny no good thing now we are his friends, yea true members of his own body.

Thirdly, he is also infinite in wisdom, and therefore able to finde out the best way, and to determine of the fittest time (with all other circumstances) to relieve & comfort us. There is many times, such confusion in the minds, such hardnesse in the hearts, such blemishes in the names, such weakenes upon the bodies, and such woe full breaches in the estates of God's servants, that no man, nay, nor all the men in the world, know how to redresse the things that are amiss : but if it please our Lord Christ Jesus to take the cure in hand, nothing shall bee found too difficult for him; but that which seemeth impossible in the eye of reason, shall appeare not onely possible, but very easie.
ease unto him, and therefore in all these respects it must needs be a certaine truth, that those that seek to him, and wait upon him, shall in due season be received, and delivered according to their need.

Which may be an encouragement unto us, whatsoever our wants and necessities be, to make Christ our refuge, & to fly unto him for a supply: if we come to wisdomes feast, we shall finde all things prepared that may be for strength, or for delight: if we be hungry, our Saviour will satisfie us with good things, and never send us empty away: if we be babes, he hath milk for us: if we be of greater growth in Christianity, he hath stronger meat for us.

Secondly, let us therefore labour to be meeke guests for this heavenly banquet: which that we may be, let us observe the directions given us in this Text: viz. that we must first come; secondly, buy? and thirdly, eate.

First, we must come, to wit, unto those places, & unto those means where we may receive refreshing: even as Iacob, when he and his Family were pinched with famine, was glad to send and send into Egypt for food to relieve him and his: so will those that are spiritually hungry and thirsty, be at any paines, and breake through any difficulties for the satisfying and refreshing of their fainting soules, they will repayre unto the Word and Sacraments, which are the conduits through which the water of life is conveyed unto us: and there they shall be sure to feed on the body and blood of Christ, who is that true Manna, and that bread of life, whereof whosoever eateth shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

Secondly, if we will have any refreshing at this feast, we must buy it: which is twice repeated: to shew that it is a matter of necessity, and a matter of weight that nearely concerneth us: not that wee can give any thing answerable to the worth of that which wee shall receive (for grace is an unmatchable treasure) but hereby these two things are signified:

First, that as in bargaines betwixt man and man, hee that buyeth a thing of another, must part with somewhat that formerly was his owne: so must we in this purpose of ours. And what is it that wee must part withall? with nothing but our owne.
owe sinnes (which will do us no good, but infinite hurt if we retaine them still) & with those things which can be no longer kept without sinne, as wealth, and liberty, and credit, and life itselfe, when God calleth for them. To this purpose, it is said, that the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field, which when a man hath found, he hideth it, and for joy thereof, departeth and selleth all that he hath, meaning all that he hath from his own corrupt nature, renouncing all his carnal affections, & withdrawing his heart from the things here below: for it is not intended that every man should sell all his substance, and earthly possessions, & commodities: but onely that he should withdraw his confidence from these and his immoderate love of these, being content to forfake them quite, rather than to forgoe Christ, and to forfeit his own salvation: so that as the price wee pay for any thing is altogether alienated from us: so must sinne bee, though never so much esteemed, and beloved before-time. And so are these words expounded in this very Chap. ver. 7. Let the wicked forfake his wayes, and the unrighteous his own imaginations, &c. Many forfake some ill wayes, but not their owne: or if they doe leave their old wayes and workes outwardly, yet they doe not forfake their owne imaginations: but to leave anothers sinne for the procuring of this pearle, is as if one should buy cattell or grounds, &c. with another mans money, which is plain theeverie, and will not goe for currant pay: the Lord would have all penitent sinners, both to forfake their owne wayes, and their owne imaginations.

A second thing in buying is, that we must receive and retaine the thing bought: and so would God have us to hold fast grace when we have got it. Therefore the wise man exherteth us, buy the truth, and sell it not: likewise wisedome, & instruction, and understanding. We may chaffer for other things as we will, buy and sell, & sell and buy, &c. but here we must not doe so: when once we have obtained heavenly wisedome, and gotten Religion in our hearts, we must get as much increas to doe it daily as we can, but never let goe any of that we have. And thus much for buying, and the things to be observed therein.

A third thing required in the Text, is, that we must eat
and this standeth in excellent proportion with naturall food: If a man come where there is great store of meat, and variety of chose wines, and he see others have a notable appetite, and himselfe none; all the cheere that is set before him will doe him no good, but rather vexe and trouble him: even so it is in the spiritual feast: and therefore Christ exhorteth us so often to feede upon him - take eat (faith he) shewing us what that is, viz. to beleive in him. In which regard he is fayd to dwell in our hearts by faith: whereas unbeliefe chaseth him thence, and will let him have no roome, nor place of abode in our soules. Therefore let us make account, that as the naturall food is to be received into our stomacks, so the spirituall also is to be received into our soules, and there to be, as it were, digested, before we can benefite by it. And this is only done by a true faith in Christ Iesus.

[Without silver.] Hence we see that God offereth us the greatest, and most excellent things, without money, or moneyworth.

The best things are best cheape.

Nothing can be gotten at a lower rate then things that are of greatest worth. Therefore are we bid to drink of the waters of life freely: and as grace, so also glory is without any desert of ours bestowed on us: for the gift of God (faith the Apostle) is eternall life, Rom. 6.

Reasons.

Now the reasons why heavenly things are not set at sale, but to be had of free cost, are these:

First, because God will have the praise of his mercy: if he should take any thing of us, he shall lose a great part of his glory. We are too ready to boast now when we are pardoned, sanctified, and saved of his free grace, and not by our owne workes, in that God puts life and strength into us to be onely working instruments of our owne happiness; what then should we doe, if God should make us our owne Saviours, and propose heaven unto us at a price, bidding us winne it, and weare it?

God knoweth full well that we have nothing to give, but are meere beggers, and could but pay God with his owne: for in our selves we are poor, miserable, naked, and destitute of all good,
goodness: Indeed we have in us matter enough to deserve God's wrath, but none at all to procure his favour.

Thirdly, if we had somewhat to give, yet it were in no sort correspondent to that which we shall receive: for the graces of God's Spirit, and the Crowne of Glory are unvaluable, so that nothing that is in the possession of any creature may be laid in the balance against them. Therefore when Simon Magus would have bought but one gift of working miracles, to wit, that on whomsoever he should lay his hands, he might receive the holy Ghost: Peter answered, Thy money perish with thee, because thou thinkest the gift of God may be obtained by money. Much more then, may this be spoken of sanctifying graces, which are farre more excellent; they are not to be obtained by money, or by any earthly treasure, for there is no price that can come neate them.

For the confutation of Papists, that would buy out Heaven by their owne meritorious works: they are even like Simon Magus their father, and would rob God of his honour, which he will not give unto any other: plainly manifesting unto all the world, that they are grossly ignorant of their owne vilenes and wretchednesse, and of the worth and excellency of heavenly things.

For instruction, though we find no manner of goodness or worthinesse in ourselves, yet that shall be so farre from being any hinderance unto us, that this sight and sense of our owne sinfull wants, being joyned with humiliation for them, will greatly further us: for, Blessed are the pure in spirit. God is not like one that keeps an Ordinary, where every one that sitteth at table must pay his shot: but he is a royall feast-maker that keepeth open house for all commers and goers: and he pays best that feeth he hath nothing at all to pay, and is thereby brought out of all conceit with himselfe. And this should put an answer into our mouthes against Satans objection, that we have nothing to satisfie God for our offences against his majesty, nor for his mercies offered unto us: we need not any such matter of satisfaction, because God would have us buy and eat freely without money, or money worth, and our humble and thankfull acknowledgement of this his bounty and liber
rality, is all the satisfaction that he looketh for, at our hands.

[Why do you lay out your silver, and not for bread? &c. ] That is, about such things, as for which you are never the better: which will not breed any good blood, or good nourishment; he followeth the former Metaphor still, reproving them for their folly, that whereas the Lord doth offer them such good things so good cheap, they would neglect and passe by them, and rather chaffer with the world, and spend their thoughts and paines, about things of no worth, that would no way satisfy them: but when they had toyled out themselves in the pursuit of them, they would be as restless, and void of true contentment, as ever before.

Nothing can satisfy, and content the minde but grace.

Many things there be that make shew as if they could do it: but the truth is, all will come too short, and be found too weake for the effecting of it. Therefore the Apostle saith, Godliness is great riches and contentment. Other riches are of that nature, that the more we have, the more we desire, and the more our hearts are disquieted with the care of keeping them, and the feare of losing them. But true piety is of that force, that it draws the soule unto God, and makes it to relie on him, and on his treasures, and there is a sure stay indeed: for he will never faile nor for sake such as cast their cares upon him. That made David so to rejoice, when God lifted up the light of his countenance upon him: and that caused Paul in what estate he was, therewith to be content. And the reason of the doctrine is, because grace onely repaires the image of God (the losse whereof was the cause of all our woe) according to that saying of the Apostle, We all behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, with open face, and are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord. Whereas looking into other glasse, we see our owne faces therein; in the holy Gospell, as in a most cleare glasse, we see the face of Jesus Christ, and by beholding it, are by little and little made conformable unto it. And this image was it which we lost by Adam's fall, and with it all found contentment: and this may we recover againe in Christ, through the hearing of the Word, and with it true peace, and settled comfort. Let a man have the com-
command of all the world, before he hath God's image stamped upon his soul, he shall have a restless heart, because he hath a wicked heart, and shall never find true peace nor comfort, till his soul be healed, and till God's holy Image be renewed in him. Adam, after his eating of the forbidden fruit, had his abode in Paradise for a while: but he found that a hell, which was formerly as it were, an heaven unto him: and why? because he had lost God's Image, and consequently the sweet apprehension of his favour, which before made all comfortable unto him.

Secondly, nothing can take away sin, but grace; now wherefore sin taketh up the place, it expels all quietness from thence, There is no peace to the wicked, faith my God. Isa. 57. 21. For when the mind is full of error, and the heart full of lust, and the conscience full of guiltines, there must needs be great confusion, and disposer, and unquietness in the whole man.

Thirdly, until grace enter into the heart, and rule there, Satan hath the dominion, and ruleth there as a Tyrant, at his own will and pleasure. If he do but stirre a wicked man to any sinfull practice, he is forthwith ready to yeeld unto him: if he do but bid him spue out the venome of his poyned stomacke, he presently breaketh forth into cruel and bitter swearing, or cursing, or rayling, &c. so that it may truly be said, That wicked mens tongues are set on fire of hell; and what rest then can there be in that soul, which is so possessed by Satan, who will never suffer his members to desist from inventing, or executing some mischief or other?

Fourthly, there can be no contentednesse in a gracelesse person, because God and he are at warre: for until such time as men be justified by faith, they have no peace with God, and therefore none with their owne consciences: and what ease or rest can be unto them, that have such a worme as is a guilty and accusing conscience, alwayes knowing within them, and such a racke ever and anon (when God will) torturing and tormenting them? Surely, if grace and peace do ever go together, (as alwayes they do) then where grace is absent, peace cannot be present, and so the soul must needs be destitute of all true contentment. This serveth,
1. For reproofs of those that (as the Prophet saith) disquiet themselves about a vaine shadow: in pursuing this pleasure and that commodity, and such promotions, and other the like matters, as best please their several fancies. If they had gained all that they seeke for, it could do them no good; for all is but vanity and vexation of the spirit: a bruit beast is farre happier than they, and weel had it been for them, if they had never beene borne; for what shall it profit a man to winne the whole world, and to lose his owne soule? to be a drudge to every base lust, to waste and consume his wit, and strength, and all, and then to have hell for his paines? yet how busie are most men in digging for dross, and refusing gold; in seeking earthly things, and despising heavenly? but what will be the event? Such as trust in lying vanities, forsake their owne mercies.

2. For instruction, that we should not spend our thoughts and time in the pursuit of vaine and transitory things, which can give us no helpe against sinne, nor comfort to our soules, nor protection from the curse and wrath of God: but let us labour for godlinesse, which will free our hearts from discontentment, and replenish them with true peace, and everlasting comforts.

3. Incline your eares, and come unto me, q.d. if your eares be dull of hearing, offer an holy violence unto them, that so you may attend unto my Word: and what then? Hear, and your soule shall live: this benefit and this promotion is promised as the best motive to stir them up to conscienceable hearing, viz. that their soules should speed the better for it, that whereas they are dead in sinne through Adams fall, they should be restored to the life of grace: whence this doctrine ariseth, That it is the greatest happinesse that can be, to have our soules to prosper, and to have the Image of God renewed therein.

Therefore in the prophecy of Ezekiel, when the Lord would magnifie his mercies towards his people, he covenanteth chiefly and principally to bestow upon them spiritual things; to wash them from all their filthinesse, by the blood of his owne Sonne; to give them a new heart and a new spirit, that is, a better judgement, and purer affections; to take away their stony and hard hearts, and to give them fleshly and tender hearts, and
in a word, overthrow the kingdom of Satan in them, and to governe and guide them by his holy Word, and by his blessed Spirit, that so they might keepe his judgements and do them.

To this very purpofe the Apostle Peter faith, that most great and precious promises are given unto us, that by them we might be partakers of the godly nature, in that we fie the corruptions which are in the world through lust. What maketh the promises to be of such singular worth, and of such inestimable value? even this, that thereby we are made partakers of the divine nature, and by degrees become like unto Christ himselfe: in this regard, it is said, that the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour, to wit, that is not righteous as he is.

And the reason why the inward prosperity is the best, is,

First, because wherefoever that is, sinne, which is the fountain of all misery, is expelled: so that howsoever some reliques thereof do still remain, yet the dominion thereof is quite abolished, neither shall those remnants of iniquity be charged upon the parties, when grace carrieth the chiefe sway in them.

Secondly, those things which make the soule to prosper, viz. the graces of God's Spirit, are most excellent, both in regard of the author of them, and of the nature of them, and of the continuance of them; and therefore are they bestowed only upon the elect: whereas all earthly things being base and vile in comparison of the other, are commonly conferred upon the worst, as well as the best; because the having of them cannot make them happy, nor the wanting of them make them miserable.

Which serveth for the confusion of their folly, who think if they be healthy, and wealthy, & bigge in the world, they enjoy as much prosperity as any one can desire, and much more than those of God's servants, that are in continuall wants, and weaknesses, and disgraces in the world: but in the midst of their earthly jollity and plenty, how go matters betwixt God and them? what graces of the holy Ghost have they in their soules? what humilitie? what love? what victory over their unruly lusts? what preparation for death? what evidence and assurance of eternal life have these men gotten? nay, as for these things, they have not had a thought of them: then with-
without question they are farre from true prosperity, whatsoever they themselves or others may imagine of their happy estate and condition of life.

Secondly, here is a singular consolation for the Saints, albeit they be continually exercized with sore crosses, and bitter temptations, that breake their sleepe, and their hearts; yet all the while they are hereby brought to that inward and best prosperity of the soule, they are happy and blessed, and have great cause to praise the Name of the Lord, who hath cast the downe in the flesh, that he might exalt them in the Spirit; and afflicted and abused their outward man, that he might enrich and beautifie their inward man, with the excellent & amiable vertues of his holy Spirit. The Lord is wonderfull in all his works, and wise in all his proceedings: when he purposeth to judge and condemne wicked men, he setteth many of them on horse-backe, that their down-fall may be more notorious and infamous: and when he intendeth exceedingly to advance and blesse his children, he casteth them very low, that so their rising may be more admirable and comfortable. He knoweth that it is better for them to have a good conscience, than a good purse; a healthfull soule, than a strong body, and therefore doth he exercise them with such fiery trials and temptations. A good Husband-man will never plow the wilde waste, but his arrable land, from which he expecteth a good crop: and even so dealeth the Lord; he many times passeth over ungodly Reprobates, and ploweth and harroweth his best-beloved, that so their soules may beare him a plentiful harvest of grace: and so long as hatred of sinne, and sorrow for sinne, and true humility do grow and flourish within, never feare what outward troubles befall you: your gaine that ariseth thence will make full satisfaction for all.

[Heare and thy soule shall live,] Hence obserue, That the conscienceable hearing of Gods Word, is that which quickens the soule, & makes it to live both the life of grace, & of glory.

So faith our Saviour, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth in him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into damnation, but hath passed from death unto life. And againe in the next verle: The time

shall
shall come, and now is, when the dead, to wit, in sinnes and trespasses, shall heare the voyce of the Sonne of God, viz. in your Minilltery, and they that heare it shall live. There is not the most vile nature, but the Word is of power to change it, and to translate it, from one measure of grace unto another. And the reason hereof is,

First, God doth mightily worke in it, and by it, upon the soules of men, in regard wherof it is called the power of God to save them that beleive, Rom.1.26. and 2.Cor.10.4. and 5. The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God to caste downe holds, &c.

Secondly, because it is an instrument to convey the holy Ghost into our hearts, which is the Author, and perfecter of all good gifts in the elect of God.

Here then we see what miserable case they are in, which are destitute of the pure and sincere preaching of the Word, they are utterly dead in sinne, and have no spirituall life, nor sense in them: Yet they eate and drinke, and sleepe, and live merrily as others do. So they may, and yet their soules go to hell, and dye the second death, because they were never partners of the first resurrection. Then a man begins to live, when hee understands the promises and beleevs them: when hee knows the commandements, and observes them: and till then he sits in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and is in so much more lamentable taking, by how much more senselesse he is of that danger wherein he standeth.

Let us then bewail their estate that are deprived of the light, and pray unto the Lord to overthrow the secret plots and practises of all that are Popishly affected, and that do seek to deprive men of the light: for they intend a farre greater mischief unto them, than if they went about to pull the Sunne out of the firmament.

Secondly, this maketh for the great comfort of them that finde in themselves much deadnesse, and hardnesse of heart: let them repaire unto the Word, which is able to quicken them, and will quicken them, if they come with honest hearts thereunto. Earthly Princes lawes do onely binde men to be honest, but
but God's lawes will make them such as they bid them to be; 
always provided that they come thereunto.

1 First, with preparation, setting themselves with reverence 
as in the Lord's owne presence. Ecc. 5.

2 Secondly, with attention, hiding the Word in their hearts 
as a precious treasure, Psal. 119. Part. 2.

3 Thirdly, with an expectation of good success in the end, 
though God make them wait for a time, Psalme 1.2,3. Psal. 
119.9.
THE SIXTH
Sermon.

MAITH. 22. 11. &c.

Verse 11. Then the King came in to see the guests, and saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment.

12 And he said unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, and hast not on a wedding garment? and he was speechless.

13 Then said the King to his servants, Bind him hand and foot: and take him away, and cast him into utter darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

In the former part of this Chapter, is set forth the marvellous goodness and favour of the Connexion, Lord towards the Nation of the Jews, under the Parable of a King inviting guests unto the marriage-feast of his son; and with all, their horrible unthankfulness, in making light of it, and refusing to come, preferring their profits and pleasures before the means of their salvation, whereto they were called: which indignity & ingratitude of theirs towards the King of heaven, together with their barbarous cruelty against his messengers, is further set out by the punishment inflicted upon them, which was, the King being wroth sent forth his warriors, destroyed them, and burnt up their City. In which words our Saviour hath reference unto the destruction of that Nation, and of their City, by the Romans, who were called Gods warriours, because howsoever they came against the Jews in malice...
malice and revenge, yet God had a special hand in ordering & disposing of all that they did; so the greatest part of the people was utterly cut off, and the rest left under a heavy stroke even unto this day, being destitute of the means of salvation, which they contemptuously rejected, when they were offered unto the

But howsoever these that were first bidden would not come to the Supper, yet the Lord would not be unfurnished of guests, and therefore he sends his Ministers unto the Gentiles; which fate in darkness, and in the shadow of death, who made their use of God's message, and came abundantly to the feast; so that the wedding was furnished with guests, some good, & some bad. Thus farre the Messengers had good success, that multitudes made profession, as if they were desirous to live under Christ his government, and to feede of his Supper, though many of them did it with falle and hypocritical hearts.

Having thus shewed what the Messengers did, our Saviour next declared what the King himself did; the place being filled with guests, [he came to see the guests,] implying that when men begin to make profession, God useth a more diligent search and examination than his Ministers can doe: for they can but judge of men by their actions; but the Lord doeth immediately with their hearts and consciences. And therefore it is added, that when he came in, he saw (that which the Ministers did not) [aman which had not on a wedding garment] where we must not conceive that there was but one such present (for it is afterwards said, that many are called, but few are chosen, ver. 14.) but this is the meaning, that if there be but one hypocrite amongst many thousands, God will finde him out, and single him from amongst the rest.

The party being thus taken, the Lord falleth to an examination of him. Friend, faith he, (how camest thou hither?) that is, how darest thou come to the Royal Table of so glorious a King (& hast not on a wedding garment?) that is, having no repentance for sinne; no freedome from the guilt, or from the power of sinne; nor any saving grace at all: how is it (I say) that thou shouldst presume to come into such a place, and into such a presence, having made no better preparation?

When God began thus to examine him in his own person,
it is said (he was speechlesse) having an ill caufe and a guilty con-
tiience, he had nothing to say for himselfe. Hereupon the Lord
proceedeth to passe sentence upon him, which is done after
the manner of earthly Judges. (Then said the King unto his ser-
vants) that is, unto the Angels, whose office it is, as to gather
the good corne into Gods Barne, so to bind the Tares together
in bundles, that they may be cast into hell-fire; (bind him hand
and foot) there must not be present execution, but he must be
dealt with as a prifoner, whose hands are bound that he may
not resist: and his feet that hee may not runne away; if either
of them had beene at libertie, he might have made some shift;
but when God comes to proceed in judgement against men,
hee will strip them of all meanes, both of defence and of esca-
ping. Further, they are bid to (take him away) to wit, from ha-
vying communion with God, with his Saints or Angels; hee
must be taken from the place and meanes of all comfort and
peace, and happiness: and is that all? nay (faith God, cast him
into utter darkness) that is, into hell, a place of all misery and
woe, which is implied by utter darkness; a fit punishment
for such kinde of persons; for seeing they are full of ignorance,
and of spirituall darkness while they live, God hath provided
that they shall have enough of it; they shall be cast into a place
of utter darkness, where there shall be nothing but horrore
and anguish. And yet if this were al, their estate were the more
tolerable; but this addeth unto the misery of the place, that
they shall be very sensible of that misery, which is intimated,
when it is said, (there shall be weeping) not such weeping as ma-
ny times befall eth men here, when the tears of their eyes abate
the anguish of their harts: but such weeping as is joyned with
(gnashing of the teeth) signifying that they should not only
have sorrow and greefe, but such as should be mingled with
derperation, and with horrible vexation, and torture: not such
as should be an ease unto their soules, but rather an addition
unto their woe.

In these words then is declared the severitie of God against
those that come unworthily unto his royall feast: where is
shewed,

1. First, the cause of this his severitie, namely, because they

abused
abused both him and his banquet, in coming with the most foule and loathsome garments of the old man; which do more displease the eyes of the Lord, than the most base and beggery rayment in the world can doe the eyes of an earthly King.

2 Secondly, the manner of Gods proceeding, viz.

1 That he convinceth their consciences, so that they are speechlesse.

2 That he condemneth their persons unto unavoidable, and yet unsupportable torments,

[Then the King came in.] From this title which is attributed unto the Lord, this doctrine ariseth: that,

God is the onely absolute King over all the world.

He it is that is blessed, and Prince, the King of Kings, & Lord of Lords. This Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged, after that the Lord had made him, being the mightiefl Monarch in the world, to become more wretched than the pooreft man in the world, living as a beast for 7 years together: after that (I say) the Lord had abased him, and raised him up again, he acknowledged that God was the King of all the earth, whereas he thought before that he himselfe had beene the onely Ruler & Commander of the world: and further he sheweth, what manner of King he is, namely, the most high, everlasting, of an unresistable power, so that all the inhabitants of the earth are to be reputed as nothing, in comparison of him.

And the reason why the Lord doth challenge unto himselfe this title to be the onely absolute Governour of all the world, is this, that all power whatsoever, is derived from him, and limited by him: so that all earthly Potentates are but his substitutes and Vicegerents: they hold their Kingdomes from him; their subjects harts are inclined by him: all their excellent parts are his meere gifts: their wisedome & policy for government both in times of warre, and of peace, proceed altogether from him, & the successse of all their purposes and attempts is wholly ordered and disposed by him: and therefore good cause is there that he should have this glory and honour ascrib'd unto him, viz. to be the supreme Ruler of all the earth.

This reprooveth them, that in words will acknowledge the Lord to be the onely Ruler of Heaven and Earth, but in
their deeds deny it: for what do they never care to get the knowledge of his Lawes, much lesse to obey them: nay, they refuse to understand the Statutes of the Lord, and rise up in open rebellion against him: and yet none more ready than such to cry out of others, that they are disloyall Subjects, such as care not for authority, and the like. Indeede those that are such, are much to be condemned. But in truth, they themselves in the meane while are the notablest rebels, in that they stand out against the Lord of Hosts. But they will vaunt and boast that they carry themselves loyally towards their Prince, and are careful to obey Authority. Suppose for the time that they doe yeeld outward obedience to the lawes (which yet few such doe) yet if they do not submit themselves to Magistrates, in, and for the Lord, all their loyalty is nothing worth. For the Apostle Jude speake of some that had mens persons in admiration, because of advantage, against whom he pronounceth a woe: they would fawne upon such as were in authority, and have them in high admiration. Oh they were worthy men, and their commandements much to be respected: so that if they would have them lye, or swear, or commit any villany, they would bee at their becke: and why? for their owne advantage: that they might get some commodity, or clime to some preferment, &c. that was their drift, and further that to serve themselves, they regarded neither the persons nor places of those that were in the governement: all their crouching was for advantage sake, nothing for conscience sake.

Secondly, sithence our God is the Soveraigne Lord and King of heaven and earth: therefore when we are to stand in his presence, and to draw neere unto his Table: let us with all reverence and due preparation, and with all feare and care, and good conscience, present our selves before his Majestie. The holy Ghost himselfe giveth this advice concerning an earthly Prince, that if any be to sit at Table with a great Ruler, he should looke unto his carriage, and restraine his appetite, and not behave himselfe rudely and unmannerly. Now if this be a point of wisedome, when a man is to feast with one that is farre his Superiour, to wash his hands, to have respect
of his apparell, and if he have any fute better than another, to put that on; and in no sort to carry himselfe disorderly and unbeseeming such a presence: if (I say) a man would & should deale thus before an earthly Prince, that if there be any failing, can but give him a rebuke and check, or inflict upon him some outward punishment; how much more carefull and circumspect should we be, when we are to sit at the Lords Table, who looketh not so much to the externall behaviour, as to the inward disposition of the soule? and if he finde us unprepared and unworthy, cannot onely smite us in the outward man, but caft both body and soule into hell.

Thirdly, this is for singular comfort unto all Gods people, seeing the Lord their God is the only Monarch of the world, that exerciseth his Kingdome from generation to generation, this should strengthen them against all crosses, and losses, and troubles, and temptations, that though men would tosse them up and down, and trample them under their feet, and for that end doe evermore plot and practise against them, yet it shall goe well with the righteous for the Lord raigneth over their most mortall adversaries: and though the times change, and mens affections change, yet their King is unchangeable; the same for ever, in mercy & goodnesse towards all his true harted Subjects; he hath turned every thing to the good of his Church heretofore, and so will he deale with his faithfull servants still, even to the end of the world. And thus much of the person of God, that he is a King.

Now for his behaviour, he doth not onely provide for his guests, but is there present himselfe (in the assembly of Saints) to see the guests: not, but he saw them before: but this is spoken for our capacitie, to signifie that as God doth see through us, so he will let men know, and feele, and finde, that he perfectly discerneth what they are, and with what hearts they appeare before him. Whence ariseth this point: that,

The Lord taketh speciall notice of every guest that cometh to his Feast.

There are many commers, but not all of one disposition: therefore doth he take a view of them, that their entertainement may be according to their condition and preparation:

Draf. 1. Gods eye is upon all his guests.
that if they be good, they may speed well; if bad, they may receive according to their ill deserts.

This is evident in Zephaniah, where it is said, that the Lord will search Jerusalem with lights: not that the Lord needeth candles or Torches; but to shew that there are many dark corners in mens hearts, where sinne lies lurking: which if they will not search, the Lord will, and finde out every corruption therein, as men by burning Lampes come to the sight of such things as lye hidden in obscure and dark corners. To the same purpose it is said, that all things are naked and open to his eyes: and that his eyes are a flame of fire, noting unto us, that he pierceth and looketh through and through every mans heart, every mans conscience, and every mans conversation.

Reasons: Firstly, the Lord hath undertaken to bring every secret thing into Judgement: therefore must he needs take notice thereof.

2 Secondly, it is his office to reward every one as he knoweth his heart and his works: and therefore must he of necessity search into the same; for otherwise he could not proceede like a righteous Judge, to give to every one an equal and perfect reward. Which maketh,

First, for reproofe of those, that because they are admitted by the Minister, and allowed amongst men, and judged to be Christians, as men that can be touched for no grosse sin, have a very good opinion of themselves, as if there were nothing else required of them: but let such know, that there must be a second survey and search; and where the Minister ends, God will begin; and if they cannot hold out in the second examination, and tryall made by the Lord, their case will be no better than his, who is found fitting at the Table without a wedding garment: therefore it stands men upon to see that they bee fitly qualified, before they intrude themselves into the Lords presence: for he hath fiery eyes to looke quite through them; and pure eyes that can indure no iniquity in them; and therefore before they come to this great Supper, they must by searching finde out their speciall sinnes and bewaile them, determining to leave and forfaie them, and repaying to the meanes to get strength against them.
Secondly, for consolation: seeing we shall not meete the Minister onely at the Lords Table, but God himselfe in his owne person; this may comfort the hearts of those that have examined their soules, and lamented their sinnes, and have a true desire to be reconciled unto the Lord, and to obtain such mercies as doe belong to penitent persons, they shall receive according to their hearts desire & expectation, even strength against their corruptions & temptations, and freedome from, or ability under all manner of crosses and afflictions: for there the Lord of Glory will manifest his presence, in giving to every one, as he knoweth the integrity of his heart. Earthly Kings, though they be present, cannot looke on every particular person nor examine of what Country or condition every one of them is: but the King of Heaven hath an eye to every guest, considering what they are, and how affected and prepared: what they did the day before, what thoughts they had, what prayers they made the night before, and that very morning: he marketh and observeth what their hopes are, what their desires are, what they expect for the present, and what they purpose for afterwards: In a word, hee taketh particular notice of every good thing in his Saints, to reward it, and of every infirmity to helpe them out of it.

And saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment. In that the King seeing this man at his Table, doth reprove him, and condemn him, for his want of good preparation; the Doctrine is, that,

It is not sufficient to come to Gods wedding-feast, but we must come as fit guests for so great a banquet, and such a glorious presence.

Indas ate and dranke the blessed bread and Wine, as well as Peter; yet because he had a cursed and carnall heart, it was his bane, and laid him more open to every hellish temptation, and made him more lyable to every curse and plague of God: this was all that he got by it. So the foolish Virgins went to meet the Bridegroome, with Lampes in their hands, making a glorious shew, & doing many things in the worship and service of God, yet because they had not Oyle in their Vessels; as well as in their Lamps, that is, had not inward graces in their hearts, and
and consciences, as well as outward semblances and theewes thereof in their carriage and behaviour, therefore their lights were quickly out, and when others were received as fit and meet guests, they were rejected and excluded, as unfit and unworthy of the Bridegroomes feast and company: so that outward terms and colours of Religion will not serve the turne; many shall cry, Lord, Lord, who yet shall be bid to depart from Christ, because they are workers of iniquitie: They brag they have prophesied and cast out devils, and done many great works by his name, but they did nothing for his name, but for their owne credit, or gaine, or for some carnall respect or other: and therefore seeking and serving themselves, the Lord esteemeth them wicked and ungodly persons, and punisheth them accordingly.

Now the reason of this point, is, because the Lord commandeth us as well to come worthily, as to come: and as the prayers of the wicked are an abomination unto him, so are all other services of theirs: to the uncleane all things are unclean: if men be dead in sinnes and trespasses, and live under the power of presumptuous sinnes, the things that are most helpfull and profitable in themselves, are made hurtfull and pernicious unto them, so that they are thereby made more impure and more unholy.

Sith there will be such strict examination, and such a sharpe sentence of condemnation past upon those that do not get them wedding apparell, when they come to this wedding feast: this serveth to humble every one that hath at any time come to this royall feast without his wedding garment; as every one hath, so often as he came to any of the meanes of salvation before he was effectually called. It was Gods wonderfull mercy that we are not destroyed in the time of our unregeneracie, for abusing his gracious and glorious presence; and that he did so patiently forbear us, and at length put it into our hearts, to put off our soule garments, and to sue unto him for white and pure rayment. And albeit the Lord have graciously spared us, yet should we judge ourselves worthy to have beene destroyed, and ought to be humbled for our old sinnes, lest they bring upon us new judgements.
Secondly, let us labour to put on this wedding-garment, seeing it is so requisite and needful for every worshipper of God to be clothed therewith.

Now, if we would know what it is, the Apostle describeth it in part, Col. 3. 12. Now therefore as the Elders of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercy, &c. As if he had said, Sith God hath chosen you to everlasting glory in the heavens, and provided unto you a kingdom, that you may reign with his own Son, therefore do you lead such a life as becomes heirs of such a kingdom, and adorn your selves with such graces as may becometh the Spouse of Christ, and those that are the chosen people of the Lord, even such as are called unto holiness, and unto whom God hath manifested his love: and seeing he hath forgiven you so many sins, and doth continually passe by so many of your infirmities, do you put on tender mercy, &c. He reckoneth up divers of those particular virtues, whereby he would have them shine forth before men; and first he willeth them to put on (tender mercy) not only to have, but to put on a merciful heart: many have this grace, which do not put it on, that is, do not stir up their hearts nor make them sensible of the wants and necessities, and distresses of their poor brethren: the bowels of compassion are not so moved within them, that they out of a fellow-feeling of their griefes, do proceed from pitying of them, to relieving of them; but the Apostle would have men so to be endued with these graces, that they put them forth for the use of others, as occasion is offered.

The next vertue which we must put on, is (kindnesse) we must not be fierce, nor froward, tart nor sower in our speeches or carriage, but be affable, and amiable in our conversation, that so we may not discourage, nor discountenance those that have to speake or deale with us.

But how may we attaine this kindnesse? get (humblenesse) which is the next vertue: for whence commeth it to passe that men are so harsh and rough, so lowd, and full of crying in their speeches? the very true reason is because they are proud and haughty: therefore the same minde should be in us, that was in Christ Jesus who was full of gentlenes, and still ready to beare with infirmities, to passe by offences, and pray for his foreft adversaries.
The next grace is [meekness] which consisteth in this, that we be not busy and violent in our owne private matters, but content to part with our owne right, so farre as Gods glory and a good conscience do require.

Another vertue is [long-suffering,] which is fitly joyned with the former: for some might say, I have shewed meeknes and peaceablenesse in my behaviour, but all will not serve the turne, I am ever vexed with unkindnesse and indignities, and must I still put up all? Yes surely, you must suffer long, therein imitating the Lord himselfe: for hath he not borne long with you, did not he spare you many yeares before your conversion? and are you so reformed now, that you need not his long-suffering and patience?

Oh, but those with whom I have to deale are very full of infirmities and defects. Beare with them then, Ver. 13. you are not without imperfections your selfe; they put you to the trial now; you know not how soone you may winne them or some others to the like, and therefore strive to beare with them, and seeke rather to mend faults, than to find faults: and to help men out of them, rather than to be imbittered against them for the same.

But there is a quarrell betwixt us, and I cannot bring my minde to peace, till that be first ended. The Apostle telleth you how to make briefe worke, and how to make the best, cheapest, and most Christian end of all controversies, and that is, [freely to forgive one another.]

But who could ever put up such wrongs, and sit downe by such injuries? Christ Iesus could, and did: and therefore it is added, Even Christ Iesus forgave you, even so do ye. There is none of the Ele& of God, but must be driven to confesse, that our Saviour hath past by farre greater matters in us, than we can do in any man: yea, and doth so still, even every day and houre, or else it would go full ill with us: which being so, they should not sticke to forgive and forget one anothers trespasses and offences, of what kinde, and of what degree soever.

These vertues if we can get and exercise, it is certaine that we have the wedding garment, and therefore may boldly and
comfortably stand before him that hath pure and fiery eyes: for say that he hates all iniquity (as indeed he doth) with a deadly hatred: if we do so too, God and we are of one minde, and of one side, and he will never lay any of our finnes unto our charge.

Thus have we heard what the wedding garment is: now it is further to be considered, how we may come by it: and the way is, to go unto Christ Jesus for it: for his Spouse must be clothed and decked by himself, who is the Bridegroome: and therefore he exhorteth the Church of the Laodiceans that was poore, and miserable, and blind, and [naked] to buy of him [white rayment:] which is the righteousness of Saints, Rev. 19. 8. that their filthy nakednes might not appeare, but be covered through the righteousness of Christ, which maketh us as righteous here in Gods account, as we shall be, when we come to heaven, though we cannot see it so clearly, nor apprehend it so fully. Now we see where it may be bought; the next question will be, how it must be bought?

And for answer thereunto: we must know that three things are to be performed.

The first is, that we must put off our owne filthy and ragged clothes, to wit, our sinfull and corrupt natures, and our bad and vile conversation, as the Apostle willeth the Ephesians, Cast ye off, concerning the conversation in time past, the old man, which is corrupt through the deceitable lusts. This then is the first duty, by sound and hearty repentance to make a ridance of all grosse finnes, and to purge our selves as much as possibly we can, from all infirmities: for certaine it is that the wedding garment cannot be obtained, untill we be fit for the same. The old man and the new will not agree together. Wherefore when the Prophet Isaiah exhorteth men to come and buy, &c. he faith, Let the wicked forsake his wayes, and the ungodly his owne imaginations, &c. Now when we forsake them, when with purpose of heart we cleave unto the Lord, and endeavour to depart from all iniquity.

The next thing required of him that would buy this white rayment is, that he must much esteeme & desire it: for the thirsty soule alone shall be satisfied with good things. Now that
we may get this spirituall affection, we must labour to have a sight of our miserable estate while we are naked and destitute of this rayment, and of our happy case when we shall be adorned therewith, which being well considered of, will make us more to affect it, than all the treasures of the world.

Thirdly, he that would be a good chapman, and procure himselfe these heavenly robes, must come to the places and shops where he may buy and have choice for his mony: which are, where the Word is powerfully preached, and the Sacraments duly administred. Thence must these robes be fetched, whereby all naked soules may be covered, and the most deformed creature may be beautified: the word is it which worketh Grace, and together with the Sacraments doth continually increase the same: so that thereby the Lord conveyeth unto us whatsoever legacies Christ hath deserved for us. And thus we see how the wedding garment may be come by: our owne ragges must be rejected, this must be desired and sought for where it is to be found and to be obtained.

A third use of this point, may be for an exceeding great comfort unto them that have put away their sinnes by godly sorrow, and have gotten an appetite to the food of their soules, they may come as welcome guests, and such as have put on the wedding-garment: they need not be afraid that God should look upon them, but have great cause to rejoice that they are so fitted and prepared, that they may comfortably stand in his blessed presence, and be worthy partakers of his royall feast.

Lastly, this is for terror unto those hypocrites, who though the Lord do call upon them, and proffer them his Sonne, and his Spirit, and his kingdome, yet they will not part with any sin, for the obtaining of these excellent things; but have their appetites so taken up with earthly things, that they have no mind to spirituall things, neither will they come to the means, nor reaflire to the market where this royall clothing is to be had; but absent themselves from the word, and especially from the Sacrament. These are much to be condemned and sharply to be rebuked, as despisers of the holy things of God.

Oh, but one lives in malice, and another in uncleanness, and therefore they forbeare coming.
This is the most wretched excuse of all: why dost thou not get out of thy malice, and leave thy filthinesse? wilt thou preferre the satisfying of thy lust, before the savving of thy soule? what is this but plainly to refuse and to reject the Lords banquet? and can such looke to escape the heavy hand of the Lord? If they were worthy to be destroyed, that stayed away upon this pretence, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come; I have bought Oxen, and therefore I cannot come: What then do they deserve, that will absent themselves under this colour, I live in malice, and therefore I cannot come: I must follow my sensual and divellish lust, and therefore I cannot come: If the workes of our Callings may not in any case keepe us from the Lords Feast: then much lesse may the works of the flesh, and of the Devill.

Verse 12. (Friend, how camest thou in hither? ) Doctrine. When God hath to deale even against wicked sinners; yet he doth plainly, and in peaceable tearmes convince them, before he passeth sentence on them for their faults. So hee dealt with Adam, when he had eaten the forbidden fruit, and thereupon fled from God, and hid himselfe among the trees of the Garden. Adam (faith he) where art thou? q.d. why dost thou flie from me, and leave the place of thy calling? Hast thou not eaten of the tree whereof I commanded that thou shouldst not eate. He comes not upon him in violence or fury, but quietly calls him by his name, and in a coole manner reasons the matter with him. In like manner deales Christ with Judas, Friend betrayest thou the Son of man with a kisfe? as if he should have said, Judas howsoever this kisfe may seeme to proceed from love, yet indeed it cometh from pretended malice & mischiefe.

The reasons why God taketh this course, are;

First, because this milde and gentle dealing maketh men see their faults more evidently; whereas, hafty and violent speeches do either discourage, or imbitter the heart, and cast such a miste upon the minde, that it cannot so well discerne of it owne errour.

Secondly, if there be proceeding to punishment, the punisher is much cleared by this meane: for when the offence is quietly laid open to the view of the offender, so that he cannot but con-
confesse his guiltiness, then must he needs acknowledge that he is justly and equally dealt with, when punishment is inflicted upon him.

This is for our imitation, that if we would have any partie set downe and humbled for his sinne, we should endeavour in the quietest and best manner to convince him of his fault. Use as hard arguments as we will (for so the Lord doth) but with all look that we use soft speeches: for that is the way to make men think hardly of themselves; whereas the contrary will cause them to think hardly of us. And here are such to be blamed, as when any thing is distastfull to them, are presently hot and boisterous, and lowd, and full of crying: and so rather hurt the ear by the loudness of the voice, than helpe the heart by the force of their reproofs: whence arise these two inconveniences: First, that the party looks not so much to his owne falling, as to their passion; and secondly, as he is not convinced, so they are not esteemed: but though they have the right on their side, yet they lose the due regard of their cause, and reverence of their persons. And therefore the Apostle telleth Timothy, that the servant of God must not strive, but must be gentle towards all men: he must not be clamorous and violent, but suffer evill men patiently, instructing them with meeknes that are contrary minded, &c. For this is the way, if there be any, to bring them to found repentance, that they may come out of the snares of the devil. This (I say) is the way, to let them see good reasons against their sins, and a good affection towards their persons: these are the best helps, and hereby we shall be sure to please God: and if the party will ever be broken, it must be by the weight of good arguments, pres'd in meeknesse of wisdom, and proceeding from a mercifull heart.

But they are vile and wicked persons, with whom I am to deale, such as deserve little or no mildnes at all. Be it so: yet we see here when God was to reason with a reprobate that was ready to be turned into hell, he proceedeth calmly and quietly against him. And so dealt Joshua with Achan that had committed such execrable wickednesse, as that the whole host of God sped the worse for him: My son (faith he) I beseech thee give glory unto the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him.
him, &c. Secondly, this is for consolation. Will the Lord give such good terms unto reprobates that are to be cast into hell-fire? then surely he will much more use mildness towards his people: if Gods enemies have good words from him, then what may his friends expect at his hands?

[And he was speechlesse] Doct. Though sinners have many excuses and colours, when they are to deal with men like themselves, yet when God commeth to examine and sift their consciences, they shall have nothing to say for themselves.

This is to be observed in Jud.3, that though he were very subtle, and a notable cunning hypocrite, yet when the Lord waked his drowsie conscience, he brake forth into a plaine confession, I have sinned betraying innocent blood. He had no manner of defence or apology for himselfe in the world.

The like may be seen in cursed Pharaoh, who in his extremities was driven to confess that he & his people had sinned, Exod. 19.27. And at the last day it is said, that the books of all mens consciences shall be opened, Rev. 20.12. And then their sines shall be set in order before them, and their owne hearts shall be as a thousand witnesses to accuse and condemn them.

The reason of this point is, because the Conscience is the Lords Officer, and it cannot but speak truth when God will have it, through the light of knowledge which he hath put into every mans soule by nature.

Then we would be able to stand before the Lord, when he shall come to try us in the fire of affliction, but especially at the last dreadful day of judgement, when the booke shall be laid open; and every man shall be judged according to his works: then let us take that course which will make us able to do so: and that is, to get a lively faith, a good conscience, and holy and found love, and to testifie our loving heart, by our loving behaviour; not to love in word alone, but in deed.

1.Joh. 3.18, 19. Chap. 5.17.

Therefore shall we assure our hearts before him, and have boldnesse in the Day of judgement: so that pure and Christian love with the fruits of it, is the best meanes to make us with confidence and comfort, to hold up our heads in the day of accounts.

Secondly, this is for comfort against all the false clamors and accusations that are raised against Gods servants: the wicked here.
here have great matters to charge them with, and have much to say for their unrighteous proceeding: but at the day of the Lords reckoning, they that have most to say now, shall have least to say for themselves, and little doth any know how soon he may be called unto the barre. Therefore let Gods children commend themselves unto God in well-doing: he is the great Judge of the whole world, and with him righteous men shall have good hearing in their just and righteous causes, and all evil men shall be put to silence. Godly men shall lift up their heads with glory, and wicked sinners shall stop their mouths with shame.

Verse 13. [Bind him hand and foot.] Hitherto of the examination, and conviction of him that had not on a wedding garment. Now followeth his sentence, well befitting the party offending. [Bind him hand and foot: he had abused his hands and feet, and dishonoured God by his whole body, and therefore just it is that he should be punished therein: [Take him away: because he had only been in the Church, but not of the Church, at the meanes, but not profited by them; therefore must he now be separated from all communion with God or his Saints: [And cast him into utter darkness:] Seeing hee loved darkness more than light, therefore he shall have enough of it? he must be cast into a hell of darkness.

Out of all which, this general point may be noted, that the speciall time and place of the punishment of wicked men is after this life in hell fire: here ungodly men have liberty both of hand & foot; and the Saints of God are in greater restraint:

but why is that? because sinners shall never have their full measure of woe, till they be cast bodies and soules into hell fire; at which time they shall be made capable of the extremity of all miseries, because then their iniquities are growne to a full height and ripeness.

This is evident in the Gospell, where it is shewed, that after the general Assises at the last day, the ungodly of the world shall goe unto everlasting paine, Math. 25. 46. and the like is testified by Daniel, chap. 12. 2. who saith, Many of the saints, here in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting glory, and some to shame and perpetual contempt: here they taste of Gods...
displeasure sundry times, and in sundry sorts, but there it shall be poured upon them in full measure.

Therefore let us never envy their prosperity, nor think that God taketh no notice of their sinnes, because he delayeth to inflict punishment upon them for the same. Judges doe cause notorious Malefactors to be reprived sometimes, but it is in no great favour unto them, though in the mean time, it may bee, they sharply correct their owne children: so doth the Lord deale, severely chastising those that are of his owne family, but letting reprobates thrive in their sinfull wayes, that in the end he may pay them home for all.

Secondly, let wicked mens punishment shall be principally in hell, and the Church shall never be fully rid of them till then: Therefore let us not be discouraged, though for a while Tares be mingled with the Wheate, there is some use of them, and God seeth that we have need of such launders now and then, while we remaine upon the face of the earth; but when we come to heaven, we shall be quite freed from them: and therefore in the mean time let us not bee discouraged, as though we should never be freed from them; but let us waite Gods time, when he shall command his holy Angels to separate them from amongst us, and to give them their due in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever.

Thirdly, let us observe this from the contrary, that as wicked mens full judgement, so godly mens full payment is deferred till the last day. They have many comfortable refreshings here, but at that day they shall have fulnesse of joy, holines and glory that shall endure for evermore.

As sinners at that time shall be deprived of all good things, and be vexed with all manner of evils; so the Saints on the other side, shall bee exempted from all evil, and be brought to the enjoyment of all good: as sinners shall be perfectly miserable, so shall the Saints bee perfectly happy: as the one shall be sensible of their wretchednesse, so shall the other bee of their blessednesse: and as the one shall be everlastingly miserable, so shall the other be eternally happy: in a word, there shall bee every way as much joy and felicitie in heaven (and more too) than there shall be woe and anguish in hell. Which should
should stay us from fainting under our crosses and sorrowes; our temptations and corruptions: wee can easily thinke that wicked men have an ill bargaine, though they enjoy the plea. 

Note, 

fires of sinne for a season, because they must come to such torments in the end: and, why should not we judge, that we have a good bargaine, though we passe through the fire, and be in the Lords furnace for a while, 

that we shall attaine to such joyes at last, as farre surpasse the reach of any mortall man.

FINIS.
THE SEVENTH SERMON of the Lords Supper.

Psalm 119. Verse 1. &c.

1 Blessed are those that are upright in their way, and walk in the law of the Lord.
2 Blessed are they that keepe his testimonies, and seek him with their whole heart.
3 Surely they worke none iniquity, but walke in his waies.
4 Thou hast commanded to keepe thy precepts diligently.

He principall purpose of this whole Psalme is to celebrate and set forth the praises of Gods holy Word,for the admirable excellency of it, the observations and keeping whereof, hee commendeth in this first part, and in these present verses by the 1 Manner of it.

For the Manner, it is needfull that first there be internall truth and uprightnesse, devoid (as farre as is possible) of hypocrisie, together with an intire and serious contention of the minde, without negligence and remissenesse: secondly, that there be externall obedience yeelded unto it, by the exercice of all good duties, making our life a journey, and Gods law or doctrine, the way wherein we constantly travaile, without wandring either on the right hand, or on the left, by lust, carnal reason, or any pretences whatsoever, dissonant or swarving from the right rule of the same, untill wee come home, and arrive at the desired place of our rest and felicity. Which hee

also
also reporteth in the second verse, although in other terms, as of keeping, viz. in minde, conscience and practice, his testimony, his blessed word whereby his will is published, and witness is borne of his heavenly pleasure.

The Motives, or arguments persuading to this found and sincere obedience, are partly from the comfortable effects which it produceth, and partly from the force of the cause which may and ought to provoke men unto it.

One effect is general, in that it maketh a man truly happy, hee is blessed thereby with all desirable welfare, whatsoever may doe him good in this life, in every respect, and with assurance of eternal glory and immortality, with full and perfect bliss, in that world which is to come. This one word Blessed, comprehendeth in it more precious and delectable treasures than all the tongues or booke in the world can severally specify.

The other effect is more special, namely immunity, freedom from the bondage and thraldome of sinne, they are not workers of iniquity, although they often fall into it. Notwithstanding they are compassed about with many infirmities, and doe divers things which God forbiddeth, yet are they not artificers of evil, nor slaves to Satan or corruptions; as for their frailties the Lord passeth by them, he seeth none iniquity in Jacob, nor transgression in Israel, Numb. 23. 21.

This is illustrated by the contrary, the vertue and power that is in them for well-doing; so farre as they from that miserable bondage to live in the service of sinne, as that they are made able to performe good services to God, and the same they doe, and constantly proceede therein, choosing his ways which he prescribeth, for their ways to walke in.

The cause which should compell and urge every one to be obedient, is that high and soveraigne authority of the Lord himselfe, exacting it as a duty of loyalty, and laying his commandement upon all men, that they accurately observe that which he giveth them in charge; not dispensing with themselves, and taking liberty to be directed by their own likings.
Ver. 1. Blessed are those that are upright in their way, &c.

That when the Prophet would make known unto all the world, who are in the happiest estate, & in the highest place of account with God, he describeth and setteth them forth by this property: that they are sincere in heart, & upright in life & conversation; in a word, such as truely feare the Lord. The point hence to be noted in general, is this, that Grace & Religion is the way to all blessednes.

This doctrine the Psalmist confirmeth unto us in sundry other places, as Ps. 1. & 112. &c. In the former whereof he declareth, who is a man truely religious, to wit, he that escheweth ill counsels and unscall practices; and on the other side, imbraceth and delighteth in goodnes and godlines, and in the means of obtaining and increaing the fame: and then he pronounceth such a man blessed: Blessed (faith he) is the man that doth not walke in the counsell of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, &c. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law will he meditate day and night. And to the same effects, is that in the other Psalm before named; Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his commandements, &c. Throughout which Psalm, we may observe as the true & certain notes of a righteous man, & also his priviledges which are very many, and very great, both in regard of himselfe, and of his posterity, which shall speed the better for his sake. Notable likewise in that place of Deuter, where the Lord speaketh unto his Church in this manner: Blessed art thou O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people, saued by the Lord, the shield of thy help, & the sword of thy glory? which speecch is not to be understood, as pertaining only to that nation, but as belonging to all that are the true Israel of God, & that serve him with an upright & faithful hart. Now what faith he of the? Who is like unto thee, O Israel? Why? If they should have looked to outward things, they might have answered, the Egyptians, the Edomites, Assyrians, nay the very Canaanites themselves are like unto us, yea far beyond us: for at that time when this was spoken,
ken, they were in the wilderness, travelling towards the promised land, & what great matters had they then? Moses, who was the best of them, had not a house to rest his head in: none of them could say, This is my ground, there is my corn, thus large are my revenues by the year, &c. but they were all tenants at will, at a dayes, or at an hours warning, or lesse, even as God's pleasure was: yet the Lord maketh a challenge against all the world; Who is like unto thee, O my people, saved by the Lord? meaning indeed, that no nation under heaven was comparable unto them, in regard of the wonderfull things that God had wrought for them, and in regard of those heavenly prerogatives which he had vouchsafed unto them, the meanest hewer of wood, or drawer of water, amongst them was to be preferred before the mightiest Monarch in the world; and that may be said of all true Christians, which was spoken of them; Who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord?

The truth of this will more evidently appeare, if wee will weigh the things that follow: Namely,

1. What misery Grace doth free us from.

2. What good things it maketh us to enjoy.

First therefore, that we may see what misery it frees us from, wee must consider, that men naturally are the children of wrath, under the curse and malediction of God, subject to horrible vexations and terrors: all their life long, they live in feare of death, and of such judgements as are forerunners of death: their table is a snare, and their prosperitie their ruine: their adversity is imbittered, and their callings accursed; and in a word, nothing maketh them better, but every thing a great deale worse; all being infected and poysioned unto them by their own sinnes, and God's fearefull vengeance upon the same. If they live, it is to the increase of their damnation: if they die, they goe to take present possession of destruction: if they refuse to eate and drinke, they are murderers of themselves: if they doe eate and drinke, they are usur-
pers of that which is none of their owne. If they come not to
the Word and Sacrament, they are contemners of Gods ordi-
nances: if they do come, they are profaners of the same, and
so shall be further hardened, to their finall perdition: and is
not this a wretched case? Though for their apparell, they were
clothed as Solomon in the midst of his royalty: though their
robes were as rich as was Aarons Ephod, or Breast-plate, or
the most costliest parts of his garments, all were of no worth
without grace: though they fed on the daintiest dishes, and
did eate Angels food (as the Israelites are said to do) yet if they
be sinfull and rebellious, they shall perish as Corah, Dathan, &
Abiram, and many other of them did. Though their habitations
were as sumptuous and delightfull as Paradise was, yet
they could have no more comfort therein, then Adam had,
who when he had once broken the Commandement of God,
in eating of the forbidden fruit, notwithstanding all things
remained in their excellency as before, yet he was surprised
with the terrous and feares of a guilty conscience, and could
take no pleasure in the goodly Rivers, in the plesant fruits, in
the variety of all the creatures that were in the garden of E-
den, &c. But he was faine to flie from Gods presence, and to
hide himselfe among the trees of the garden.

And last of all, though their dignity were never so great:
their possessions never so ample and large, and their substance
never so plentifull and abundant, yet they could have no more
comfort in any, or all of these things, than Belshazzar that im-
pious king had, who for all his valiant Captains and Souldiers,
for all his great cheere and plenty of wine, for all his jollity
and triumphing over Gods people, for all his merrie compa-
nions that he had about him, and all the means that he had to
comfort him; yet was he in such honrour, when he saw on
the wall the hand-writing against him, That his countenance
was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, and the joynts
of his loynes were loosed, and his knees smote one against
another.

This (and much more lamentable than can possibly be ex-
pressed) is the case of all unregenerate men: and how great
then must the excellency of Grace needs be, which freeth a
First, a good estimation: so that it may be well said, that the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: and that of all other, they are the most glorious people, that have the Spirit of Grace and of Glory dwelling in their hearts. For they are precious in God's sight, as being his chiefe treasure: precious in the eyes of his people, precious in the account of the Angels: yea reverent in the sight of the very wicked, who esteeme them to be honest men, and dare trust them before any other; many times, with their goods, with their children, and their portions, yea and with their soules also. For when they are in any extremitie, lying upon their death-beds, or the like; Oh then they cry out, Send for such a Preacher; send for this or that good man or woman: now their prayers and their speeches might do me good, which heretofore I have rejected, or lightly esteemed: and then none is to bee compared to them, none to be sought unto in respect of them. And when they labour to disgrace and vilifie them, by tearning them dissemblers, and hypocrites, even then against their wills; they highly commend them; for it is in effect, as if they should say: these men pretend they have many vertues in them, but I would not have men thinke, that they are so good and godly as they seeme to bee: If they bee, then they must needs be an excellent people indeed: (For there is none that hath any civilitie in him, but he will acknowledge that it is a good thing to heare, and reade, and conferre, and to spend much time in prayer, as Gods servants do; but they cry out, that they do not these things well, nor with a good heart.) Now if Christians consciences do beare them witnesse, that they do performe these duties in uprightness, then they have the testimonie of ungodly men themselves on their sides: and till they can disprove the soundnesse of their hearts, they must, whether they will or not, justifie their behaviour. Thus wee see how godlinesse winneth a good
good estimation.

Now secondly, it doth also bring safety with it: it setteth men out of gunshot, so that neither the devil, nor all the powers of hell, can annoy or hurt them: nor any, or all of the devils instruments in the world, prevale against them, for their overthrow: for the Lord is evermore a shield and buckler unto them, so that they must first strike through him, before they can come at them. He will cover them under his wings, and they shall be safe under his feathers, Pl. 91. 4.

Thirdly, the vertue and power of grace is such, that it maketh Gods children to rejoice, even in affliction; as was verified in David, who when he had many malicious adversaries against him, and many troubles befit him round about, yet he had more joy of heart than they had, when their wheat, and their wine did abound. And so it is with all Gods servants: as their sufferings are many, so are they refreshed with manifold consolations.

And when outward matters of rejoicing are furthest removed from them, then are they driven nearer unto God, the fountaine of all true comfort, and by that means their hearts are exceedingly revived. And if they be so much cheared in the times of their greatest adversitie, how much more joiful are they in the dayes of their prosperitie, when he maketh them to rest in greene pastures, and leadeth them by the still waters: preparing for them a table, in the sight of their adversaries, anointing their heads with oyle, and causing their cups to runne over, as the Psalmist speaketh: And they withall have a principal care to entertaine Gods blessings with thankfulnesse, and to serve him with a good and thankfull heart, in the use and enjoyment thereof.

Now if their estate be so blessed in this life, what shall their happinesse be when they depart out of this life, to have the fruition of those joyes, which are prepared for the Saints in the kingdome of glory? where all teares shall be wiped away from their eyes, and they being altogether freed from sinne and sorrow, shall receive an immortal crowne of blessednesse with the Saints and Angels, in Gods owne presence, where is fulnesse of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for ever.
evermore; where there shall be no parting of company, nor possibility of any unkindness, nor tediousness in conversing together.

Much more might be spoken of the excellency of this estate, and yet when all hath been said that can be, it is nothing in comparison of that which the thing is in itself, and we shall finde it to be, when we shall lay downe this body of corruption, and be clothed upon with perfect glory. But yet that the dignitie thereof may somewhat more clearly be scene into, let us consider a little further of the

\[
\begin{align*}
1 & \text{Price,} \\
2 & \text{Rarenesse, and} \\
3 & \text{Continuance}
\end{align*}
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1 First, concerning the price that was laid downe for the purchasing of it, it was the greatest that ever was given for any thing; for there goeth more to the buying of a Christian, than to the making of the world: for in the creation, God did but say the word, and all things were presently formed according to their severall kinds: but in the worke of redemption, God was not onely to say, but to pay also, and that full dearly, even the bloud of his owne Sonne, which was of an infinite value. And therefore if things are to be esteemed according to that which wise men will give for them, surely the estate of Christianity must needs be worthy high estimation, sith the wise God provided it for his children at such an inestimable reckoning.

2 Further in respect of the rarenesse thereof, it is to be accounted very admirable. If things that are very deare were also very common, that would diminish some part of their worth, but as for this, it is both precious and rare. There are but a very few selected ones, that the Lord hath singled out to be partakers of the life of Grace, and to be afterwards heires of the kingdome of glory, which maketh it to be a gift of farre greater estimation.

3 Lastly, if it were both deare and rare, yet if it were to be enjoyed but a little, it were the lesse to be regarded: therefore this addition there is unto the happinesse of this estate, that
it is also durable, yea everlasting. And whereas all worldly excellency, and all earthly promotions are temporary and vanishing, so that a man may be very high this day, and as low ere to morrow, and none can be happy in possessing those things, through the losse whereof he may so quickly become miserable: it is otherwise with them that are in the state of Grace, for that never sayleth: once a Christian, and ever a Christian: as the Lords purpose changeth not, so neither doth our condition change: but if we have begun in Grace, we shall end in glory, that never shall have end. Psal. 16. 11. Dan. 12. 2.

Is it so, that Religion and true piety, is the ready way to the highest advancement: then hence let us learne to set our hearts chiefly thereupon, and above all the treasures in the world principally to affect that. We count it good husbandrie in the first place, to seeke after those things that will do us most good: if silver be offered, we will preferre it before Brasfe; and if Gold be offered, we will take it rather than Silver. Now concerning this heavenly wisedome, it is said: Receive my instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather than fine Gold: For Wisedome is better than precious stones; and all treasures are not to be compared unto her. And this should encourage us rather to use all industrie for the obtaining of this blessed estate, because it is a thing have-able. It were in vaine for a base person to sue to be a King, a Duke, or a Lord: none almoft is so foolish, as to seeke for such preferments, because they know it would be but lost labour. But there is not the meanest servant, slave, or bondman, but may attaine to this spirituall dignitie, which is farre beyond all the advancement that the Kingdomes of this world can possibly yeeld. Hee that can pray, heare, meditate, conferre, and judge himselfe in secret before he commeth to the Sacrament, and with all good care and conscionable respect, use all Gods ordinances for the obtaining of faith and other graces, which do ever accompanie the same, shall be sure of good and happy success: for the Lord will be found of those that seeke him with a true heart; therefore let us not so cast our eyes on earthly commodities, as that in the meantime we neglect this pearle.
of price, and this inestimable jewel, that will so exceedingly enrich us. The Apostle telleth us, that those that runne in a race for a prize, though it be but a garland that is set up, so that they can gaine onely some small credit of their agilitie and nimblenesse in out-running one another, yet they will put off all that might clogge and hinder them in their race, but especially if they should runne for a crowne of gold: neither will they be so foolish as to stoope downe to take up every pin or point that lyeth in the way; and yet they runne but at an uncertainty; when they have done their best, another may carry away both the honour and commodity from them, and certaine it is, that but one alone can win the prize: and even he also, though he have the applause at one time, may go away with the disgrace at another; or if his credit do continue all his life time, yet death will take it away at last. From all which the Apostle would have us to draw this conclusion, that if such kinde of persons, notwithstanding all that hath been said, will so bestirre themselves, & seek to acquit themselves every way like men; then much more ought we to put our selves to it, and with all alacrity run the race that is set before us, sith we run not at an uncertainty, but are sure to obtaine the crowne; one shall not prevent nor deprive another, but all shall undoubtly get that which they do expect; & especially seeing that withall we strive for an incorruptible crowne, and shall attaine unto not a fading and vanishing, but an abiding and everlasting dignitie.

Obut (will some say) we bestow our paines and endeavors so much about spirituall things, in the meane time, we shall neglect those earthly things that are needfull, and so bring our selves to poverty. Nay, not so, provision for our everlasting estate, doth never impaire our present estate: for godlines hath the promises of this life, and of that which is to come: and thereby shall all matters be blessed unto us.

Have we inheritance, wealth, reputation, dignity, &c. This will assure us that we have a good title unto all, and reason and sweeten all, that every one of them shall be comfortable and profitable unto us, making it cleare unto our hearts and consciences, that the Lord tendeth them in mercy, as pledges of greater
greater matters that he meaneth to bestow upon us.

Have we not these outward things? Godliness will make a supply in stead of all: for that is great gain with contentment, in comparison of which, all the promises of contentedness that other things make unto us, will be found to be but mere illusions; because it certifieth our foules that God will provide sufficiently for us, which persuasion alone is able to stay the restless and unsettled minds of the sons of men, from pursuing after the unprofitable, deceitful, and lying vanities of this present evil world.

Seeing religion is such an incomparable treasure, it should instruct us in the second place, to have the means in due estimation whereby we may be made truly religious, by which our minds that are blinde, may be enlightened, our hearts of crooked may be made straight, of proud may be made humble, and of fraudulent may be made true and faithful. And those means are the Word, the Sacrament, Prayer, and the like, which are the steps whereby we must ascend unto this honourable estate: for it is as possible for men to make staires to climbe up unto the skie, as for us without these, to ascend unto heaven, by any devices of our owne framing.

The Word is the key that must open hell gates, to set us at liberty from the bonds of sinne, of Sathan, and of death, and to unlock heaven gates, that we may have entrance into glory: in which respect it is, that Christ faith unto Peter, that he wold give unto him (and consequentely to all Ministers of the Gospel) the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that is, the dispensation of the word, which maketh the way into heaven lye open to all such as by faith receive the same into their hearts. So that we shold not come unto the means with a base conceit, or light estimation thereof, but with a large and ample desire & expectation of taking benefit thereby. If men can once espie a way how they may rise in the world, either in great wealth or promotion, they will be most industrious & laborious in that course; they will refuse no paines in time, though the weather be unseasonable and cold, and their worke every way troublesome: but they will put themselves to it with all care and industrie, in hope (though it be but an uncertain hope) of bettering.
bettering their estate. So those that live by Faires and Markets will not fail one of them ordinarily, neither heat nor cold, winde nor raine, nor any the like impediments shall hinder them from pursuing their commodity: and why then should we be negligent, and play the sluggards while our seeds-time lasteth, and the Lord biddeth us 

\[\text{plow up the fallow ground} \]

of our hearts, that he may sow therein the seed of life, which will never faile to yeeld us a plentiful Harvest, if we can wait upon him for the same? And why should we be slacke and careless when our chiefe Market-dayes & Faire-dayes come, and not rather set our hearts and endeavours to seake after those things, which all that seke shall finde, and being found will make us men for ever.

This should be an encouragement unto us, not to thinke any thing too much, that we can do or suffer, in or for the profession of Christianity.

Oh, but it is an hard matter (may some say) to fast and pray, and mourn, and grieve our hearts continually for our smmes, and when we have done all, to be derided and maligned, persecuted and slaine for a good cause: and besides all these, to seele Gods hand scourging us, sometimes with poverty, and want, sometimes with feares and terours, sometimes with temptations and inward conflicts, &c.

These things seeme very great, and very tedious indeed, to flesh and bloud: but in truth they are small, yea matters of nothing, if we consider what is the use of them, and what will be the end of them: and therefore let us remember for our comfort when we are in this strait and difficult & unpleasant way, that we are going to be installed into a kingdome: and who is there that being offered a Baronrie, or a Lordship, yea though it be but a Farme, if so be he will take the pains to come for it, who is there (I say) that would take exception, and say, alas, the aire is cloudy, and the weather uncertaine, nay it begins to raine, or haile, or snow already, and therefore I will even stay at home, and never wet my foot for the matter: Nay, if there be but likelihood of some smaller gaine, and the weather foule, and the wayses deepe, and themselves somewhat out of temper also, yet they will adventure to go through all, and rather
rather ferry over, than come short of that profit that is offered, how much the more then ought we to break through all impediments, & swallow up all difficulties with the consideration of this, that our journey tendeth not to the getting of some small commoditie, or to the purchasing of some worldly possession, or to the obtaining of any earthly preheminence or preferment whatsoever; but that we are travelling towards our owne Country, where we shall receive an invaluable, & eternall crowne of glory? and albeit we must passe through many rough, and craggy, & thorny waies, and meet with sundry things that will be very irksome and unpleasant; yet let us make account withal, that we shall find many sweet comforts, and joyes unspeakable and glorious, in the midst of our pilgrimage, & in the end shall have the fruition of that happiness, which will make amends for all. And this was it that made the Apostle Paul so comfortable in the midst of all his sufferings: **2 Cor. 4.16,17**

Therefore we faint not (faith he) but though our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed daily. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, causeth unto us a far more excellent & an eternall weight of glory. Where we may note, that when he speaketh of the happiness of another life, he magnifieth the same exceedingly, both for the worth of it, and for the continuance of it: calling it a far most excellent, and eternall weight of glory. To be excellent is much, to be most excellent, is far more: to be far most excellent, is yet an higher degree: but when he calleth it a far most excellent, and withall an eternall weight of glory, it maketh a great addition unto all the former, & theeweth that it is indeed an inconceiveable & unutterable happiness that in the heaven we shall enjoy: but on the other side, he counteth his affliction light & momentany, because it passeth as it were in a thought, & is a thing of nothing, being laid in the ballance against the never-fading blisse that wee shall shortly come unto. And as for that weight that is in the tribulations of this life, it is but as an heavy bag of gold, that will make the hart of the owner lighter, in the very carriage of it, & so much the more light, by how much weighty it is. And therefore by all these motives, we should perfwade, yea even compell our soules unto patience under the crosse of Christ, and
The Seventh Sermon

and perseverance in the practice of all the duties of godliness: a pattern of which patience we have in the Hebrews, who after they had received the light, endured a great fight in afflictions. Partly (as the Apostle) while ye were made a gazing stock, both by reproaches & afflictions; and partly while ye became companions unto them, which were so tossed to & fro. For both ye sorrowed with me, for my bonds, and suffered with joy the spoiling of your goods: and why? knowing in yourselfs that you have in heaven a better and more indurmg substance. If their riches had been of such value, as they made shew of, and as the world takes them for, they could not have been so quickly taken from them: but sith they had betaken them to their wings, these faithful ones knew, that heaven, which was reserved for them in steed thereof, was farre more excellent, and more durable, and therefore full glad were they, that for the cause of God, they had made so happy and so blessed an exchange.

Ver. 1. Blessed are those that are upright in the way, &c.

And v. 2, Blessed are those that seek him with their whole hart.

These words having been expounded before, offer unto us this Doctrine: That whosoever would have found happiness, must have a sound heart.

So much sincerity as there is, so much blessedness there will be, and according to the degree of our hypocrisie, will be the measure of our milery. It is not in the action done, or in the word spoken, that blessedness consists, but in the quality of them; that all be done and spoken soundly and sincerely, this is required Psalm 15. that hee that will be a member of the Church militant on earth, and of the Church triumphant in heaven, must walk uprightly, and speake the truth from his heart. And againe in another Psalm, a question is made to the same effect, Who shall dwell in the mountain of the Lord: and who shall stand in his holy place? and the answer is, He that hath innocent hands, & a pure heart, which hath not lift up his mind to vanity, nor sworne deceitfully. In which words we have a description of a sound hearted man:

1 By his actions, that he dealeth uprightly, and so hath innocent hands.

2 By his affection, that he lifteth not up his minde to vanity,

Psalm 15. 1-4.
that is, setteth not his heart on any earthly thing: In which sense that phrase is used in the original, Ier. 22. 27.

3 By his speeches, that he hath not sworne, nor any way spoken deceitfully.

The reasons to confirme this point, are drawne from the great inconveniences that will follow on the contrary; for if there be in any a fraudulent and deceitfull heart:

1 First, there is a deadly quarrell, and mortall enmity betwenee God and him: for who are they that are reconciled to the Lord, whose sins are covered by the righteousnesse of his sone, so that they shall not be imputed unto them? even they in whose spirit there is no guile. And what will follow then for thosse whose hearts are full of fraud and deceit, but that they must needs be destitute of all hope of the pardon of their sins, and so consequently lye open to the strokes of Gods vengeance due unto the same?

2 And as their persons are hatefull to the Lord, so are their services abhorred of him: for indeed they are not the services of God, but of Sathan, and of their own flesh: and therefore be they never so glorious in outward shew, and let them pretend never so much zeale in the performance of them, yet the Lord hath them in utter desestation. As we may plainly see in the Hypocritcall Pharisses, they would be every where praying with great devotio, & very often fastinge with great austerity, & blowing a trumpet to give notice unto men of their alme-deeds and liberality, and striving with all their might by external observations to win themselves the praise of holy & zealous men: yet for all this, our Saviour sharply rebuketh them, saying; Ye are they which justifie yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts, for that which is highly esteemed before men, is an abomination in the sight of God. It is as loathsome unto him, as Carions, or Toades, as any such creatures as mans nature doth most abhor, can be unto us.

Thirldly, this is another misery of hypocrites, that they live in continuall feare and danger: there are holes in their masks; (at least there will be) and their double dealing shall be scene danger. into: it shall some time or other come to light, how they have abused Gods presence, and dissembled with their brethren, by making
Luke 8, 13

John 10. 29.

John 4. 4.

1 Iob 5. 4.

Rom 8. 38 39.

The seventh Sermon

making faire sheues, and pretences of that which they never meant: their sins shall not alwaies lye hid, but either they will give over all, in time of persecution, as the stony ground did, or in hope of promotion, as Judas and Achitophel did, and so discover their false-heartednesse: or else it shal be drawn forth by their speeches, in their erriments, or in their distempers, or els Gods Spirit in Godly men shall descry it, by working in their hearts a vehement suspition of them and causing them with a judicious eye, more narrowly to try into their workes and wayes. By one such means or other, God will lay them open to the view of the world: so that being in such perill, they cannot but have a searefull heart, & a restlesse conscience. And to this purpose, notable is that saying of Salomon: Hee that walketh uprightly, walketh boldly or surely, but he that perverteth his wayes shall be known. Whence it is apperant, that the upright man needeth not to seare any thing: needeth not to be afraid of ill men, for though they may disgrace him, they cannot shame him: he needeth not to be afraid of good men, for the oftner he speaketh to them, and converseth with them, the more he is approved by them; neither needeth he to be afraid of God, for he that searcheth the heart & the reins, knoweth & alloweth of the integrity of his soule. He hath no cause of feare for the present, because all things goe well with him; neither is there any for afterwards, because all things shall goe well with him, for he shall never goe away from God: None can plucke him out of his hand, Satthan cannot, because he that is in us, is stronger than he that is in the world, mine cannot, because grace will prevale against it: the world cannot, because this is our victory, whereby wee overcome the world, even our faith. And the Apostle concludes, generally for all other matters, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

What followeth now on the contrary part for hypocrites; but he that perverteth his way, that is, alloweth himself in any ill course though never so secretly, shall be known? that is, his vile & wretched dissembling shall be detected, if not in this world, yet
yet when the thoughts of all hearts shall be made manifest: they shall be found out first or last, and therefore they cannot but walk fearfully in their ill courses, wherein they go forward and give liberty unto themselves.

This should make us exceeding careful and wary, when we offer ourselves to God's service, to search and dig deep into our hearts, that we may cast out all the loose earth that is there, and so our building may be on a rocke, and not on the sand. We must purge away that leaven of hypocrisy, that hath wholly infected our nature, that so we be not found to halt in our worshipping of God, lest he take us with the manner, as he did him that came without a wedding garment, whom he singled out from all the guests that were present, and that not only to ignominy and reproach, but to everlasting punishment and torment in hell fire. It is very dangerous then we see to deal hypocritically with God; it is not safe with men to pretend and say one thing before their faces, and to speak and do another behind their backs, because they may peradventure discern it: but it is more dangerous to dissemble with God, for he doth certainly discern it, and will certainly punish it.

Many when they are reproved, or admonished, will mutter at it, and say: What need you be so hot in the matter? I hope you cannot charge me to be either Whore or Thief. But though man cannot charge you (which all cannot say) is that a sufficient discharge for you? Nay you must looke unto it, that God finde not matter sufficient to convict you, either of those particulars, or of worse and viler offences.

And let none reply that it is sufficient, that wee frequent Sermons, and partake of the Sacrament, and come to prayer in publike, and use prayer in the family, and perform other duties that Christian men and women should doe, and no more is required at our hands.

Yes, God doth require more than this, he called for the Answer heart in all these: though a man be present at never so many Sermons, yet if his minde run after his pleasures, or after his covetousnesse, so that when his body travels one way, his affections travel another way, all his hearing is nothing worth.
And so in prayer, though there bee never so many excellent words, apt tearmes, and godly sentences, yet if they come from the head, and not from the heart, from wit and memory, and not from the inward feeling of the soule, they cannot be accepted. God professeth indeed that he will be found of those that seek him: but then they must seek him with their whole heart: that is, truly and fervently: they must not come with a part of their hart, for then they bring no part, in Gods account; but with all their heart, for hee that giveth him not all, giveth him nothing at all. So for the workes of our calling, if we doe not labour therein as Gods servants, wee can expect no wages, we may have commendation from men, but wee shall have a checke and rebuke from the Lord; mens tongues may magnifie us, but Gods hand will confound us.

Therefore let us, when we enter upon any good way, endeavour with an upright & true heart to go forward in the same, otherwise it had bee better never to have entred hereinto. Now that we may make sure worke in this regard, let us try our sinceritie by the good effects that doe ever accompany the same.

1 One note therefore of a sound heart (which wee should take for our triall) is to be univerfall in our desires, and in our practice, that we have respect to every commandement of God, to the first Table as well as to the second; and to the second as well as to the first: that we be righteous towards men, as well as religious towards God; that wee looke to our hearts as well as to our actions, and to our actions as well as to our hearts. Contrary to this rule is the dealing of those, that will give dispensations unto themselves for many things, so that they can make a shew of some things. What if wee bee not so strict for the Sabbath? (thinke they), yet we are no swearers nor blasphemers: what if we take a little liberty for vaine sports and idle discourses? there are but trifles; we will not be adulterers, nor filthy speakers, &c. This is a shrewd signe of a heart full fraught with guile and deceit: the property of a good conscience to be willing and desirous in all things to walk honestly. If one be never so strict for the Sabbath, if hee will helpe himselfe by a lyge now & then, for his commodity, or for
his credit fake: and if a man bee never so rigorous and severe for matters of justice, and yet will steal time from the Lord upon this day, and spend the same in his owne businesses, and affaires, whether secretly or openly: & so for any other thing, if wee make bold to borrow a little law of God; this is an argument of a false and dissembling heart; and therefore this must be taken heed of, as being very dangerous.

A second marke is to have a continual increase in godliness, neither to wax worse, nor to stand at a stay, but still to strive to grow better and better, as the Apostle Paul testifieth that he himselfe did: I forget that which is behind, & endeavour my selfe to that which is before: & follow hard toward the mark, to the price of the high calling of God in Christ Iesus. And having shewed what he did himselfe, he annexeth an exhortation also for us; Let us therefore, as many as are perfect (that is sincere, and void of grosse hypocrifie) be thus minded. Hee was not as a vaine foolish man, who running in a race will be ever & anon looking back how much ground he hath rid: but his eye was upon the mark, considering how much he had yet to runne, how farre off hee was from perfection: and the same minde should be in us, & will be in as many of us, as are indued with the same spirit that Paul was. We must every day labour to abound more & more in all wisdome, and in al goodness. If we prayed once a day in private, and that somewhat coldly at the first, we must afterward pray twice or thrice, or oftner in a day as occasion is offered, and that more fervently, and feelingly, than we did in the beginning. If we did reade and meditate more seldom: and with greater weakenesse & distraction at our first entrance into profession, in our proceeding we must use those exercises more frequently, and performe them more seriously and cheerfully: and the like may be said for all other duties. Thus if we can labour to doe, and when we slip, and so are stayed now and then in our race, yet if we recover our selves with speed, and set furer, and looke better to our steps, and make more haste in our way than we did before, wee must not be discouraged, though we finde not so good a progresse as were to be wished for: God will accept of our industry, and his spirit will beare us witnesse that we have a true heart.
heart, notwithstanding we come far short of that we should and other of God's Saints do attain unto. But on the contrary, if we stand at a stay, or start aside like a broken bow, and to turne backe againe unto folly, it is much to be suspected, that we had never any soundnesse in us.

3 A third token of sincerity is, constantly and carefully to use all the good meanes of attaining to goodnesse, and to chew all the inducements that may allure unto evill. Doth any one hate swearing? then let him shew it by avoiding the company of blasphemers. Doth any one loath impurity and filthinesse? then let him testifie it by separating himselfe from all wanton and lascivious company, and from all suspected persons and places. If one pretend that he hateth these and the like evils, and yet will adventure upon the bait, it is sure that such a one wanteth that truth of heart, which should bee in him, and is in all, so farre as they are found within.

So for the contrary, doth any one desire that grace and religion may flourish in his heart, and that the fruits thereof may appeare in his life? then let him use all private and publicke religious exercises, whereby these things may be wrought and increased in him; and delight in such company, as both by precept and example may further him therein. Doth any one wish that he could get victory over some speciall sinnes and corruptions that he is troubled withall? then let him enter into combat against them, as the Apostle did, Rom. 7. Let him humble himselfe by fasting and prayer, and complain and cry unto the Lord for the repressing of them, and get such forcible reasons against them out of the Scriptures, as may quell the strength & violence of them; and thus a sincere heart will do. But if we make shew that we desire to be godly & religious, and yet use not the meanes at all, or but some of them: or if we use them all, it is but by fits and starts : or if we use them constantly, yet we do it but remisly and coldly, we cannot have any assurance that our hearts are faithfull unto the Lord.

A fourth argument of sincerity is, to performe all duties as in God's presence, looking unto him, as the direcfer and discernor of our thoughts, words, and works, and thinking it sufficient if he approve of us, though men do dislike us; as the Apostle
Apostle Paul telleth the Corinthians, As touching me, I passe very little to be judged of you, or of man's judgment, &c. He that judgeth me is the Lord. And againe in the Epistle to the Thess. As we were allowed of God that the Gospel should be committed unto us, so we speake: not as they that please men, but God, which approveth our hearts. And therefore he prayeth in another place, that the Corinthians might do no ill, not that he might seem approved, and have the credit of their goodnesse, as being wrought chiefly by his ministry: but that they might do that which is honest, though he were disallowed, to wit, by men: for with God the righteous judge, he knew that he shoulde bee both approved and regarded. Thus he that is a servant, faithful and trusty in his place, serving the Lord Christ in conscience, and not men with eye-service, albeit he should be accounted the most idle and untrustie servant in all the family (being indeed the most diligent and painefull of all) he will still go on with his faithfullnesse, and not diminish any jot of his industry and laboriousnesse.

This job alledged this as a testimony of his integrity, that whereas he might have given free scope to his eye for wanton looks, and to his heart for sinfull affections, yet he faith of himselfe: I made a covenant with mine eyes, why then should I think on a maid? And why was he thus jealous of himselfe, and thus careful to guide his eye, and to govern his heart in a right manner? the reason is rendred, ver. 4. Dost not he behold my ways, and tell all my steps? This also is Joseph's commendation, that whereas he might have lived in impurity and filthinesse, not onely without blame and reproach, but even with the favour of his sinfull and unchaste mistress, yet the fear of the Lord restrained him from that monstrous and abominable sinne: How can I do this great wickednes (faith he) and so sinne against God? Yea though she spake to him from day to day, yet he refused, and would not so much as be in her company, lest any temptation should be offered unto him by that occasion: he would rather have her displeasure than Gods, and rather be imprisoned amongst malefactours for forbearing of evil, than to be vexed and tortured on the racke of an evil conscience for committing of evil. And this good disposition Gods serv-
vants do many times find in themselves, that when they have fallen into any secret sinne, and have entertained vaine and foolish thoughts, or corrupt and carnall affections, when they have over-shot themselves in their speeches, or in their carriage, and no man discerneth it, yet they take themselves with the manner; and knowing that Gods holy eyes are upon them, they judge and condemn themselves, and are thoroughly angry with themselves for that which they have done.

Yea sometimes, when men praise and extoll them, yet they blush within themselves, and have an holy indignation against their own soules, that they have dealt hypocritically, or vaine-gloriously, or lightly, or indiscreetly, or passionately. This is a very singular marke, and undoubted argument of great piety and sincerity. As on the contrary, it is a certaine note of grosse hypocrisy, ever to be caring what men thinke, and speake of us, and of our doings, and never to regard what God seeth amisse in the same.

The last note (though many other might be named) shall be this, patiently to endure an admonition and reproofs, & to be desirous of the same, to the intent we may profit thereby: in publike, to the best, and desire most those Sermons, wherein our owne corruptions are most throughly met withall, and struck at with greatest sharpnes, & vehemency: and in private, to be most glad of the society of those friends, that will in wisdome and mercy, tell us most often, and most plainly of our faults.

Hypocrites cannot abide that any should rubbe upon their galled backs as it were; or come neere them to touch their gouty, festred, & corrupted consciences, but they will wince and kicke, and lay about them, and cry out on those that are such judgers, and such busy-bodies (as they tearme them) and to reject all wholesome reproofs, & carry a bitter heart against the reprovers. Onely those that are sound-hearted, can submit themselves, in the lowlineffe of their minds, and meeknesse of their spirits, to beare admonition, when they need it (be he a superiour or an inferiour that administreth the same) and labour to make a right use hereof, & to love the party the better that will deale so mercifully and faithfully with their soules.

Indeed Gods best children may sometimes faile herein, and begin.
begin to bustle and take on, when they are somewhat sharply dealt withal, and cannot so readily and cheerfully swallow and digest those bitter pills, as they should: but if they be grieved in their souls, that they find so much pride in themselves, and though they be a little distempered in company, yet when they are alone, they are ashamed of their folly, and desire more wisdom and grace to reap benefit by the admonitions that shall afterwards be given them, and begin to think more reverently of the parties that shewed them that mercy & kindnesse: they should not be dismaied, knowing that they are true Israelites, in whom there is no guile, notwithstanding that unwillingnesse and untowardnesse to undergo a rebuke, that they finde in themselves, and their corrupt nature.

Secondly, this is for the great comfort of all such as finde these notes of uprightness in themselves, though they have many corruptions and imperfections mixed with their best works, yet seeing they have pure hearts, they are happy and blessed, and shall finde the good effects of their blessednesse. True holinesse, and true happinesse are never separated. As for perfection, God looks not for it at our hands. If sinne hang on us, but we would faine cast it off, if we finde unbeleeve, we would most gladly get faith: if we be troubled in our hearts with hardnesse, but are desirous of softnesse, if we be humbled for that we cannot be humbled sufficiently, nor get such a large heart as we would desire and expect grace from heaven, let us not be discomforted for our defects and frailties: for the Lord will spare us, and be gracious unto us in his beloved Son: according to that worthy prayer of good King Hezekiah, The good Lord be merciful toward him that prepareth his whole heart to seek the Lord God of his Fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary.

Though many have beene brawlers heretofore, let them labour to be peaceable: though they have beene worldly, let them strive to be heavenly: though they have beene filthy, let them endeavour to get chastity: though they have been ignorant and prophane, let them study to obtaine knowledge and holinesse: and then they may come to the Lords Table, and welcome: the Lord will have respect unto them, and grant them
The seventh Sermon

them pardon for their sinnes, and supply all their wants, and give them more grace to do their duty, in the remainder of their life, and in the dayes of their pilgrimage that are yet behinde.

Surely they worke none iniquity. That is, they make not a trade, and common practice thereof. Slip they do, through the infirmity of the flesh, and subtiltie of Satan, and the allurements of the world: but they do not ordinarily and customably go forward in unlawfull and sinfull courses. In that the Psalmist setteth downe this as a part (and not the least part neither) of blessednesse, That they worke none iniquity which walke in his wayes, the doctrine to be learned hence is this, That it is a marvellous great prerogative to be freed from the bondage of sinne.

Doct. 3.
A prerogative to be freed from sinne.

So soone as any man is truly religious, he is presently in state of happinesse.

They are blessed in the way, and before they come unto the wayes end, whilsts they walke, and are not put off till they attaine to their perfect rest, whilst they seeke God, and not then onely, when they have found the fulness of his gracious and glorious presence. That indefinite manner of saying (that the man is blest which walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, but delighteth in the Law of the Lord; and blessed is the man that feareth the Lord) importeth so much: but especially by that testimony, the truth of the point is evidently evinced, which pronounceth every one blessed who feareth the Lord, and walketh in his wayes: forasmuch as many of them are of no long standing in the exercise of piety and religion, and many in the semblance & shew to the world (which conceiveth of things according to deluded sense, and the abuse of reason) are in a miserable case, and wretched condition.

For reason hereof consider: first, that the Lord owneth his children as soone as he hath begotten them: they are his people, when they are sanctified and made partakers of his grace, and that is an undeniable verity: Blessed are the people which be lo, yea, Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord: for himselfe with all his attributes is become theirs.

Secondly, that their sinnes are remitted, and they justified by
by the merits and sufferings of Christ, both from guiltinesse, and punishment, the unspeakable comfort whereof they best apprehend that have beene in Davids case, presse with the heavy weight of a guilty conscience, and the testification of Gods displeasure for the same. When a man shall be accused by the voype of God, when he shall be convicted by the testimony of his owne heart; when he shall be condemned by the sentence of justice; when he shall see the certainty and grievousnesse and nearnesse of the execution, being ready bound for it, by the curses of the Law, now to have a pardon, now to be set at liberty, now to be discharged of the crime, and freed from the penalty, peril, and reproach, who can pierce to the top, or sound to the bottome of this heavenly consolation? Thirdly, that their substance and possessions are forthwith upon their found and faithfull imbracing of Gods holy Gospel, after an admirable manner and measure enlarged. All things are yours, faith the Apostle to such persons, Whether it be Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, you have a right in, and benefit by every Minister whom you shall heare; or the world, the earthly commodities so farre as they are profitable for you, and will do you good; or life, so long as God will have your dayes continued, you have a good estate in your breath, and the cohabitation of soule and body, and enjoy the same as a freehold; or death, your departure out of this world will be gainfull unto you, and much for your advantage: Or things present, or things to come: prosperity present, or to come, or adversity and crosses present, or to come, yea eternall blisse to come, whatsoever you shall heare or see, or have the fruition of at the day of the Lord, or in heaven, all are yours, and you are Christs, & Christ Gods.

This point well serveth for the confutation of some, for the comfort of others, and the instruction of all.

In the first place, they are confuted who are growne so miserably erronious, that they imagine men so soone as they soundly imbrace reli gi o, forthwith to become miserable, who make a mocke of the counsell of the poore, because the Lord is his trufl. Psal. 14. 6. Now, say they, is his rising at the highest, let him looke for no higher promotions: now is his wealth
weal the at the greatest, you shall shortly see him fall into beggary, now are all his delights past, and come to an end: he will live the rest of his dayes in lumpishneffe, and melancholy: now the love that hath beene borne unto him, will quickly grow cold, his friends will soone leave him, and turne to foes: And why (I pray you) must there needs be such a change? Is the favour of God so hurtfull? are his promises so full of perils? are his graces so pernicious? Who raiseth up, and exalteth men to preferment? doth not the Lord? who bestoweth riches, and disposeth of all the commodities of the world? doth not the Lord? who filleth mens hearts with joy and gladnesse, especially with true joy and spirituall consolation? doth not the Lord? And who carryeth mens hearts in his hand, to make them hate, or love, to maligne, or to be beloved? doth not the Lord? And shall we thinke then, that he which hath all honours in his power, will throw downe his owne children into base ignominy and contempt? And that he which is the Lord and owner of all things, will suffer his best servants to enjoy nothing? And that he which is the God of comfort will oppresse his people with vexation and sorrow? And that he which by grace worketh love in his owne, and by providence commandeth kindnesse in the hearts of his enemies, will endure no man to beare good affection to his favourites, and dearlings?

In the next place they are confuted, that think they may be happy, but it is uncertaine, whether they shall be so, because according to their opinion, men may have grace, & lose grace, they may be the sonsnes of light to day, and the children of darkness to morrow: For he that is once truly blessed (as every one is which is truly godly) shall perpetually be blessed, and cannot possibly be unblesseagaine.

Let no man thinke that time hath worne away, or dried up the vertue of Gods holy Word, which in the Apostles time was wont to be an immortall seed, that now we should have a mortall regeneration by it. Or that Saint John spake onely touching the perseverence of those regenerate that lived in those dayes, when he said, Whosoever is borne of God sinneth not, for his seed remaineth in him, neither can he sinne; that is,
is, fall into the power of sinne, and returne to the dominion of it, because he is borne of God.

In the third place they are confuted which grant that in time the godly men shall attaine to certaine happinesse, but in another world, and after a long time, as that the worth and value of it, is thereby much impaireth, as if it were a purchase of lands to be possed after some lives, or many yeares to come. But if this be so, why doth the Apostles speake of the present, and one say, We know that we are translated from death to life? And another say, We all behold, as in a mirrour, the glory of the Lord with open face, and are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord? And why doth Christ himselfe say, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth in him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but hath passed from death unto life? And why is that solemn song of praise sung unto Christ, by the foure living creatures, and the foure and twenty Elders, saying, Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us to our God Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on the earth?

These absurdities being thus refuted, let us make use for comfort to enrich as are upright in their wayes, and walke in the commandments of God, every estate and condition which they are brought unto, tendeth to their felicitie and well-fare. Are they in high places & advanced above many others? The Lord in goodnes hath exalted their horne, and raised them to that dignitie and honour. Are they in low place, and many others above them? They are Princes walking on the ground, and farre more honourable than servants on horses. Are they rich and wealthy, having store of goods and substance in their houses, barnes, fields, shops, or ware-houses? The blessing of the Lord, hath made them rich, and it is he that replenished them with good things, the light of his countenance shineth on their habitation.

Are they poore, and scantied of that plenty which others abound withall, and so driven to fare hard, and be courte, cladde, and meaneely harboured, neither have great portions to leave to theirs? Herein they are not unlike to Christ, their head.
head, nor to many of his principal members, both Prophets and Apostles, who being poor, yet made many rich, and as having nothing, possessed all things. Are they healthy, strong, and likely long to live? They shall performe the more service to God, and receive the greater reward: they shall be the more useful to the people of God, whose prayers and thanks to the Lord in their behalf will countervail all their services; they shall reape the fruit of a long life, by seeing of good, and beholding the favours of God upon themselves, and the rest of his servants. Are they sickly, weak, and shortly to depart out of the world? They shall perform the more service to God, and receive the greater reward: they shall be the more useful still to the people of God, whose prayers and thanks to the Lord in their behalf will countervail all their services; they shall reap the fruit of a long life, by seeing of good, and beholding the favours of God upon themselves, and the rest of his servants.

The instruction which we are to receive hence is, the same which we have taught in the former point, that no paines be neglected which may further us to this felicity, or any difficulties unsifted, which may hinder us from the same. For good markets and commodious traffick, men rise early, and ride farre, blacke mornings, and deepe wayes seldom keep them at home, after they have resolved their journeys; gaine turneth rain into faire weather, cold into Sunne-shine, uneven ground into plaine, and myre into gravel; and shall every foots breadth in spiritual travelling be counted a mile long, and every threat or hard word against us, a thunder-clappe; and every small molestation, for well-doing; an high mountain in our way that we cannot climbe over, or an impassable Fenne, that we cannot wade thorow? I beseech you let not earthly transitory things bee more industriously sought for of worldlings, than durable substance of Christians. An earnest and true desire is mighty in force, to worke diligence and the apprehension of happinesse, is as forcible to kindle that desire. Would Joseph have pleaded that his shifting of apparell might have annoyed him, rather than he would have gone to Pharaoh out of the bondage of prison, for honour and promotion? Or did Jacob thinke it a tedious voyage to come downe unto him into Egypt? The case is cleare then, and apparant, that no labours bestowed, or troubles sustained
are able to counterpoise piety and godliness, and therefore also let us beware lest on the other side, profits, and pleasures, advancements steal not away our hearts from it, and diminish our joys and delights in it. They all in comparison of it, are but as stubble, chaff, dung, and Sathan will be ready to game with us, and take down these trifles, farre bafer than pinnes, or cherry stomes, that playing with him, wee may lose our patrimony, our livings, our lives, our soules, and salvation. For the satisfying of our earthly desires, so often as we are carried thereunto, we hazard our comfort, and safety, and deprive ourselves of innumerable blessings and benefits.

If there were no other reward but this, yet it were a happy thing to be religious, even in this respect, that we shall be set at liberty from such a service. This point is evident from the Apostles words, where he speaketh thus: God be thanked, that you have been the sdervants of sinne, but ye have obeyed from the heart unto the forms of doctrine, whereunto you were delivered. Where we see, that this was not the least priviledge that they had by being Gods servants, but indeed a matter for which he was greatly to be magnifed; that whereas they had beene the slaves of sin, and (as bale drudges) at the command of every vile and wretched lust; by the vertue of the Word powerfully preached unto them, and faithfully received of them, they had beene delivered from that bondage, and made the servants of God in righteousnesse, and holinesse of life & conversation. And therefore in that same Chapter, verse 14. it is promised unto Gods Children, as a speciall favour, That sinne shall not have dominion over the. It may sometimes tyrannously usurpe authority in them; but the strength of grace, and the operation of the holy Spirit of God, will still diminish, and at last abolish the force and violence thereof: so that it shall never bear such sway over them, as in the time of ther unregeneration it did.

The truth of this doctrine will yet more clearly shine forth, if we consider what the master the service, & the reward of finfull persons are. As for their master, it is Sathan: For he is the God of this world, & the Prince that ruleth in the childre of disobedience: of whom all unbelievers are held in captivity, and
The seventh Sermon

still employed according to his will and pleasure. Now he is a more cruel and savage tyrant, than ever Pharaoh was: though he were very fierce against the Israelites, & exercised great tyranny over them, yet Satan putth his vassails to carry heavier burdens, and do tole out themselves in baser work, than ever the taskmasters of Egypt imposed on the poor Israelites. For all impenitent sinners are thrall'd to every brutish lust: they must defile their bodies, and corrupt their soules, and consciences, and pollute all their works and waies, when, and in what manner soever the devil will have them; they must converse with every lewd and sinful companion, they must runne up and downe like drudges to follow every vaine and base delight, to pursue every meane and trifling commoditie, and to hunt after every promotion and dignitie that offers itself unto their view.

They cannot live peaceably in the day, nor rest quietly in the night: as we may see in gamesters, who break their sleepe, mispend their time & strength, deprive themselves of a comfortable estate, and bring many miferies upon themselves and their families, by their over-eager pursuit of their uugodly and unthrifty courses. It is a wofull and lamentable case that franticke persons are in, that must have every one in the family to attend upon, and to have an eye unto them, lest they should hang themselves, or drowne themselves, or get a knife to cut their throats, or some way or other worke themselves mischief: but farre worse is their case, that are possessed with a spiritualle frenzy, and led by the suggestions of Satan, who are evermore labouring to worke out their own overthrow, and to bring upon themselves destruction of body and soule, which is the reward that Satan giveth the, for all their pains that they have taken in serving him, and in fulfilling the lusts of their owne wicked flesh: according to the saying of the Apostle, The wages of sinne is death: that is, everlasting death: which is an utter separation from Gods blessed presence, and from all manner of comforts whatsoever, to indure unspeakable and endless torments in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Reason 2: Another reason, why it is a great priviledge to be exempted from
from the dominion of sin, is, because it is a testimony that
we are the sons of God, as it is said by the Apostle John, He 
that committeth sin is of the Devil, and whosoever is born of
God, sinne not. And why? because the efficacie of the word
and spirit doth restrain him there-from.

A third reason is because that is it whereby we are made
conformable unto Christ Jesus; when we are freed from the
slavery of sin, we are still translated from glory to glory, and
have the Image of God renewed in us daily more and more,
purging our selves even as Christ is pure, I J oh. 3.3.

This serveth for our instruction, that seeing it is such a pre-
heminence not to be a worker of iniquity, therefore we should
hereby fence & arme our selves against all inticements, ther-
by we might be allured to sinne, either in heart or in behavi-
our, when pleasure smileth upon us, or filthy lucre setteth on
our hearts, or preferment calleth for us, &c. Let this be as a
buckler whereby to repel all the fiery darts of the devil; It is
a blessed thing to worke none iniquity, & what should it profite a
man to win the whole world, and to lose his owne soul? Moses
chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to en-
joy the pleasures of sin, & the preferments of Egypt for a season.

It was a foolish and mad part of the Israelites to desire to re-
turne into Egypt, the house of their bondage, that they might
eate of their flesh-pots, and of the Leekes and Onions, that in
time past they had there enjoyed: but much more void of sense
and reason are they, that when they have been once delivered
from that spiritual servitude, will cast themselves into thrall-
dome againe: and when they have bin puld out of the snares
of the Devil, wherein they were held at his pleasure, will re-
turne again to folly, and intangle themselves the second time.
Wherefore let this put strength into us in all conflicts, that we
may stand resolutely, as against other assaults, so against that
of the examples of great and mighty men, who usually take
their liberty in all voluptuous and licentious kinde of living.
This consideration (I say) should arme us against it, The Lord
hath pronounced them blessed that work none iniquity: & if I be
of the number of them, I shall be more happy in renouncing
sinne, than the greatest Potentate on the earth is, or can be, in
commit-
committing offinnes. And therefore let us deale as Eliphaz did in the booke of Job, I have seen the foolish well rooted,(faith he) and suddenly I cursed his habitation: not by way of imprecation, but of denunciation of Gods judgements due unto them for their evil works, shewing that they took such courses as did make them and theirs accursèd, and bring the vengeance of God upon them: the meditation whereof was a strong bulwarke to fence him against all temptations unto the like sinfull and vile practises.

2 This maketh for the terror of all such as doe drinke in sinne with greedinesse, and give allowance to themselves in blaspheming, in Sabbath-breaking, in wantonnesse, in lying, in slandering, and scoffing, and such other soule vices. If they be blessed that doe not worke iniquity, then cursed are they that make a common practice thereof.

But I hope (will some say) a man's heart may be good, though he over-shoot himselfe by rapping out an oath now and then, and by speaking foolishly and lightly, &c. you must not judge (say they) God knoweth our hearts.

He doth so indeed, and he hath made knowne unto us by his word, that an ill tongue & an ill life doe alwaies argue an ill heart. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh: And a good tree cannot bring forth such rotten fruit, nor a pure fountaine send forth such muddy and filthy streames, as doe evermore issue forth at their profane mouthes: and are derived from their impure consciences unto all, or to the most part of their actions.

Thou haft commanded to keepe thy precepts diligently.

The Doctrine that these words afford, is this, that nothing is superfluous that is done in obedience to Gods holy will.

The word translated diligently, doth signifie in the original tongue (wonderfull much) so that the words go thus: Thou haft commanded to keepe thy precepts wonderfull much. And this the Apostle urgeth the Corinthians unto: Having such promises beloved, let us purge ourselves from all filthines of the flesh, & of the spirit: that is, from all manner of corruption, as well inward as outward. And that was the drift of Jesus Christ in giving the true interpretation of the Law, which the Pharises had corrupted.
corrupted by their false expositions; I say this was the drift, to
draw men from resting on the outward observation thereof,
and to bring them to have regard unto their thoughts, and to
the affections of their hearts: and moreover in their practice
to do those things which heathen men and hypocrites could
not attain unto: and therefore he often urgeth this sentence,
to shew the slenderness and insufficiency of their obedience:


What singular thing doe ye? Implying that Christians must in
many things be singular, and differ from, and goe beyond the
common sort of men.

If one could doe as much good, as an hundred, yet he could
not doe the hundredth part of that which a Christian ought
to performe. Let him say still (for it is a truth) I am an un-
profitable servant: I have done no more than my duty, nor so
much as my duty. As Christ came to fulfill all that his Fathers
Law required, so it behoveth us to observe every thing that
we are commanded, though not in perfection, which we
cannot attain unto: yet in uprightness, and with our best
endeavours. When the Israelites told Moses, that if he would
goe neere, and heare what the Lord said, and declare it unto
them, they would heare and doe all that the Lord should say:
the Lord him selfe testified the equity of their words, That they
had well spoken, all that they spake, & wished that there were such
an heart in them, to fear him, & to keep all his commandements
alwayes: that it might goe well with them, and with their children
after them. Whereby we are informed what is acceptable unto
God, and profitable for our selves: namely, entire obedience,
and to the same purpose tendeth that serious instigation
of Paul to the Corinthians, Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye
drist, unmoveable, abundant alwayes in the worke of the
Lord: for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vaine in
the Lord.

First, no vaine thing is commanded, but every precept that he giveth is holy, and every duty prescribed to us is
needful to be performed, he requireth nothing but that which
is good, and just: and who can charge us to doe more than
enough, whiles wee deal onely in that which is just and
good?
Secondly, the Lord desireth to be served with all due care and faithfulnesse. Can any man say, I am before hand with him, and I have done more for his sake than he hath for mine? do we not receive from him breath, and being and life, and living, and preservation, and salvation itself, and all things else?

Thirdly, our labour is not lost, nor travaile mispent in yielding obedience to him: for he will reward it at the full, and above all desert; No man worketh for him without wages: not a godly action, not a godly word, not a godly purpose, not a godly motion of heart shall passe without pay and compensation.

Fourthly, every default and omission of well-doing, at every time deserveth damnation: and either shall be requited with the death of the sinner, or hath been already requited with the torments of Christ which serveth.

For confutation of the Papists, that little regarding the commandements of God, expect great matters for their devotion, and their outward inventions and observations: but who hath required those things at their hands? the Lord commandeth them to keepe his precepts, otherwise they can expect no recompence from him, but that may be said of all their invented worship, which was spoken of, they that were to full of externall ceremonies (as touch not, taste not, handle not) in the Apostles time concerning all which he faith: That they perish with the using, seeing they are after the commandements and doctrines of man: So soone as the worke is done, the reward is gone.

Besides, here may be confuted all their works of supererogation. If God commands us to observe his law in perfection, then what can there be left for them to performe beyond that which he commandeth? Doth Christ bid us say, that when we have done all that we can, we are unprofitable servants, and have performed no more than our duties? and will they be so audacious as to bragge of an overplus of well-doing? Is it possible for obedience to exceed the commandement? or for ought to be any thing worth that is not done in obedience? But to let them passe.

This
This is for our instruction: hath God enjoyned us to observe his precepts so exceeding carefully and diligently? then let nothing draw us there-from, no not in the least circumstance: let us esteeme nothing needless, frivolous, or superfluous, that we have a warrant for out of his word; nor count those too wise or precise that will stand resolutely upon the same: if the Lord require any thing, though the world should gainsay it, and we be derided and abused for the doing of it, yet let us proceed still in the course of our obedience.

Sithence our Master doth require it as due, and it becometh us to yeeld it as a duty, and our hire is so great for the performance of the same, which will also be inlarged as our integrity shall be increased; the greater our faithfulnesse shall be found, the more praise we shall obtaine, accompanied proportionably with all other good blessings, & let this be a motive further to incite us to fuch diligence, that the Lord is much displeased with remissenesse and negligence: slothfull persons are every where reprehended in the Scriptures, even for being idle in humane affaires, and matters that concerne mens present estate: much more then doe they deserve to bee sharply reproved, and also corrected for their carelesnesse in those holy workes, where-about God setteth them: hee that doth not as much as he may in the services of God may looke to have more strokes from his hand, and rebukes from his mouth, than will be for his comfort.
THE EIGHTH SERMON.

John 6. 26, 27.

Jesus answered them, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye eate of the loaves, and were filled.

Labour not for the meate that perisheth, but for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life, which the Sonne of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

He fleshly followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, having bin miraculously relieved at his hand with corporall food once, expect as much again: & not finding him in one place, where it was likely he would have bin, they seek him in another, where without a miracle he could not be: for the sea was between the, & Ship they knew there was none left to transport him, wherby they took occasion to demand of him when he came thither, insinuating that they conjectured how he came thither, even by walking upon the waters. To these our Saviour directeth the words of this Text, & others that follow: not answering to that question how he came, because it savoured of adulation, & was somewhat frivolous; but discovering their purpose, why they came, and that was hypocritical & carnall. Now for the sense of the words, where he layeth to their charge, that they sought him not, because they saw the miracle: it is to be understood, that they apprehended not his divine nature, nor sought to know him as God and their Redeemer, by virtue of the miracle, but onely hoped that he would work another to feed their bodies againe, and make them to fare well often. And having reprooved them, he proceedeth to instruct them, prescribing a more wise and profitable
of the Lords Supper.

profitable course for themselves and their souls: and that is, to preferre things that are everlasting, before those that are perishable and momentary. Not that he precisely forbiddeth to labour for food, and other maintenance, but to labour covetously with too greedy a desire; to labour immoderately, and with too great travel: to labour principally for that which is earthly, and more remisly for that which is heavenly; this is that which he here forbiddeth. By meat, figuratively so called, which endureth unto everlasting life, he meaneth the gifts and graces of God's holy Spirit, whereby the souls of his people receive strength and comfort constantly: even until the fruition of that bliss and immortality, whereunto they shall attain for evermore hereafter.

Now for their better assurance, that they might certainly know that they should not lose their labour in seeking for this durable food, this bread of life, himselfe undertaketh to bestow it upon them: and that by the appointment of God his Father, who hath sealed him to this office, as Princes, and great men do authentically confirm the authority of those whom they imploie in weighty affairs, by their seales and letters Patents.

This answer therefore of Christ, consisteth of two parts:

A \ Reprehension.

Exhortation.

In the reprehension he declareth:

1 What they neglected: they made not a profitable use of the miracle which they saw.

2 Wherein they transgressed; they had a sinister respect in seeking of him: it was for their bellies sake, and not for conscience sake.

In the exhortation, he perswadeth them most to affect the spirituall meat, by two arguments:

1 In regard of the goodness and lastingness of it; It endureth unto everlasting life.

2. In regard of the Author of it; Christ giving it:

The words which they spake to Christ were reverent, they called him Rabbi, and took knowledge in some sort of his strange manner of passing over the Sea: and had before in
verse 14. testified that of a truth, *Hee was the Prophet that should come into the world.* And not so onely, but as it appeareth in ver. 15. *They minded to take him, and make him a King:* yet the first answer that he giveth unto them is a rebuke: whereby we learne that

By faire speeches to us, or courteous usage of us, we ought not to be stayed from telling men of their faults, when by our calling we are required to admonish them.

It besemeth not a good man, to suffer his heart to be as it were bribed with kindnes, that his mouth should be stopped, when God and fit opportunitie calleth upon him to open it. Though Belshazzar would needs have Daniel clothed with purple, and a chaine of gold put about his necke, with promisfe of great preferment, yet Daniel spared not to tell Belshazzar that he had lift up himself against the Lord of heaven, and profaned his holy vessels, and praised idols, and not glorified the God in whose hand was his breath, and all his ways.

The example also of Elisba will prove this unto us; when Jehoram the king of Israel made suit unto him for the obtaining of water for himselfe, & two kings more, together with all their Host, tellling him that they were undone, and should fall into the hand of their enemies if he did not helpe at this pinch, & in this great strait; notwithstanding this submissfe and humble manner of entreaty, he spareth him not, being a wretched Idolater, but answereth him roundly and sharply, *What have I to do with thee (faith he) get thee to the Prophets of thy fathers,* &c. As the Lord liveth, in whose sight I stand, if it were not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat King of Judah, I would not have looked towards thee, nor seene thee. Mark how lightly he setteth by this wicked king: telling him that hee would not give him so much as a good looke, much lesse be an instrument of relieving him & his Army, were it not for good Jehoshaphats sake, whose heart was uprighit with God, though he were faulty in joyning with those Idolaters. And agaime, when Hazael came unto him, with a present of every good thing of Damascus, as much as forty camels could carry, and used him with all reverent respect, calling him, *My Lord,* &c. yet he dealt plainly with him, and with teares told him what
a tyrant he should be, and what havoc he should make amongst the people of God. So Christ Jesus, an undoubted pattern for our imitation, when he came to Martha, a good woman, and very loving and kind unto him: yet being more careful to make provision for her body, than to get provision for her own soul, & finding fault with her sister Mary, that was better employed than herself, Christ's mouth was not stopped with her meat, for he reproved her, and commended her sister, saying, Martha, Martha, thou carest and art troubled about many things, but one thing is needful: Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Now the reason of this doctrine is, First, in respect of them, because otherwise we should deal unfaithfully with such as deal kindly with us, and when they shew their love unto us, we should shew our hatred towards them: if we do not help them when we have a calling, and some likelihood of doing them good, it were as great an injury, as if when a Patient speaketh friendly to his Physician, and telleth him that he will content him at full for all his care and pains that he shall take, he thereupon should grow more remiss, and careless, and give him ranke poyson, instead of wholesome receipts, and curing medicines.

2. In respect of our selves, if we be slack in admonishing our friends of things amiss in them, because they speak lovingly, and carry themselves in a friendly manner towards us, we shall thereby provoke God's displeasure against us: and so their faire words and cheerfull looks, shall make God looke angrily upon us, and speake sharply unto us, and we by our silence, or by our flattery, shall make their sinne to become our owne, and so both we and they shall be punished together.

This maketh for the just reprooofe of those that frame all their praises and dispraises, according as they themselves are dealt withal: if they be well spoken of and well used, they will be altogether for the parties that do so befriend them, and they shall be sure of their good word: but if others be preferred and they neglected, especially if upon their just desert they be roundly taxed and reproved, then the case is altered, and the streame of their commendation turned another way, and
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instead of their former speeches of approbation, you shall hear from them bitter invectives, and tearmes of reproach, much unbeseeming the mouth of a civil man; much more of a Christian. Of this sort were those false and deceitful Prophets, which were likened to dogs: let men cast a bone unto them, as it were, and fill their mouthes with somewhat now and then, and they will sawne upon them, and tell them their case is good, they shall be sure of peace and prosperity. God is well pleased, and all things shall go well with them, albeit in the meantime, they be the most vile and wretched men in the world. But as for those that will not feed their covetous humor, though they were the best men that lived upon the earth, they shall taste of their doggishe behaviour: they shall be snarled at, if not bitten: if they put not into their mouthes (faith the Prophet) they prepare war against them, they furnish themselves with a number of bitter and biting reprooves, with a multitude of heavy and grievous threatnings to powre out against them in full measure. But these are farre from our Saviours spirit, who would frame his speeches to the good of all without exception: not sparing those that were kinde unto him, nor laying loade on men for with-holding kindnes from him, speaking not pleasing but profitable things unto all sorts. Thus true and fervent love unto God and men, made him to deale, and selfe-love and selfe-respect, maketh false-hearted hypocrites to take a quite contrary course.

Here is a matter of instruction for us, to imitate our Saviour in this point, and of a great comfort unto such as (in a zeale of Gods glory and compassion over the soules of men, and in conscience of discharging their owne duty) seeke to recom pense natural kindnes with spiritual kindnes: and when men shew their love unto them in a civill manner, do endeavor to requite it in a Christian manner, as well as in the like kind: and do not suffer the faire speeches or good turnes of any, so farre to daze their eyes that they cannot see, or to tie their tongues that they cannot speake against those things that are amisse in them; but deale faithfully with their souls in that behalfe; howsoever they may sometimes beare the imputation of inhumanity and indiscretion, yet if they deale wisely & mercifully, as our Savi-
our did, though not in the like perfection, they may take comfort therein. For howsoever ignorant and carnal mens tongues be against them, the testimony of God, and of their consciences will be for them, and beare them out against all calumniations and reviling speeches, that are invented to defame and disgrace them: and this shall be found true, when all men shall be proved liars, that he that reproveth (when he hath just cause and calling thereunto) shall finde more favour at length than he that flattereth. And thus much for the generall doctrine. Now let us consider the words more particularly.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me not, &c.

In that Christ Iesus taketh notice of the disposition and inclination of their hearts that do now follow him, and intend the filling of their bellies, though they pretended to seeke after the satisfying of their soules; the doctrine hence to be collected, is this: that our Lord Iesus Christ is acquainted with the purposes of such as come to his services, and to the meanes of their salvation.

He observeth what is the principall end that they ayme at, as we may see in this place: they affoord Christ very good words, and are ready to acknowledge the miracle that he had wrought, and yet he doth not onely see; but narrowly looke into that fleshly respect that they had in comming unto him, and tels them plainly of their hypocristie, and that with a protestation, Verily, verily, &c. q.d. I say it for a truth, disprove me if you can, and I avouch it againe, because it is a matter of weight, that you come to feed your bodies under pretence of feeding your soules. And as he did descend into their hearts, and finde out their fraud and guile, so doth he continually behold all the windings and turnings that are in the hearts of the tonnes of men. This may appeare in the Gospell of John, where it is said, that many beleived in his name when they saw the miracles that he did: they were moved in a sudden passion upon the sight of such great wonders, to thinke that he was the Christ: but (it is added) Iesus did not commit himselfe unto them, he would not trufty the (notwithstanding the faire shew they made) because he knew them all, and had no need that they should testimonie of man: for he knew what was in man; he percei-

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First, that he publiseth them to others, is apparent in Ezekiel, where the Lord telleth the Prophet, that howsoever the Elders of Israel came unto him, and sate before him, yet they had set up idols in their hearts: and howsoever they would have men to beleive that they were the holy servants of God, that they loved the word of God, and came to heare what he would teach them: yet the Lord declareth unto Ezekiel, that their hearts were not withdrawne from idolatry and superstition, and therefore that he should thinke never the better of them for their outward semblance of Religion.

Secondly, as he publiseth mens thoughts to others, so he reproveth them for the same himselfe:as the Evangelist testifieth, Wherefore thinke ye evil thoughts in your hearts? Where it is plaine, that therefore he rebuked them, because he discerneth the corruptnesse of their thoughts, in judging hardly of him, because he had said to the man sicke of the palsey, Thy sins are forgiven thee. And indeed what equity were it that Christ should blame men for their cogitations, unless he were the searcher of the heart? It is indiscretion, and an injurious part for a man to finde fault, unless he can directly prove that which he layeth to another mans charge: and how much unbeseeming the infinite wisdom and righteousnesse of Christ must we needs thinke it then to deal with any in that sort? Nay, he forbiddeth us to judge rashly, and commandeth us to judge righteous judgement, and therefore he will, much, more obserue that rule himselfe.

Thirdly, he doth correct and punish men for their perverse and naughtie imaginations and affections, and therefore he must needs be a dicerner of the same: for otherwise how should he proceed according to every mans desert? And that
he doth inflict punishment on men for thoughts, the Prophet Isaiah sheweth when God chargeth the people, that though their bodies were near unto him, yet their hearts were removed farre from him: and therefore he threateneth that he will do a marvelous work with them, to wit, that the wisdom of the wise should perish, &c. that he would infatuate them, and give them up to blindness of minde, and to senslesnesse of heart, as afterwards it fell out in their children the Scribes and Pharisees, to whom all things that Christ Iesus spake, seemed Parables, so that they knew not the mysteries of the kingdome of heaven, but had eyes and saw not, ears and heard not, hearts and minds, and understood not the things that were taught them. And as God doth lay judgements upon the soules of men, which are the most grievous, so doth he also on their bodies, even for their defects & wants, as we see in the Corinthians, amongst whom many were sicke, many weake, and many smitten with the stroke of death, because they came negligently and unpreparedly unto the Lords Table: and so doth his heavy hand lye upon many now-adays, being strucke with the pestilence, and such like plagues of God, for coming prophane, irreligiously, and hypocritically to the Word and Sacrament: not in outward appearance for ought that we can see, but before the Lords eyes who searcheth the heart and reines, and layeth his corrections, according to the measure of mens inward, prophane, and lewd disposition. Now this he would not do, unless he could prove them guilty: but indeed he is able to indite them, and to produce witnesses against them, that these and these have beene their secret sinnes, such and such vile thoughts they had at such a Sermon, at such a Sacrament, and their hearts were wandring about their pleasures and profits: they were full of malicious & revengefull imaginations & intents, nothing regarding Gods presence, nothing affecting nor reverencing his ordinances: & these things he can make their own consciences to testify against them, & therefore doth justly plague them for the fame. And as in this life, so at that great assizes at the last day, the Lord will lighten things that be hid in darkness, and make the counsell of mans heart manifest: & bring every secret thing to judgement, whether good or evil, that all
Sinceritie, and phet that God's Sincerity in God's services.

If then all shall be at that time judged and rewarded, according to their thoughts, most sure it is, that God well observed the same, while they lived upon the face of the earth, and kept the same in his booke of records.

Since the Lord marketh whether men come in love and in sinceritie, or for fashion and in hypocritie, let this teach us to present our soules before the Lord, and so serve him soundly and religiously: not onely behaving our selves in as orderly a manner as others do, but in as holy a manner as we can. Divers there are that will repair to God's house as often as the best, and make a colourable shew of reverence in God's worship, sitting modestly in the view of the congregation, not gazing hither and thither, nor expressing any unseemly behaviour: yet nevertheless except God see their hearts well exercised, all that men behold and take notice of is nothing worth. They seemed to be very forward, of whom the Prophet Isaiah maketh mention, they would enquire after the ordinances of judgement and justice, and seek the Lord, and not by fits and starts, but daily: they would be ordinarily at the Lectures of the Prophets, and peradventure marke what was delivered, and make repetition of the same; and if there were any thing that they understood not, they would ask direction, and search out the meaning of it: and yet the Prophet is bid to cry out against them with full mouth: Cry aloud (faith God) lift up thy voice like a Trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and to the house of Jacob their sinnes. And that because they came with hollow and hypocritical hearts, as their unholy and unrighteous behaviour afterwards did witness to their faces.

And therefore that must be looked unto, that we satisfy God's eyes, as well as mens, and to that end search out, and cast forth all leaven of hypocritie that is in our hearts: for if we do not finde it out, God will: and if we spare our hearts, God will not spare us. Well we may delude our owne soules, but God is not mocked: outward serving of him may make the Minister think us upright, & cause our neighbours to esteeme us good Christians: but except God approve of our hearts,
we are never the better, for the good opinion that men conceive of us.

2 This is for the exceeding comfort of such as are true-hearted, and that in a double respect:

1 In regard of that approbation which the Lord will give us, if he be a witness of our sincerity and faithfulness. If we come to the Sermon in obedience to God's ordinance, with a desire to get grace thereby; if we come to the Sacrament, that we may have communion with our head Christ Jesus, & that the new Testament or Covenant of God, may be sealed and confirmed unto us; if we see our weakensse, and labour to get strength against it; if we bewail our corruption, and strive to get victory over it: if we perceive the imbecilte of our faith, and would have it increased: or want of repentance, and would have it renewed; or defect of love, and would have it augmented, and so come to God's holy feast with an hungry appetite; we may comfortably partake of his heavenly mysteries; & whatsoever we imagine of ourselves, God will reward us according to that integrity which he seeth in us. Well was it for Nathaniel that his heart was known unto Christ, for otherwise he had lost the praise of his uprightness. And so is it with many Christians: if one should demand of them whether they had faithfull hearts or not, the answer of many would be, I hope well; but in truth I dare not say so much; and therefore this is not the least part of their happiness, that God discerneth the truth of their hearts better than they themselves do: and whereas there is some deceitfulnesse, in the most sincere and plaine heart that is, if there be any endeavour to shake it off, the Lord will certainly pardon and remove the same.

2 Secondly, here is matter of consolation to those that are offended, in regard of the clamors and flanders that are raised against them: they are usually charged to be all hypocrites, troublers of the places where they live, and such as altogether serve their own turns, in that profession of religion which they make: here is their comfort, the Lord knoweth their hearts, and he will cleere the innocent, and make their righteousnesse shine forth as the noone day: as hee will judge and
and condemn all hypocrites, so will he manifest the faithful-ness of his owne servants; and this was Iobs comfort when his friends counted him a dissembler: My witnesse is in the heavens (faith he) and my record is on high.

Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that perisheth, &c. You cannot doe both together, you cannot seeke the things of this life, and the things that pertain to a better life both at once: whence this doctrine ariseth, that

A man cannot be both a worldling and a Christian, these two are opposed and set one against the other, as things that cannot stand together: one cannot labour for these transitory things, that is, set his whole desire upon them, and bend his whole induer for the obtaining of them; and withall labour for better matters, and religiously and unfainedly seeke after them. He that pursueth after earthly things, cannot follow after heavenly things: and he that followeth after heavenly things, will not pursue after earthly things. Not but that one may be truly religious, and yet enjoy the commodities of this life; but he cannot set his heart upon them, and upon matters of godliness: also no man can be earthly minded and spiritually affected at one and the same time: nor seeke that happiness which is above, & that which is beneath at once; in which regard the holy Ghost maketh an opposition betwixt them, saying, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: Whence it is evident that a mans affection cannot be fastened both on the world and on God. He may use the world, and yet love God; but he cannot love the world, but it will exclude the love of God: hee that maketh it his felicity to enjoy the things of this life, the love of the Father is not in him; neither doth he love the Father, nor apprehend the Fathers love unto him. But what are these things of the world which we must not love? he telleth us in the ver. following, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, & the pride of life. Where by the lust of the flesh, are all kind of concupiscences meant, as in eating & drinking, and such like sensualitie. 2 By the lust of the eyes, are meant all such things as content the eyes, as fair houses, goodly pastures, great store of cattell, gorgeous furniture, &c.

3 By
3 By the pride of life is meant an ambitious desire of advancement & dignity, or to become great me in the world any way, either in place or estimation, for any special parts or endowments. All the things of the world may be drawn unto one of these three heads; of pleasure, profit, or credit. And concerning all these, he faith, that they are not of the Father: honest delights, wealth, & preference are from the Father, but the love of these is not from the Father, but from the world: & thencefore whoever inordinately affecteth the, is a worldling, not a Christian. Therefore the Apostle exhorteth the Colossians, If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above; and set your affections on things which are above: & not on things which are beneath, implying that they could not doe both. It is as possible for a man to rise & fall, to clime upward, & to descend downward at the same instant, as to be godly & worldly, to ascend to heaven-wards, and to grovel to the earth-wards; they cannot be verified of the same person, at one and the same time.

The reason is taken from that of our Saviours: No man can serve two masters; for being of contrary dispositions and affections, as God & the world, or rather the Prince of the world are, either of them would be whole Master, and requireth the whole man. Doth voluptuousness take place in the heart? it will not indulge any matters of religion to be thought of, or spoken of; but that must have the ordering of the cogitations of the minde, and of the speeches of the mouth, & of the actions of the body. Doth worldliness or haughtiness bear sway? then will they extinguish all the sparks of goodness that are in a man, & quite put out the light of religion, carrying all the meditations and practices of the party towards the obtaining of that which is aimed at. On the contrary, if religion once get the better, & begin to rule in the heart, it will root out sin, & make those that were Sathas bond slaves before, to become Gods free men: it will by degrees kill lust, and covetousness, and pride; grace will be still increasing, and corruption decreasing, so that they can never agree together, no more than can fire and water.

Which is for the confusion & overthrow of that dangerous error, that is in the most part of men, that take it to be a
notable point of wisedome to joyne these together, to be rogers in the earth, and yet professors of the Gospell: to order the matter that they will neither bee to apparently pro-

phone as others that notoriously practice impiety and wicked-

ness: neither be so strict as others that exercise found morti-

fication and holiness. And herein they glory, that they can
carry the credit both of husbands for the world, and of wif-
dealers for their soules: that they can enjoy a present happi-

ness in this life beyond the best, and yet live in hope of ble-

fedness in the life to come as well as the best, and therein they
applaud their owne wisedome, and have themselves in admira-

tion, and for want of this they cenfure their betters of folly,
and have them in derision. But of all silly men these are the

fillieft, that think they can serve both God and Mammon, the
Lord and the world. Christ had not found out the depth of

that wisedome; hee professeth that his Kingdom was not of

this world, and biddeth us labour for the food that indureth to
eternal life, and not for that which perisheth. And therefore how-

soever these vaine men blesse themselves in the high estima-
on of their great policy, yet they doe very palpably bewray
their grosse ignorance and simplicity, as all shall doe that will

try conclusions contrary to Christ's conclusions; whatsoever
they dreame of, in seeking for both, they lose both, they have
neither found comfort in God, nor true contentment in the

world.

Yet how general is this error amongst the tonnes of men? they make some reckoning that there is a God, and therefore
they will now and then heare a Sermon, sit at it, and speake of
it, but never make use of any thing that crosseth them in their
pleasures or profits: they will make a shew of keeping the
Sabbath, by frequenting the publike exercises of religion; but
when they are over, they betake them to their sports and re-

creations: But what will be the issue of these things? Our Sa-
vior, telleth us in the Gospel: for when men shall say unto him,
Lord, Lord, and brag of the workes they have done in his
name, he will profess unto them, I never knew you, (or acknowled-
ged you for mine) depart from me ye that work iniquity. There-
fore it standeth men upon to have regard hereunto, that they
deceive
deceive not themselves, in thinking to have fellowship with God & Belial together: the Apostle Paul tel8heth such persons of their end: Many there are (faith he) whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, which minde earthly things. They were professors, and would make shewes of religion, for else the Apostle would not have taken the matter so to heart: but they tooke carnall courses; they were addicted to their bellies, and sought preferment in the world, and minded those things that are here below; but their glory was their shame, & their pleasure their perdition: and whereas they pleased themselves in their wisedome, the Apostle could not speake of them, but he must weep for them: Of whom (faith he) I told you before, and now tell you weeping, &c.

2 Seeing that we cannot set our affections both on carnall things, and on spirituall, let us reject the worst, and imbrace the best: let us leave the things that are momentany, and lay fast hold on the things that are eternall, and that we may be perswaded hereunto the rather, let us weigh with ourselves what our Saviour here faith of this temporall food: He calleth it meat that doth perish. And the like may be said of all other things: Labour not for the wealth that perisheth. When we have gotten all that may be gotten, what is it? it is but a corruptible treasure, that is quickly gone: Hee that getteth riches, & not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his daies, and at his end shall be afoole. When men have heaped up all the wealth that possibly they can, it is but as a great heap of snow, let the Sunne of Gods displeasure arise upon it, and it presently melteth and vanisheth: but suppose riches doe continue with us, there is such corruption in our hearts, that they are rather likely to poison and infect us, than any way to further us in the course of godlinesse: therefore are they called wicked Mammon. We doe account him a silly man, that will accept of money, or meat, or garments, that are suspected to be infectious, in that they come from such as have had the plague-fore running upon them: and yet certainly these things cannot be in any degree so dangerous as riches are unto those that lay open their hearts as it were to entertaine the love of them: the former do but indanger this present life:
The latter do undoubtedly (without repentance) deprive men of everlasting life: and therefore exceeding great is their madness to will so eagerly pursue after such vanities, especially seeing by reason of the uncertainty of their life, they have not any assurance to enjoy them, no not one hour; whereas Grace (as after shall be shewed) is an incomparable & incorruptible jewel, which they must needs forgoe while they so greedily hunt after these trifles of the world. But that there be no mistaking of that which hath been spoken, we must understand that the purpose of it hath not beene to withdraw any from labouring in his calling, and providing for himselfe and his family; but onely to persuade men in all their labours to serve God, & in seeking earthly things, to propose unto themselves an heavenly end; that in following the world, they may not forfake God; and in getting the things that are fading and perishable, they doe not lose the things that are permanent and eternall.

But for the meat that endureth to everlasting life.

We heard what we must not labour for: now Christ shewed what we must labour for, to wit, grace & the means thereof; whence the doctrine is, that

They are most provident for themselves, whose greatest labour is for grace.

Therefore seeing it cannot be attained unto without diligence, Christ's counsell is to use all carefull and to search for it as for silver, and to search for it as for treasures. So that it is God's ordinance that men should labour for it, if they would have it. Earthly things will not be had but by labour and toyle, much lesse these things which are of greater value. And whereas men may let others a work for the obtaining of outward matters, they themselves may be at home in their houses; and others labouring for them abroad; it is otherwise in the matters of Grace. A man must travel for it in his own person; if ever he intend to get it: he himselfe must pray, heare the Word, understand it, apply it, and make use of it: the greatest Monarch in the world must performe these and the like duties, and not bid his servants doe these things for him. And to encourage us

_Doct. 4._

They are the best husbands that labour most for grace.

_Proua. 4._
the rather to set upon this worke, the Lord hath promised us certain successe, as in that former place of the Proverbs: If thou seest her as silver, &c. then shalt thou finde the knowledge of God. Others may take a great deale of pains, & yet not speed well; they may rise early, & go to bed late, and eat the bread of carefulnesse, hoping to be rich, and yet be still poore; men may labour to be applauded of all, and yet be derided of all; seeke to have all crouche unto them; study and beat their heads how to live a pleasant life, and yet none be more vexed and tormentes than they: but those that spend their pains in seeking of grace, shall never lose their labour, nor misse of their marke, but alwaies obtaine that which they doe desire; & when once they have possession of it, it will abide with them; they cannot lose it though they would; it is so durable and permanent, that it will never decay, and so united and ingrafted into the nature of the parties, that it can by no possible means be wholly taken away, nay nor cast away. And therefore as in other things, so in this, the continuance of it addeth greatly unto the worth of it. To have a Leafe is better than to be Tenant at will: a fee-simple is more desirable than a leafe; now grace is a perpetuall inheritance that farre surpasseth all that the world can afford.

A man must leave his earthly inheritance and abundance, hee knoweth not how soone, neither can his great substance descend into the grave with him, neither can he so make it over unto his seed, but that they may be deftauned of it: but the heavenly treasure is ours whiles we live, & when we dye, & after death, yea at, and after the resurrection for evermore. And as the perpetuity, so also the excellency of this in it own nature should be a forcible motive unto us, and set an edge upon our affections to pursuie after it continually. For whereas other things are dangerous and hurtfull, this is alwaies profitable & helpfull; it maketh us blessed in this present life, and in the life to come; it bringeth with it the comfort of the spirit, the feeling of Gods love & favour, and the comfortable use of all outward good things. We are not likely, at least not certain, to continue here many daies, & what an unspeakeable comfort then is it to be assured that when we go from men, we shall go to God,
and when we leave the earth, we shall inherit heaven, that we shall have peace at our death, and glory after our death. If the pestilence enter into our houses, or take hold of our owne persons, when none dare come unto us, then God will bee with us: though our bodies be infected, yet our soules can never be so infected, in we have grace in our harts, but that God dareth to enter into our houses to visit us: and when our soules shall be parted from our bodies, he will not thinke it too much to give them a place of rest with himselfe in his own kingdom, and at length to unite them to our bodies againe, that they may enjoy everlasting blisse together, as they have beene employed in Gods service together.

Seeing then, that the benefit of labouring, for grace, is so great, this serveth to reprove those that are sloathfull in the things of God: sloathfull in repairing to the word, & in mingling the same with faith in their hearts: sloathfull in travelling with their owne soules, in examining their hearts, and laying the edge of Gods threatenings to their corruptions, for the cutting off of the same. These men thinke that grace will grow as weeds doe, without any plowing, manuring or sowing of the ground: though they never pray earnestly, nor heare carefully, nor beat any paines for the reforming of their hearts, or of their lives, yet they thinke they shall have goodnesse enough by an ordinary course, and conclude that heaven shall be cast upon them whether they wil or not: as if God could not chuse but save their soules. But these foolish men doe altogether deceive themselves, & they shall find by wofull experience, that except they set their minds, & hearts, and tongues, and hands, and all the powers and parts of soule and body on work, they shall never attaine unto any godlinesse at all, and therefore of necessity be deprived of everlasting life.

But we like of the Word, and love the preaching and Preachers thereof. But what measure of faith and of other graces of Gods spirit have you gotten thereby? if you be destitute of those, it is sure you have not laboured as you should for the same: for whosoever seeketh, findeth. Talking of gold and silver, and the like, & declaring to others how much we affect them, wilt not keep us from penury: we must so labour for them, as

**Objection.**

**Answer.**
that we get them, if we would be rich men. A sluggard may desire to get the victory, but he must fight for it that will have it: and the like holds in spiritual things, those that would be partakers of them, must use the means that God hath appointed for the accomplishing of their desire.

And therefore this rebuke lights upon the heads of all such sluggards, as will not bestirre them in this weighty matter, nor labour in the field of grace, nay when the crop of grace is brought home unto their houses, they will not open their doores to receive it: they will not so much as give attention to the word, but are like the high-way side, that doth not so much as receive the seed that is cast upon it, but let the devill catch it away all from them.

Secondly, this may be an Apology for those that are faithfull and painfull, in seeking for the Word: if it be a thing so exceeding necessary, then are not they to be blamed, that are content to undergo any toyle for the obtaining of it: it is no preciſenes nor needles labours: neither are such to be checked and reprehended, but rather to be commended & encouraged: for this is it that is foretold in Daniel: Many shall runne to and fro, and knowledge shall abound. If men have a dangerous sickness, they seeke helpe from the Physitian though farre off, and none findes fault with them, nor makes queſtion, why they should seeke to be healed. If house-holders want proviſion at home, they will repaire to the Market, and none cries out upon them, What wretched men are these that cannot keepe them from the Market? have they not oxen & sheepe at home? yet though they have, men are so wise as to consider that they are not made ready for their turne. Now if they are not blamed, nor indeed blame-worthy, that do thus seeke for corporeal Physicke, and food, then why should they be blamed by Papifts, and such as are Popishly affected, that seeke for that which is spiritual, it being farre more requisite and necessary?

Which the Sonne of man shall give, &c. Doct.

The efficacie of the Word and Sacrament, is from Christs own hand. Whosoever would have grace, must receive it from Christ himself: hence is that promise made unto the Israelites: The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed.
The eight Sermon

ReaJons.

1. Be that thou maist love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soule, that thou mayest live. They to whom it did belong to circumcise their bodies, could go no farther than the outward circumcision: it was God only that could cut off the corruption of their hearts, & frame them unto obedience: and that which is spoken concerning that one Sacrament, hol- deth us true in all the rest: man can give onely the externall signes, God must give the inward vertue. And the reasons why it pertaines unto Christ, and is a work of the Godhead onely, are divers. First, one is taken out of the Text, where it is said: Him hath the Father sealed: it is Christ his office unto which the Father hath ordained him: he alone hath commision and warrant to deale in it: and whosoever else doth arrogate that unto himselfe, is an intruder, and shall be punished, for that he goeth about to thrust Christ out of his chaire.

Secondly, as it belongs to him, so he alone is of ability to do it: none besides him can deale with the heart, wherein this worke doth principally consist. He onely knowes it, and he alone can cure it: as the first Adam did kill us, so the second Adam must quicken us. No man can give natural life unto another, no not that which brutish creatures do enjoy, nay nor so much as that which plants do live by: much lesse can any one give spiritual life unto another. Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but God alone giveth the increase.

Thirdly, experience will confirm us in this point: for who be the men upon whom the Ordinances of God are usually most effectuall? even the most unlikely of all other in the eye of reason, many of them having bin very sily & of marvellous weak and slender capacity: others violently carried with sundry grievous and strong corruptions, of anger, pride, raging lust, and the like. And herein doth the power of God more clearly manifest itself in overthrowing the strong holds of the devill, &c. Our Saviour magnifieth Goes name, saying, I praise thee Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes: And when the Apostle had spoken of many notorious and abominable sinners, as fornicators, Idolaters, adulterers, bug- gerers, &c. he addeth, And such were some of ye, but you are washed.
If we might make the choice of those that should be converted, we should have good natured civill men, and wise and politicke men, and noble and great men to fill up the number, that God might that way be more honoured, and religion countenanced: but God in his wisedome taketh another course that maketh more for his glory: he chooseth the worst to make them best: and not many wise, nor many noble are called.

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, &c. That the whole worke, and the glory thereof, may be attributed to him alone.

This should instruct us to go out of our selves, and to looke beyond sense and reason, when we are to meddle with the things of God: not to thinke we are of capacitie sufficient to conceive the mysteries of salvation, but to call upon the Lord for assistance.

Neither let us rest upon the act done in hearing of the Word, or receiving the Sacrament, as if thereby grace must needs be conveyed unto us: for we may partake of those ordinances of God to our greater ruine; as Judas and Simon Magus did.

Further, let us be admonished hence not to depend upon the excellency of the Minister: for it is God, not man that giveth working to his ordinances. God indeed may heare their prayers, but he himselfe doth the whole worke. Moses was a rare Minister, yet he could not give grace unto the Israelites, but many of them perished that received the Sacrament. John Baptist also was a rare Minister, yet he could onely baptize with water: Christ must baptize with the holy Ghost, and with fire.

On the other side, doth the vertue of the ordinances depend on God? then let us not be discouraged in regard of the weakness of the Minister, or the outward meanes: for though neither the party administering, nor the things administr'd can breake our hearts, and worke grace therein, yet the Lord can and will do it: therefore let us not thinke the worse of that precious jewel, because it is brought by a simple messenger, &c.
in a plaine boxe, as it were: neither let us lightly esteeme of pure gold, because it is carried in a leatherne bagge, but let us value the gift according to the worth of it, and according to the dignity of the giver.

If men should judge according to corrupt reason, they would never thinke that a poore man by speaking unto them, by powring a little water upon them, and by giving them a little quantitie of Bread and Wine, should make them kings and fellow-heires with Chrift Iefus for ever: but if in this gift we looke unto the Sonne of man, whom God the Father hath sealed and ordained for that purpose, and cast the eye of our faith upon the promises that are made through him, and the all-sufficient power that is in him, we fhal easily conceive that all this may be well effected: for he is a rich fountaine, Of whose fulnesse we all receive. What though our capacitie be fnder? Gods word giveth wifedome to the simple. What though our hearts be hard? God is able and ready to soften them. What though we have played the hypocrites? So had thefe here, unto whom our Saviour directeth this exhortation. They pretended to feeke for the bread of life, when their comming was onely to have their bellies filled: yet Chrift doth not caſt them off, but biddeth them labour for the food that endureth to eternall life: and then promifeth to give them eternall life. And to will he deale with us; albeit we have beene disemblers: yet if now we returne from our hollownesse to soundnesse, and from our hypocritis to plainnesse, we shall be sure of a blessing.

This is further for the great consolation of all Gods faithfull servants. Is the vertue and effectuall working of the Word and Sacrament, the gift of Chrift by the appointment of the Father, through the grace of the holy Ghost? then certainly they are highly in Gods favour on whom this is bestowed. If once we have any testimony of grace, the Lord hath greatly magnified his love towards us; according to that speech uttered by Wifedomes owne mouth; Blessed is the man that findeth me, he fhall receive life and favour from the Lord: and therefore (as Chrift telleth the woman of Samaria) if we knew who it is that offereth such mercy, and what the gift of God is, we would esteeme it more highly, and feeke it more earnestly than
than ordinarily we do. The Manna that they had in the wilder-ndesse was counted excellent food, and they extraordinarily graced and favoured that did eate thereof; because Angels were the Ministers of it: how excellent then is this heavenly Manna, which is by Christ's owne hand conveyed unto us: and made effectuall for our good and comfort?

Surely we can never be joyfull and thankfull enough for this inestimable treasure.
The Ninth Sermon.

Mar. 14, 18, 19, 20, 21.

18 And as they sat at table, and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me, which eateth with me.

19 Then they began to be sorrowfull; and to say to him, one by one, Is it I? and another, Is it I?

20 And he answered, and said unto them, It is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the platter.

21 Truly the Sonne of man goeth his way, as it is written of him, but woe be to that man by whom the Sonne of man is betrayed: it had beene good for that man if he had never beene borne.

His History containeth in it especially & principally the Institution of the Lords Supper: wherein two things are chiefly to be observed:

1. A conference that was before it, contained in these foure verses.

2. The manner and celebration of it, contained in the three next verses.

First, for the conference, it was betweene our Saviour and his disciples, at the eating of the Passeover, before the institution of the other Sacrament; wherein 1. Christ Jesus doth discover unto them the practife and treason that was conspired against him; Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me, &c. that is, shall treacherously deliver me into the hands of the high Priests.

2. They make answer: where the affection wherewith the eleven delivered the same, is expressed: Then they began to be sorrowfull, and to say to him, one by one, Is it I? and another, Is it I?

Sorrowfull they were, because their Master had told them that he should be betrayed into the hands of sinners, & that one
of them should do it, and every one was doubtfull & distrustful of himselfe, and therefore partly that they might be better acquainted with their owne hearts, to the intent that if they were of such an ill disposition, they might be helped against it: partly that each of them might have comfort that he was not the man: and partly that they might be cleared every one of them before his fellows, they ask a their Saviour, saying, Is it I? Judas indeed proposeth the same question, but not with the like affection, nor to the like use and purpose: but onely that he might thereby cloake his unfaithfull and ungodly plots and practises against his Master, having before this compounded with the high Priests for the betraying of him.

Next is set downe the reply of our Saviour upon this their answer: wherein he declareth,

\[1\] The grievousnesse of the traitor.
\[2\] The miserable estate of the traitour.

First, the grievousnesse of the traitor is set forth, Verse 20. in that it was contrived by (one of the twelve) one whom Christ had chosen to be an Apostle, and principal Ambassadour unto himselfe: one that was so familiar with him, as that he did sit at his owne Table, eate of his owne meate, yea in his owne dish: It is one of the twelve (faith Christ) that dippeth with me in the platter.

Secondly, the wretched condition of the traitour is declared, Ver. 21. (Truly the Sonne of man goeth, &c.] Where the Lord Christ Jesus preventeth some objections that might arise in their hearts: for thus they might reason in themselves, Do you know of such a treason? and who it is that goes about it? Why then will you yeeld your selue into his hands? were it not good wisedome to prevent it, and to use means to escape? No (faith our Saviour); that may not be (The Sonne of man goeth his way, as it is written of him) I cannot, I must not avoid it, nor decline from it: for the Lord hath appointed it, yea manifested it in his word, which cannot be verified, unlesse this be fulfilled: therefore seeing the Lord in his wisedome hath made this to be my way, I will be content to walke in it. Upon this they might reply againe: If the Sonne of man go away, as it is written of him, then he that doth betray him effecteth no more
more than that which the word of God hath foretold of him: which may seeme to be no fault, and therefore to deserve no punishment. Yes (faith Christ) woe to that man by whom the Sonne of man is betrayed, &c. It was pre-ordained indeed, but that doth not lessen the fault, neither shall it diminish the punishment of him that is the traytours: but woe unto him, it had beene good for that man he had never beene borne, whatsoever matters of present contentment he may seeme to enjoy.

Verse 18. And as they sate at table, and did eate, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, &c.

The Lord Jesus Christ was well acquainted beforehand with all the passions which he was to indure, and all the occurrences that should befall him: as may plainly be seene in this place, and elsewhere, in that he foretellleth his discipules by whose means he should dye, and after what manner he should die, with all other circumstances. As one Evangelist testifieth, saying, From that time forth, Jesus began to shew unto his discipules, that he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the Elders, and of the high Priests, and Scribes, and be slaine, and rise againe the third day. And as another wittnesse, relating our Saviour his owne words; As Moses lift up the Serpent in the wilderness, so must the Sonne of man be lift up.

First, because he was God from everlasting, and so knew all, his hand disposing of every particular thing that in the fulness of time came to passe, being pre-ordained by his owne wisedome and counsell.

Secondly, he as Mediator must of necessitie understand of all things before: because he compounded with his Father for our redemption, not rashly without fore-knowledge of that which he should performe, but advisedly, agreeing how much he should endure, and what he should pay; even so much as should satisifie his Fathers justice, and appease his wrath.

Thirdly, the Scripture foretold what he was to undergo: that one that was neere him should betray him, who was prefigured in the person of Achitophel; that he should suffer a very grievous kind of death, such as was long before described, with the particular circumstances that accompanied it, both in 

Psalme
Psalm 21, and Isaiah 53, besides sundry other places. Now he was perfectly acquainted with all the Scriptures, and the meaning thereof; they being written by his own Spirit, and therefore it must necessarily follow, that none of his sufferings therein prefigured and foretold, could be hidden from him; and as he foresaw what should befall his natural body, so hath he a continual foresight of that which shall befall his mysticall body, that is, his people, and every one of them.

The doctrine serveth, first for consolation against all tribulations that man light upon us, & all persecutions that may be raised against us, either by bloody Papists, or other enemies of the Gospell. When we see them exceeding malicious in their plots, and threatenings, and practices, intending and devouring to overthrow all the servants & services of God, & to raze them by the very foundations, and not to suffer one of them to live, but (if it were possible) to root out their names from under heaven; though, I say, their rage bee marvellous great, even as the rage of the Sea, yet need we not at all to be afraid of them: for the Lord Christ knoweth all that shall befall us, as he did all that should betide himselfe: for the case of his people is as much respected of him, as was the state of his owne body, since he tooke upon him an humane nature, and suffered both in soule & body for their redemption and happiness. Therefore is it that our adversaries attempt many things against us, which never come to passe (as it fared with Jeremy in the times of old) because God foreseeeth them, and disappointeth them.

But suppose some things doe come to passe according to their hearts desire, the Lord knew of them before, and therefore did not prevent them, because hee law they could not be hurtfull unto us: Hee is a wise Father, that will have his children to feele somewhat that may bee for their smart and paine, as knowing it will turne to their good at length, but hee will stay any thing that might procure their undoing and overthrow, and therefore Christ pronounceth them happy and blessed that suffer for his names sake, either disgraces, or loss of goods, or banishment, or imprisonment, or death it selfe. As farre then as any of these may hinder
our happiness, we shall be sure to be freed from them, so that we need not feare any of the things which we shall suffer: for if we be faithfull unto the death, we shall receive the crown of life.

Secondly, this serves for terror unto wicked men, in that God's remembrance is equall to his fore-knowledge: and therefore if he can understand long before what they shall do, he can as well call to remembrance what they have done: and fithence he hath an eternall fore-sight of what shall come to passe, he hath also an everlasting memory to kepe a memorial of the things that are practised against him & his, to set them in order before the offenders at the last day, and to inflict proportionable punishment upon every one of them, according to the same.

Ver. 19. Then they began to be sorrowful, and to say to him one by one, Is it I? &c.

Here we see that every one of the Disciples (except Judas) was mistrustfull of himselfe, and yet none of them proved to be the Traytor. Whence we may learne, that They are likely to fall into least evill, who are most fearfull of falling into the same.

They who are most jealons of their owne corruptions, are best fortified against dangerous falles. Therefore is it said by the wise man: Blessed is he that feareth alwaies: but he that hangeth his hart shall fall into mischiefe. That was HafaeL's case, he suspected not himselfe, and therefore when the Prophet told him that he should be a cruell man, that hee should slay the young men of Israel with the sword, and dash their infants against the stones, and rend in pieces their women with child: he said unto the Prophet, What? Is thy servant a dog, that I should doe this great thing? As if he had said, I were worse than a dogge, if I should ever shew such immanity and fierceness, and such beastly violence, but the Prophets words fell out to be true: he would not mistrust his owne heart, and therefore hee became savage as a Wolfe, and fierce as a Lyon. The example of David will adde further light unto this point: for as long as he was awed by Gods correcting hand, & fearing himselfe, kept a narrow watch over al his waies, hestood firme & unmoveable against all assaults: but when hee grew fearlesse and
and careless, we know what a grievous & dangerous fall he had. So Peter and the rest of the Apostles as long as they were afraid of themselves (as concerning this matter of treason they were) none of them fell; but when he and the rest grew confident of their own strength, then they all plaid the coward, especially Peter that was most resolute in an opinion of himselfe. For whereas he professed that whatsoever his Master thought of him, he would never forfake him; Christ must be content for once to be mistaken and deceived in him, hee was another manner of man then hee conceived himselfe to bee: whereas (I say) he was thus presumptuous of his own courage in holding out, he that boasted he would staid it out even unto death, was daunted with a word; and whereas he thought if the men of warre had come against him with swords, hee should have defied them all, & stucke unto his master: a poore silly wench with the only breath of her lips, maketh him lye and sweare, and for sweare his Saviour. So that from these examples it is evident, that when men are doubtful and distrustfull of themselves, then they speed well; but when they are confident of themselves, then they slip and slide, & fall exceeding dangerously. And this may be yet further confirmed unto us by reasons: for

First, he that is carefull of himselfe, hath God to bee his keeper, who pronounceth him blessed that feareth alwayes: for this holy feare will stirre men up to make many earnest and fervent requests unto the Lord for his strength and gracious assistance, which he never denyeth unto those that faithfully crave it at his hands; and thence it comes to passe, that how weake soever they be in themselves, yet they grow strong in him, and in the power of his might.

Secondly, as they have God to keep them, so will they with all diligence keepe their owne hearts, and avoid all occasions and allurements unto evil. As one that is afraid of the pestilence, will be very carefull to avoid the infection, and for that end carry wormewood, &c. in his hand, and take somewhat next his stomacke, that may fence him against it; if hee be to walk abroad, taking heed what company he comes into, and how he passeth through any street, or by any dore where the
sicknesse is hot: whereas on the contrary, he that thinketh it not to be infectious, cares not what company he communicateth with, nor what places he commeth unto, but if he expect a booty, will goe to their beds side that are sick of it, & receive plague stuffe, or plagiue garments or the like. So is it for sinne, he that feeth the poyson and infection of it, will eschew all company, intimations, and occasions that may draw him into it: but as for those who see not, or feare not the pronenesse of their nature to fall into iniquity, nor the dangerousnes therof when they are plunged in it, they are altogether negligent in looking to their hearts, & to their behaviour, entertaining impure lusts in their souls, not caring whither they cast their eyes, nor what sinfull objects they meet withall for the poysoning and corrupting of their affections. Whence it oftentimes commeth to passe, that they are very shamefully overtaken: for when they waxe so bold and ventrous, it is just with God to give them over unto themselves, yea though they be his owne children. As he dealt with David when his hart was lifted up, and he presumed that his mountaine was so strong, that hee should never be moved, when he gave himselfe to his ease, and tooke liberty for his eye, as if there had not been in him an inclination to adultery, we reade what great sinnes and miseries he fel into: how much more then wil the Lords hand be upon the ungodly ones of the world, that do altogether harden their hearts from his feare, never eschewing the baits of sinne, nor the snares wherein Sathan seeketh to take them, and to hold them faft, unto their eternall damnation?

Seeinge it is so, that as every one is more fearefull of falling, (provided that his feare be a godly feare, and doe not drive him to despaire, or to discouragement,) so he is in l esse danger of falling; therefore whatsoever sinne the Scriptures tell us that God doth abhor, and man is subject to fall into, we should conclude, that we are likely to be overtaken with the same, & in that regard stirre up our hearts to a holy feare and suspition of our owne weakenes, intreating the Lord to preserve us from them; yea though they be monstrous and so unnaturall evils, such as are mentioned in the first Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and 2 Tim. 3. 2, let us be jealous of our selves, left
left we should be drawne unto them.

For reproofe of them that are bold and venterous, to be in dangerous places with suspected persons, they will warrant you for ever being insnared; but let them know that none are more likely to be overtaken by idolatry, adultery, or any such foule sinnes, than they are.

Verse 20. It is one of the twelve that dippeth, &c.

Doct. No bands of kindnesse can make wicked men faithful unto godly men.

That which is here related to have fallen out betweene Christ and Judas, will hold true betwixt all Christians and Judas his fellowes, that though they be never so well dealt with, and never so courteously used, yet they will prove unfaithfull, and requite evill for good, if it may be for their advantage.

Christ Iesus (as we may observe) had dealt marvellous friendly with Judas: he had admitted him to his service, to be domestical, to be one of his Apostles (which was so great an office in the Church as never man had greater) to sit at his owne Table, to eate of his owne meafe, at so holy a banquet as was the blessed Sacrament, &c. yet after all this he most lewdly and basely for a little money betrayeth & delivereth him into the hands of his mortall adversaries. This (as all must needs acknowledge) was exceeding great unfaithfulness, and very wretched dealing: yet none other than is still to bee expected from men of Judas his spirit and disposition. This David complaineth of, and exclaimeth against in Achiæphel, the figure of Judas: My familiar friend (faith he) whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up the heele against me. He had highly preferred Achiæphel, made him of his Counsell, yea the principal man of his Counsell; he used him as his familiar friend, not only in matters of state, but in matters of religion, &c. Yet for all this, he fell from him in hope of greater promotion, joyned with his rebellious son Absalon, sought to depose him from his kingsome, yea to deprive him of his very life: He lifted up the heele against me (faith that good King) comparing him unto cattel that are fat fed, who feeling the provender to prick the, do kicke with their heeles against their master. The like sinfull
and unthankfull dealing may be seene in Isai. 

Iehoiada the high Priest had preserved his life, by keeping him close from his grandmother Athaliah, who had slain all his brethren: and this he did not without peril to himselfe: afterwards he caused Athaliahs life to be taken from her, and the crowne and kingdom to be established unto him: yet notwithstanding all this kindness, when he fell from God & from religion, he forgot Iehoiada, and cruelly murthered his son Zechariah, an holy Prophet of God, for doing the message of the Lord unto him, in reproving him and his Princes for their idolatry.

To this point our Saviour giveth further testimony, telling his Disciples what should fall out upon the preaching of the Gospel: The brother shall betray the brother to death, & the father the son, and the children shall rise against their parents, and shall cause them to die. What neerer bonds than these, especially that of children to their parents, who have beene the means of their life, of their education, and in a word, of all the good things that they either doe or shall enjoy, and that not without great paines and charges, and troubles unto themselves? Yet for all this, if children be impious, and their parents religious, they will not sticke to betray them, and to put them to death. So that by these proofs it is cleere and evidente, that no bands of kindnesse or of nature will hold, where the bands of religion are wanting. And there is reason for it: for

Reasons.

1. First, the devell hath the disposing of all ungodly mens hearts, and therefore untill such time as he grow kinde unto Gods children, nothing in the world (but Gods over-ruling hand) can make his limbs, true and trustie friends unto the members of Christ: for Sathan having the command of them, will enforce them (will they, nill they) to be unkinde, unthankfull, and uncourteous unto Gods servants that have beene most beneficall unto them.

Secondly, there is in all unregenerate men abundance of pride, which maketh them to thinke that whatsoever is done for them, either by God or men, it is due debt, and nothing more than their deserts doe require: and therefore when they are fat and full, they spurne with the heele against the givers. And this let us set downe for a certaine ground, that they which
which shew themselves unfaithfull and disloyall unto God notwithstanding all his benefits, will never be true and sincere friends unto us, how neerely and strongly soever they are linked unto us in outward respects: he that is not God’s friend can never be our faithfull friend.

Thirdly, wicked men doe love sinne better than any benefit: and therefore will they fall out with their kindest friends rather than with their beloved corruptions, and be discourteous unto any, yea adventure the damning of their owne soules eternally, rather than crosse their wretched lusts, and set themselves against their sinful actions.

For instruction, to teach us a point of wisedome, that seeing all sinners are unfaithfull, therefore wee should beware how we trust them, and how we commit our selves or our secrets unto them: for albeit their looks be faire and smooth, and their speeches and outward carriage feeme loving and kinde, yet they feare not God, they will lye in wait for an advantage, and do us a mischiefe before we be aware, if we take not the better heed of them, and therefore let us not expose our selves unto them.

Indeed our Saviour did lay open himself unto Judas, because he knew that Judas was appointed for that work, and the will of his Father must needs be fulfilled: but wee not having the like reason, must not imitate our Saviour herein, nor acquaint such persons with our counsels: much lesse let vs provoke them, and cast our selves into their danger: for if they have us once in the snare, there is no hope of mercy, except the Lord worke for us extraordinarily.

Let men therefore looke heedfully unto themselves, & beware, as of others, so of untrustie servants, ofungodly children, yea of unholy yoke-fellowes: for there is no fidelitie to be expected where the true feare of God is not planted in the heart. They are bound to pray for them, to instruct them, and shew them any kindnesse that civility or Christianity bindeth them to performe: but herein their wisedome must appeare, that they be not too open hearted unto them, nor too readie to put them in trust in matters of great importance.

Secondly, here is matter of comfort to all such as are faith-
full in their dealings, that would rather lay downe their lives, than deale dishonestly or discourteously: this is a great grace of God to requite friendship to their friends, & to shew themselves thankesfull for benefits received. And indeed true and sound thankesfullnesse can be in none, but onely in those that are truely gracious: wicked men may be glad of a good turne, and in outward complement of words and behaviour make a semblance and shew of thankesfullnesse: but to be truely joyfull, as seeing Gods hand in a kindnesse received, and heartily & in conscience to love the partie whom God hath made an instrument of that good, with a desire and endevour to requite the same, this cannot possibly be in any, but in Gods people.

Verse 21. Truely the Sonne of man goeth his way as it is written of him, but woe be to that man by whom the Sonne of man is betrayed.

The death of Christ and the manner and meanes of it were prophecied of before, yet is not Judas thereby excused. Which teacheth us, that,

A wicked man may fulfill the will of God to his own condemnation, and doe that which God hath foretold, to his utter destruction.

God had said, that Judas should be a trayer: he is a trayer: God had determined (and Christ had confirmed it) that he should be a divell: he is such a one, yet all to his woe. So was it declared before unto Abraha, that Pharaoh should grievously afflict the Israelites: he did accomplish Gods will in that behalfe, and verified that which God had forespoken, but to his own utter ruine. In like sort the Prophet Nathan in Gods name denounced beforehand this judgment against David, that he would raise up evil against him out of his own house: Absalom effected it accordingly, but to his own overthrow. So Herod and Pontius Pilate, the high Priests and the Gentiles consulted together to put to death the holy Sonne of God, and therein did nothing more than Gods hand & his counsel had determined before to be done, yet notwithstanding they perished in their sins as many of them as repented not. And to heape together no more proofes in a matter so evident, we may note in the Scriptures, how the enemies of the Church are compared
red to Gold-smiths, for that they purged God's people from their dross, and to Launders, because they washed away their spots, &c. and yet heavy judgements are denounced, and have been from time to time executed upon them for such works: And good reason it should be so.

First, because they are not allured unto it by vertue of any commandement, but driven unto it by a secret providence of God.

Secondly, they do it not in love unto God, but in malice against God, or man, or both: as Judas in a spleene conspired against his Master, because he found fault with his hypocritical dealing. Mar. 14. 6. &c. and 10. &c.

Thirdly, they ayme not at God's honour, though they accomphlished that which tendeth to his honour: but they seeke themselves some way or other, in that which they do.

Which serveth for the just reproose and terror of those that when they are convicted of any hainous crime, cast off all the fault with this, I was predestinated unto it, and unlesse God hath appointed it, I could never have done it. What of that? therefore they hope there is no danger hanging over their head for their facts. But what then will they say of Judas? did not he do that which God had decreed? yet our Saviour faith, Woe to him: and we may as well say, woe unto these: for whatsoever they imagine, the necessitie of their sinning in respect of God's decree, doth nothing diminish the grievousness of their offence, neither shall it at all mitigate the extremitie of their punishment.

This is also for our instruction, that we should frame our obedience in another manner, and for that purpose reason thus with our selves: have I a commandement for this which I do? is it a duty warranted by the Word, which I now performe? Some do that which God hath appointed, but it is onely by a providence, not in any conscience: how doth my obedience differ from theirs? Do I practise good duties because God calleth for them? then shall my service be acceptable unto God: do I forbeare evil because he forbiddeth it? then do I that which is pleasing unto him, otherwise not. In this manner let us sift our hearts, performing every thing in that manner,
manner, and to that end which God hath ordained, that we may not only do that which the Scripture faith (for so did Judas) but that which the Scripture warranteth, and in that sort as it approveth, for so God's servants are bound to do.

It had been good for that man, if he had never beene borne.

It is good for us that he was borne, because we have benefit thereby: but not for him, because whatsoever matter of contentment he had in his life time, turned at length to the increase of his misery, and to his perpetuall damnation. Whereby it appeareth, that All the delights and contentments of wicked men in this world, cannot countervaile the miseries that they shall feel in the world to come.

Judas had life at selfe, which is a thing very delightfull, and of which it is truly said, though by a lying spirit, Skinne for skinne, and all that ever a man hath, he will give for his life: He had also great preferment, being one of the Apostles, and the chiefe officer amongst them, namely, to be their purfe-bearer: which liked him exceeding well, because he was a thiefe, and itole from them much of that which was given: yet notwithstanding all this, and whatsoever else can be named, our Saviour faith, it had been good for him that he had never bin born.

The like may be said of Saul, Jeroboam, Ahab, and many other kings: who would account it a good bargaine to have their kingdoms with all the honors and delights which they could afford: and their victories with all the glory that accompanied the same, upon this condition, that he shall endure the same miseries and torments in hell, that they do? Certainly no wise man would willingly make such a match: for what shall it profit a man to winne the whole world, and to lose his owne soule?

First, the best delights and contentments of this life are mixed with many troubles, sorrows, and fears: but their miseries in the life to come are pure miseries, without any mitigation or comfort in their paine and torment.

Secondly, their pleasures here are few, and short, and of small continuance: but their paines hereafter shall be innumerable and endless.

Third-
Thirdly, all their delights in this life, are but snares, and all
their good cheer and dainties, but poisons, and the more men
take of them, the more grievous shall their punishment in
hell be.

For instruction, that we should not endanger our souls for
the enjoyment of the pleasures of sin for a season; yet many
are so foolish, that so they might satisfy their fleshly desires,
they care not though they do it with the price of their souls:
so they may have their pleasures and commodities, and fulfill
their beastly lusts, they will even sell themselves unto destru-
tion, as Ahab did: not caring what miseries they cast them-
selves into, nor what snares they intangle themselves in, so
they may accomplish their brutish and diabolical purposes, be-
ing therein more silly than the poor bird or fish, that once
perceiving the snare or the hooke, will not easily meddle, nor
adventure the danger of the second time.

Secondly, if it be so, that all the commodities and delights
of this life cannot counterbalance the miseries of damnation, then
on the other side why should it not hold as true for our com-
fort, that all the losses and sorrows of this life cannot counter-
vaile the happiness of salvation: for the Apostle saith, That the
afflictions of this present time, are not worthy of the glory that
shall be shewed unto us: the one being light and momentary,
the other weighty and eternall. Let us suffer never so many
disgraces and losses, &c go through never so many hard brunts,
our blessed estate in heaven will answer for all: so that as it
was said of Judas, it had beene good for him he had never bin
borne, notwithstanding all the delights that he enjoyed; so
may it as truly be said, happy we that ever we were borne,
notwithstanding all the miseries that we have endured: yea,
though they have beene as great as theirs, of whom mention
is made, Hebr. 11. that they are racked, and stoned, and hewne
in sunder, &c for they endure all in hope of a better resurrec-
tion, Ver. 35. and so should we if God bring us unto the
like extremities. And thus much of the conference, now fol-
loweth the institution of the Lord's Supper.
THE TENTH SERMON.


22 And as they did eat, Jesus took the bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to them, and said, Take eate, this is my body.

23 Also he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new Testament, which is shed for many.

E have in this Text and the words following, declared unto us, after what manner our Saviour did celebrate his own Supper, at the first institution thereof, leaving to us & his whole Church, a president and patterne for the due observation of it, wherein is to be noted;

1. The dealing of our Saviour with the Elements.

2. His speaking to the Communicants.

1. Concerning the first, it is said of the bread that he took it, and 2. blessed it, and 3. brake it, and 4. gave it. (He took the bread) meaning that bread which was prepared by them for the Pasleover, and by Gods providence for the Sacrament. And when he had blessed it: that is, prayed for a blessing upon it, that it might be effectual, both to his elect Apostles that were present, and to all those that should faithfully receive it, to the end of the world: and had also praised God, for giving himselfe to be the Redeemer and Saviour of the world, & vouchsafing unto his Church this Sacrament, and causing the bread to be of such great force and use, as not only to represent unto them his sufferings, but also to confirm their faith in him, and to exhibite the vertue of his passion unto them. Having thus
thus blessed it, it is said that (he brake it) which he did in a double respect; one was, that so it might be more divisible, to every one a part; another was, that it might be more significant, to express Christ's sufferings. Concerning whom though it be said, that a bone of him should not be broken: yet that phrase is used to declare the passion of the whole manhood, that he was broken for our iniquities, Isa. 5:3.5. When he had broken it, it is added, that he (gave it) assuring them thereby, that he bestowed himself upon them.

Likewise for the cup it is said, He took it, and when he had blessed it, that is, prayed and praised God for it, in the same sort as he had done for the bread, he gave it to them, Ver. 24.

2 Now concerning this speech to the Communicants, it consisteth partly in a Commandment, and Promise.

1 The Commandment is contained in these words, Take, Verse 22; eat, take the bread, and take my body: eat the bread, and eat my body: take and eat the bread corporally and by sense; take eat Christ spiritually, and by faith. And the like commandment is here implied, and elsewhere expressed concerning the cup, that is, the wine in the cup, (drinke ye all of this) which they are said here to obey.

2 The promise is implied in these words, This is my body, this is my blood; that is, lively signes to signifie, and effectual instruments to convey myself, and all the benefits of my death and passion unto you.

Further, concerning the wine it is said, This is my blood of the New Testament, or new Covenant: as if he should have said, as God hath bequeathed unto you himselfe, his graces, his blessings and his kingdom, so by the shedding of my blood he will confirm this legacy unto you, and that two ways:

First, because as others, so this Will and Testament could be of no force as long as the maker thereof was alive, Heb. 9. 16, 17. Therefore by this Sacrament Christ would have them put in minde of his death.

Secondly, as in other, so in this Will, it was not sufficient that the
the party that made it should be dead, but it must be proved by authority, as it were to be good, and therefore was this authenticall seal of the Sacrament set unto it. So that this Testament was sealed by the bloud of Christ, concerning the merit and efficacie of it: but by the Sacrament, concerning the application of it.

It is called the new Testament or Covenant; in respect of that which was under the Law, from which it differeth, and goeth beyond it in divers circumstances: as particularly shall be shewed.

And as they did eat, Jesus took the bread, and when he had given thanks, &c. Or as the word signified (blessed) that is prayed unto his Father for a blessing to be bestowed upon the receiving of it, not onely upon those that were then present, but upon all that should afterwards to the end of the world faithfully partake of the same. In that Christ Jesus seekes the blessing of this Ordinance from the Lord, the Doctrine is that

The vertue and efficacie of the Sacrament, is from Gods owne hand, through the mediation of Christ Jesus.

God gives it, and Christ procures the benefit of it unto his people: and this is common to all other ordinances and services with the Sacrament. To this purpose it is said, that Moses gave not that Manna unto the Israelites in the wildernes from heaven, but my father (faith Christ) giveth you the true bread, which giveth life unto the world: that, no Minifter, nor creature in heaven or earth can bestow upon any.

First, one generall reason of this doctrine is, that every good giving, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh doun from the Father of lights. Now what more excellent and perfect gift can there be than the body and bloud of Jesus Christ? and therefore if God be the author and giver of all other good things, this must of necessitie proceed from his bountie in a speciall manner.

A second cause why God will have the disposing of his graces in his owne hand, is, that there might be a difference betweene him and all his Ministers, and that he might retaine that prerogative for Christ Jesus alone: for he it is that giveth the
the meat which endureth to everlasting life. And the reason is because the Father hath sealed him; that is, the Lord hath authorized him by the broad scale of heaven, and will let none to be copartners with him in that office: he is the Lord-Treasurer of all graces, and therefore he must bless his ordinances unto us, if ever we looke for benefit thereby. In which regard John Baptist faith, I baptize you with water, and that is all that he could do; as for washing of the heart, and purging of the conscience, that he attributeth wholly unto Christ Jesus: He will baptize you with the holy Ghost; and with fire. John would not arrogate that unto himself, lest he should treacherously lay claim to that which is proper unto the crown. The like faithfulnesse in giving God his due, we see in the Apostle Paul, who faith, I have planted, Apollos watered, but God giveth the increase: thereby intimating that the best Ministers are but as Gardeners in the Lords Church, they can but put the Siens into the stocke, or the root into the ground: and as possible it is for a man to make a tree, as for a Minister to make a Christian: and as possible to put sap into a dead blocke, and to make it grow and flourish; and bring forth fruit in abundance, as for a Minister to put into any the least drop of grace, or to add any whit unto it where it is already wrought.

Thirdly, the Lord will have the vertue of the Sacrament to be in his own power, to bestow where and how he will, that there might be a difference betweene Communicants, to wit, betweene the good and the bad. If it were in mens hands to dispose, and did consist in the deed done, as ignorant Papists imagine, men would bestow it promiscuously, and wicked hypocrites would have as good a share as those that are truly religious, and the worst speed as well as the best: for men cannot search the hearts of their people, to see with what preparation they come: and there is that love in them (which is a thing commendable) that they desire all might be saved. If Moses could have given every man in Israel grace when he gave them the Manna, he would have done it: he that could have beene content, that his name should be razed out of the booke of life for their sakes, would not have stocke with them for such a matter. If Abraham could have circumcision Ismaels heart,
heart, when he circumcised his flesh, he should not have been excommunicated for his prophaneness: but God hath alwayes heretofore, and doth still kepe this power in his owne hand, that so he may enrich with grace those whom he thinketh fittest, and deale with every one as he knoweth their hearts. Moses was the Minister of Baptisme to those that passed through the Red-sea, yet with many of them God was not pleased: for onely those that are good in his sight shall taste of his good gifts: And therefore Christ prayeth not for the world, but onely for those which he hath chosen out of the world, and such as shall beleeve through the preaching of the Gospel, that they may be partakers of the benefit of his ordinances.

First, for instruction, if ever we would speed well when we come to the Sacrament, let us make the Lord our friend, by the distribution of grace pertaineth to him alone: let us seek it at his hand, and not bring any sinne with us which may offend his glorious presence. Which if we can do, we may and must expect a blessing from him. It is not the goodnesse of the Minister that can do it (though it be a good comfort to have a holy mans prayer for us) it is as possible that a man should appoint where the raine shall fall, as where grace shall fall: and though it should be concluded by Parliament, what dayes it should rain, and in what parts of the land, it were of no force; for God alone hath the ordering of the clouds, and so hath he also of the graces of his Spirit.

Secondly, this maketh for the comfort of such as come preparedly unto the table of the Lord, with a true heart, though burdened and wearied with many corruptions. Christ hath prayed that the Sacrament may be effectuall unto them, and therefore it shall be so: and he hath praised God for giving it unto his people, and therefore it shall not be in vaine: neither their owne weaknesse, nor the meannesse of the Elements, nor the imperfections of the Minister shall hinder the powerfull working of Gods ordinance.

Object. But we are bale creatures, and the Minister is no better than he should be.

Answer. Indeed if Grace were to be fetched out of such dutty ditches as we are, we could looke for little good; but God is a cleare fountaine,
But alas, neither we, nor our Minister can pray so earnestly, nor praise God so heartily, when we communicate at the Lords Table, as God requires, and we ought to doe.

What of that? were not Christs prayers and praises such as must needs be pleasing to the Lord? If they were (as cannot be denied) let us never be discouraged for these imperfections of ours, for Christ was appointed to be an univerfall Minister for all his elect, and in the perfection of his petitions and thanksgiving, all the blemishes that are in ours shall be hidden and covered.

Thirdly, that is for the reproofe of such prophane persons, as come uncheerfully and heavily unto this Sacrament: and if the respect of their governour, of the lawes, and of their own credit did not move them, they would altogether abfent themselves from it: these are wretched persons, that make no more account of this singular pledge of Gods favour, Hath Christ prayed unto his Father for a matter of no worth? and given thanks unto him for that which is of no estimation? But let such unbelieving and sinful wretches goe: and as for us, let us be assured for our comfort, that when Christ became a sufferer to his Father, he was in such favour with him, that he obtained that which was worth the having, and deserved praise and thanksgiving both from him, and from all his people, as that which should be a means of their everlafting happiness.

Verse 22. Take, eate, this is my body, &c.

This is the commandement that our Saviour giveth unto the Communicants, to wit, that they should take the bread, and take his body, eate corporally, and eate spiritually: receive the signe, and the thing signified, the one as well as the other: for so much doth the promise which is annexed (This is my body) imply. As if he should have said, this bread broken before your eyes, doth plainly represent unto you my body (that is, the whole man-hood, a part being put for the whole) which is given for you, and shall be broken for you, that so you may have a spirittual communion with me, as there is a natnrall union betwixt you and this bread which I give unto you:
you: and the like is to be understood of the wine. The words thus expounded, according to the simple meaning thereof, afford us this Doctrine, that

Christ Jesus in the Lords Supper, by corporall food doth give us a most sure possession of himselfe, & neer union with himselfe. The bread and wine are not onely pledges of what shall be bestowed on us, but effectuall means to exhibite the things promised unto us: and therefore Christ useth these words, 

Take eate, this is my body, which is given for you, which is broken for you: and of the wine, Drink ye all of it, this is my blood which is shed for you. Now what can be nearer unto us than our meate & drinke? We have greater interest in nothing than in our food; for that is made a part of our selves. If we eate meate in another mans house, after we have received it, it is more ours than his that prepared it; no one joynt is so neere another, nor the soule so neere to the body, as our food is neere us when once it is digested and turned into nourishment unto us: which doth plainly representer unto us the neare conjunction that is betwixt Christ and every worthy receiver: Hence proceedeth that speech of the Apostle, The cup of blessing which we blesse, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we breake, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? that is, doe not these cause us to have an effectuall communion with him in all his gracious merits?

Now if question should be made, why Christ should make choyse of bread to be a signe in the Sacrament, rather than of any other more excellent and glorious creature?

The answer is, that he did it for divers reasons:

1 Because it was his will, as it is said concerning the Gospell, that it pleased him by the foolishnesse of preaching to save them that beleive.

2 There is besides his pleasure great wisedome in it, because it is very fit to represent that unto us, for which it was ordained, it being substantiall food, and therefore called the staffe of mans life, on which he doth as it were leane, and whereby it is upholden: and besides, this is for every mans stomack, & for every ones state, & may every where be gotten. And yet withall we must know that bread cannot fully expresse
express the efficacie of the spirituall food, Christ Iesus, which we are to feed upon: for bread is earthly, that food is heavenly; bread preserveth the corporall life, and that but for a time, Christ not only preserveth, but giveth, not a natural, but a supernaturall, not a temporall, but an eternall life.

Thirdly, God made choice of bread, in respect of his owne glory, that the weaker the means are, the stronger his hand might appeare to bee. If we had beene to receive gold or gemmes, or precious stones, our senses would have beene more wrought on than our hearts, and we should have more regarded the signe, than the thing signified, the which inconveniences, with other of the like kinde, the Lord by giving us bread hath prevented.

Seeing then that the bread (as also the wine) in the Lords Supper is of such excellent force and use, as to put us in minde of Christs death and bloud-shedding, to testify his undoubted, true, and real presence to every faithfull Communicant, and to refresh and feed the soules of the worthy receivers unto eternall life, in which regard they do as far surmount common bread and wine, as the wax wherewith a pardon or charter, or any other evidence is sealed, is of more worth than that which is to be sold in the Tradel-mans shop: seeing (I say) that the bread is of such singular use, this maketh first, for the _Vfe_ of the confutation of the Papists, which hold that after the words of consecration, there remaineth no bread at all, but that it is transubstantiated into the very body of Christ. Indeed wee grant that as the bread, so Christ his body is there offered and received by every faithfull Communicant: but how? not corporally, but spiritually: not from the Ministers hand, but from God's hand; not by sense, but by faith. And for the further clearing and confirming of this truth, many reasons might bee brought, but I will produce but onely some few.

The first is taken from the expresse words of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures, who mentioneth bread after the words of consecration, (saying, (the bread which we brake.) 1 Cor. 10.16. and againe, Hee that eateth this bread, &c. 1 Cor. 11.27,28.

A second reason is this, we receive the same in substance which
which the Fathers did in the wildernesse, 1 Cor. 10:1. for the 
Manna is there called spiritual meate, and the rocke is said
to be Christ: now it is certaine that they did not corporally
eate the body, and drinke the bloud of Christ, because hee had
not then assumed our nature: and our Saviour denyeth the
Manna to be the true bread which came downe from hea-
ven:

Thirdly, if the bread by the words of confession be tran-
substanted, it will follow that wicked Communicants may
also partake of Christ (for Paul faith, that all, good and bad,
did eate the same spiritual meat, &c. as touching the outward
signe and element) and so cannot afterwards perish, and be
damned; for that whosoever eateh of Christ his flesh, &c. hath
eternal life, and he will raise him at the last day: for he dwel-
leth in us, and we in him: Now it is certaine that there is no
communion betwixt the Lord Iesus and wicked sinners, nei-
ther are they in the state of salvation, neither shall they be rai-
shed up unto glory at the last day: and consequently, they feed
not on him, and the Sacramentall signes are not transubstanti-
ated unto him.

A fourth reason is from the end for which the Sacrament
was instituted by Christ, & is continued in his Church. Then
his meaning was not according to his humane nature, to con-
verse with his people on earth after a bodily manner: for
though he were present with his disciples at the first celebra-
tion sensibly in his manhood, yet the purpose of it for after-
wards was to continue a memoriall of him, when the heavens
should containe him: therefore (faith he) doe this in remem-
brance of me. Which should be superfluous and needlesse, if he
were continually conversant with his members every where
in the Maffe, and in the Lords Supper.

Fifthly, many foule abfurdties doe insue upon this grosse o-
pinion of transubstantiation, for,

First, either one Christ in his bodily presence, must be both
in Heaven and Earth, and in innumerable places there at one
instant: or else be multiplied, and many Christs, and many Sa-
vours, and many redeemers, must be dispersed throughout
all the Churches where the Masse is offered, or the Sacrament
administred
administered: and so when the Lord did first celebrate it, there was to be one Christ breaking and distributing, and another Christ broken and given: one Christ to Peter, another Christ to John, and to every Apostle one.

Secondly, how can cruelty be here avoided? how can men devour him, and not kill him? how should men swallow him up, and yet offer no violence unto him?

A glorious body may be in many places at once, and be eaten and not hurt, because it is not palpable nor mortall.

But when the Disciples first received him, he was both mortal (for he died on the morrow) and palpable, for he was in an agony and torment that night: and therefore how commeth it to passe that the nailes should have force to kill him, which only pierced some part of his body, rather than their teeth which chewed him whole?

But he himselfe saith, This is my Body.

So it is sacramentally, and by a trope: but not literally and simply, as the words may be misconstrued. The like kind of speech is used in other Sacraments: Circumcision is called the covenant, Gen. 17.13. the Lamb is called the Passover, Ex. 12.11. the rock Christ, 1 Cor. 10.14. And is not the cup said as well to be the blood of the new Testament: and yet our Saviour calleth the consecrated wine the fruit of the vine, Mat. 26.29.

But Christ saith, John 6.53.55. Except ye eate the flesh of the Sonne of man, and drinke his blood, ye have no life in you, for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drinke indeed.

He speaketh not there of the Sacrament, but rather of the faithfull imbracing of him in this word; for the Lords Supper was never before, nor at that time instituted, & as yet the words of consecration had not beene spoken: and therefore if this be understood literally without the spirituall meaning thereof, it will follow, that either Transubstantiation was before the Lords Supper, or the Lords Supper before the night in which he was betrayed. And in this place hee maketh no mention of bread to be turned into his body: and the words wrested, would rather argue his body to be transubstantiated into bread, or flesh, than bread to be changed into his body.
Secondly, it is this received for the contribution of them that

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beloved. None but those that are friends can eat of his dainties, and those that are friends will eat of the same: and therefore if ever we would shew our selves to be Christ his friends, if we would enjoy the feeling of his love unto us, and be assured of our love towards him, let us refresh our souls at this banquet, and not let our Saviour be at cost in vain, in making so good and so large provision for vs.

Verse 23. Also he took the Cup, &c.

In that wine is joyned with the bread, this point may be noted, that Jesus Christ in the Sacrament doth make us a full meale.

We have here not onely bread, but wine, not onely the body of Christ, but his bloud also, even the whole Christ with all his graces offered unto us. This is promised in the Prophecy of Isaiah, where it is said, In this mountaine shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, even a feast of mixed wines, &c. Meaning that he would make for his Church compleat provision, whatsoever might bee for health, or strength, or delight. And the like is proposed in the ninth Chapter of the Proverbs: and there is cause why wee should thinke this to be so, for

First, he is of sufficient ability, so that he can doe it. And

Secondly, his love unto us his people is such, that he is willing and ready to doe it. Some men when they make feasts, could provide variety of good cheare, but they are loth to goe to the charges: others are frank and liberall enough, but they want ability to give great entertainment, so that they speake that truly, which others do vaine-gloriously; I am sorry that your cheere is no better. But it is otherwise with the Lord; as hee is bountifull and will not spare cost, to is hee rich in all abundance of heavenly treasures, and needs not spare cost, and therefore seeing Christ hath prayed that all his guests might have of the best, they shall not faile of any thing that their heart can desire and long for.

Especially seeing it is for his owne glory. A mortall sinfull man, even the King of Persia, for the setting forth of his magnificreate and greatness, spared no cost in the feast that hee

 testified. Christ maketh us a full meale.

Reasons.
made unto his Princes: much lesse will the Lord of glory in this banquet which he provideth for his people, seeing that he is incomparably better able: and more bountifull: and withall feeth and considereth the severall needs and necessities of all his children.

Here then in the first place, is confuted the error of Popish Priests, that will have but one kinde of food at this table, and to cause the people to have a dry feast, without any wine at all: thus doe they sacrilegiously robb Gods people of that allowance which he hath appointed for them, & him of that glory which is due in respect of his large bounty in this behalfe. For whereas the Lord instituted the cup as well as the bread, and prayed and gave thankes for the one as well as for the other, bidding them drinke all of the wine, as well as eate of the bread: they teach and practise the cleane contrary. And that their sacrilegide may not seeme so vile as in truth it is, they produce some shewes of reason for this their dealing. It is

needlesse (say they) to add the wine unto the bread, for when we receive that, we feed on the whole Christ, and partaking of his body, wee must needs withall partake of his bloud, which is contained in the veines.

See here how shamelessly they controule Christ himselfe: for if we receive the bloud in receiving his body, why did he ordaine the cup as well as the bread?

They answer, that Christ gave it onely to Ministers, and so doe they.

So did he the bread also, and therefore by the same reason, they may administer neither bread nor wine unto the Laity: and what reason can they alledge why Ministers may not receive the bloud in the veines, as well as any other: But the words of Christ may decide this controversy when he saith, Drink ye all of this, this is my bloud, &c. which is shed for you & for many, for the remission of sinnes. And who are those many? even all that should afterwards beleive in him. To those for whom Christ his bloud was shed, the cup must bee administered: but his bloud was shed for private men, as well as for Ministers: and therefore the cup must be administered to them as well as unto the Apostles themselves.

A second
A second use of this point is for instruction, that seeing there is such plenty and variety of all good things offered us at this banquet, no other feasting, or voluptuous living should either keepe us from it, or make us come unworthily unto it: yet how many are there, that doe so glut themselves with eating and drinking, and surfeiting on their carnall delights, that they are altogether unfit for the Lords Table?

Thirdly, here is matter of rejoicing for Gods poor servants, that though they fare hard at home, yet they may have as good refreshing as any other in the Lords house: for Christ Iesus dore there provide a full meale for them. This was Davids comfort when he was banished from the assemblies of Saints, and could not be present at the Sacrament and sacrifices: when he could but remember that hee had beene at them, and also beene a profitable communicant as oft as he could, it did much refresh his soule, so that it was satisfied as with marrow and fatnesse, with the very meditation thereof; he had received such store of grace from Gods Ordinances, as such a strong apprehension of his favour, that he counted it better than life it selfe.

And the consideration thereof did not only comfort his soule, but helped him also in his bodily necessities, in somuch that when hee was in a barren and dry Wilderness, pinched with hunger, and pressed with thirst, the very remembrance of those things that were past long before, did cause him more cheerfully to undergo all his penury and want: If hee then tooke such comfort therein, in his absence, how much more should we being present at the same?

Verse 24. This is my bloud of the new Testament, &c.

That is, this is a signe and seale of the new Testament: which is so called, because therby Iesus Christ doth bequeath unto his people, as all the benefits of this life, so the speciall blessing of all, even eternall life: and this is termed a new Testament, in respect of that which was made in the time of the law. That was, & this is: when that was insufficient in some respects the Lord abolished it, and established this in stead thereof, as being much better than that; for though both of them ayme at salvation by Christ, yet it is in a different manner: for
That was obscure, consisting in rites and ceremonies, whereby Christ was darkly prefigured: but this is more plain and perspicuous, so that God's mercy and goodness towards us in his Son, may more clearly and evidently be discerned in this one Sacrament, then it could by all their sacrifices. Then the blood of beasts was shed in stead of Christ's, but now hath he shed his own blood for us.

Secondly, that Testament was appropriated to a few, and did belong properly to the nation of the Jews alone: & if any other nations would have their part in it, they must unite themselves unto the Jews: but this hath a larger extent, and pertaineth to all God's Elect throughout the whole world.

Thirdly, that conveyed unto men a smaller measure of grace: this offereth great plenty and store thereof.

Fourthly, that was temporary, and to endure but a while, this is perpetually, and shall last to the end of the world: and thus much for the differences betwixt the old Testament and the new. Now in that our Saviour faith, *This is my blood of the new Testament*, &c. The Doctrine is, that

Faithfull Communicants at the Lords Table come not onely to be refreshed at a feast, but to be inriched by a legacy: Christ's will & Testament being there confirmed unto them.

The particular legacies which Christ Jesus hath bequeathed unto them, are specified in the Epistle to the Hebrews, *This is the Testament that I will make unto them, after those days, faith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, & in their minds I will write them, & their sins and iniquities will I remember no more*. The substance of which covenant is this, that all their sins shall be forgiven, & both the guilt and punishment thereof wholly removed: yea they shall not only be justified, but also sanctified, the laws of God & his promises shall be written in their minds, so that they shall have the knowledge of them and in their hearts, so that they shall have the comfort, & feeling, and fruition of them: they shall not onely have interest in all God's graces and blessings, but according to their neede shall have the use and enjoyment thereof. And what treasures are comparable unto these? If wee should receive many ten thousand pounds at every Sermon and Sacrament, it were nothing
thing to this legacy, which is sealed unto us in the Lords Supper: the worth whereof is so much the greater, by how much it hath more excellent appurtenances annexed unto it beyond that, which other Wills have.

First, when other legacies are paid, they can be no more demanded: but this is still due unto us; it is as it were a continual rent, and the more we receive, the greater assurance have we of a larger portion, both grace and glory.

Secondly, whereas when men have bequeathed any thing unto us, we must stay for it till their breath be out of their bodies; here it is otherwise; when once we have this Testament sealed unto us, we shall have present participation of the things therein made sure unto us, because the Testator is already deceased.

Thirdly, whereas others leave executors to performe their Wills, the Lord liveth for ever, so that he himselfe that made it, will also execute it: and therefore as it is called a Testament, so it is else-where termed a Covenant: for the fulfilling whereof, the Lord hath entred into bonds, and pawned his word and promise, his truth and fidelity, his oath, yea himselfe, his nature, and all that he hath: so that it is impossible he should faile in performing the least clause thereof. The use thereof shall be.

First, for instruction, that seeing there is such a rich treasure offered unto worthy receivers of the Lords Supper, therefore we should not suffer any earthly commodities, as oxen, farmes, Luke 14, or the like to keep us from the same.

Secondly, here is comfort for Gods poore servants: albeit they have but a small quantitie of earthly things, seeing they have such interest in Christ his Will, their state is happy; they have a faire living, and a goodly heritage; the Lord himselfe is their portion: and therefore though they have not these outward things themselves, yet seeing they have the owner and commander of them to be theirs, they are richly provided for, Christ being theirs, all is theirs. And as in respect of themselves, so also of their children, this offereth them matter of consolation. Alas poore creatures (say many) we have little or nothing to leave them; but have you procured them a legacie?
in Christ his will? if you do so, though they have little, hee hath much, and therefore never be afraid; they shall be sufficiently provided for.

Thirdly, by this point all such as have beene communicants at the Lords Table, may make tryall of themselves, whether they have beene worthy receivers or not: hath the Lord imparted his graces unto them? have they gotten assurance of the remission of their sinnes, and the power of the word in their hearts to quell the strength of their corruptions? &c. If they find this in themselves, they may be assured that the Lord hath graciously received them into his favour; but if they find no increase of knowledge nor desire thereof; no vertue of Christ to crucifie their lusts: and to quicken them to good duties, &c. they may as certainly conclude on the other side, that they came unworthily and unpreparedly, and therefore speed accordingly, being sent away altogether barren & empty. For concerning those that are within the covenant, it is laid; They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, & every man his brother, (saying) know the Lord (they were past that,) for (faith the Lord) they shall all know me) in a competent measure (from the least of them unto the greatest.

The end of the tenth Sermon.
A profitable Metaphrase, upon the
Epistle of Paul to the Colossians.

CHAP. I.

I Paul understanding that there are that go about to spoyle you, and to make a prey of you, partly by shew of wisdome and Philosophy, and partly by the beggerly elements of the world, or Ceremonies of the Iewes, thought it needfull to write unto you, that according as ye have received Iesus Christ at the first, even so that ye would abide and proceed further in him, that you may be rooted and further built in the faith.

Verse 1. Paul an Apostle of Iesus Christ, by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother.

And that I write unto you, know that I do it with warrant: for I am an Apostle of Iesus Christ, and not tyed to any particular congregation, or to one Province, yea, or to one Kingdom, but am an Ambas-ador, and have commission to all the world. Neither do I come to this charge of mine owne will, or of the will of any other man, but by the will of God: and the same his revealed will. And albeit my authority herein be sufficient to convince all men of the truth I write of, yet for further and stronger confirmation thereof, I have joyned Timotheus, my welbeloved brother, to beare record with me, that in the mouth of two witnesses, the truth may be more surely establisshed.

Verse 2. To them which are at Colosse, Saints, and faithfull brethren in Christ, Grace be with you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Iesus Christ.

And considering that the blessing of all labour dependeth upon the Lord, our beginning is with hearty prayer unto God for the grace and favour of God, to be freely given, together with
with all blessings, both of this life, and of that which is to come, from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, to you Colossians; yet not all that dwell in that City, but to those which by faith are Saints and brethren, not in the flesh, but in Jesus Christ.

Verse 3. *We give thanks unto God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, always praying for you.*

And that you may have further testimony of our love towards you, know you that we do continually both pray and give thanks to God for you: whom, to separate from all false gods, I call the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 4. *Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of your love towards all Saints.*

For, the report of your profession and piety in Jesus Christ, and of your love towards all Saints, is come unto us.

Verse 5. *For the hopes sake which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye have heard before by the word of truth, which is the Gospel.*

Which both profession and love we know to be sincere in that they are upheld in you through the hope and expectation of a treasure laid up, not on earth, but in heaven; which hope you have conceived, not of your owne fantasie, or of the word of any man, but by the word of truth, that is to say, the Gospel.

Verse 6. *Which is come unto you, even as it is unto all the world, and is fruitfull, as it is also among you, from the day that ye heard, and truly knew the grace of God.*

And if you aske what is that truth or Gospel? verily none other than that which is preached among you now: which is not among you alone, but is preached in all the world, a certaine note of the truth thereof: there having never beene, nor ever shal be any doctrine, which hath leavened so great a lump of dough as is the world, but onely the Gospel. And for further assurance that it is the truth of God, I offer this to your consideration, that as in the other places of the world, to among you, it hath brought forth fruit, even from the first time you have truly & sincerely acknowledged this grace of God.
Verfe 7. As ye also learned of Epaphras our deare fellow-
servant, which is for you a faithfull Minister of Chrift.

Where if you lay, we know not what doctrine is preached
in all the world, nor what fruit it hath brought forth; although
it be no other thing than the common and constant report
which many may bring unto you: yet to joyne neare unto you,
and to rid you of all doubt, which is the true Gospel of Chrift,
it is even the very fame that you have learned of Epaphras;
whom, if you love me, you must love, as being my beloved
fellow-fervant in Chrift; yea, if you love yourselves, you must
respect him, as being a faithfull Minister of Chrift for you.

Verfe 8. Who hath alfo declared unto us your love, which ye
have by the Spirit.

Who made manifest unto us your true love, not onely na-
turall, but that especially which is spirituall, whereof the Spi-
rit is the author.

Verfe 9. For this caufe we alfo, since the day we heard of it,
ceafe not to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be fulfilled
with the knowledge of his will, in all wifedome, and spirituall
understanding.

And as we give thanks for your good, and fo for the fame
cause that you have well begun (both because you should not
go backe againe, and for that you have not attained to perfe-
don) even from the first day we heard of you, we never give
over praying for you, making this fuit, that you may be filled
with the knowledge of his will, in all wifedome and under-
standing, whereof the holy Ghoft is the author.

Ver. 10. That ye might walke worthy of the Lord, and please
him in all things, being fruitfull in all good worke, and increa-
sing in the knowledge of God.

Not that you should content your selves with a bare know-
ledge and contemplation of heavenly things, but that you
walke worthy of thofe whom the Lord hath called to fuch
honour, to a full and whole pleafing of him, both by bringing
forth fruit in every good worke, and by being increased in the
knowledge of God.

Verfe 11. Strengthened with all might, through his glorious
power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulnesse.

Wherein
Wherin because there are many difficulties and hindrances laid in our way, our suit also is, that you may be strengthened with all manner of strength, according to that glorious power, which being in God, he is able to furnish you with; that even with joy, you may be able to beare all troubles, how grievous and how continually soever they be.

Ver. 12. Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light.

And as we give not over praying for you, so do we not cease to give thanks to God the Father, because that it is he that by his holy Spirit hath made us fit to have a part in the inheritance of Saints: whom whether we consider as they are in this world by reason of the comfort and knowledge of God, or as they shall be in the world to come, by reason of their perfect blessedness, may well be said to be in light.

Verse 13. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his deare Sonne.

This part of our inheritance standeth first, in that God with a mercifull hand pulled us out, both of the present darkness of ignorance and disobedience, and from that which is to come even the most fearful punishment of them both. And secondly, it standeth in this, that the same God hath translated us into the kingdom of his most deare Sonne, which being here begun, shall be accomplished in the life to come.

Verse 14. In whom we have redemption through his bloud; that is, the forgiveness of sinnes.

In which his deare Sonne we have a full redemption, whereof one part which is our justification, we have already received, waiting for that which remaineth, even the redemption of our bodies: all which redemption is purchased unto us in the obedience of the Sonne, which obedience was specially, and most significantly declared in the shedding of his bloud.

Verse 15. Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-borne of every creature.
This Christ, that you may know what plentifull and rich redemption you have in him, to the end that you may rest in him alone, is thus set forth to you as followeth. As touching his person standing of two natures, he is the most lively and expressive image and character of God, not onely of his qualities (if yet there were any qualities in the Godhead) but of his very nature and essence; in whom we behold God which is invisible, and touch him which is inseparable, which is the principal heir of all the creatures in the world, in whom we that believe have right unto them.

Verse 16. For by him were all things created, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, things visible and invisible: whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him.

For by him all things are created in heaven and in earth, visible & invisible, even the Angels themselves, to the worshipping of whom ye are seduced: and amongst them all of what degree or place soever they be: whether they sit in Thrones, or whether they have Lordship, Principalities or power over other Angels, all things are made by him and for him.

Ver. 17. And he is before all things, & in him all things consist. Wherefore he is before all things, and all things have their continuance, and are uphelden by him.

Verse 18. And he is the head of the body of the Church: he is the beginning, and the first-borne of the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence.

And as touching the office which he executeth in respect of both natures, he is the head of the Church, which is his body, and he is the first fruits and first begotten of the dead, not onely in respect that himselfe is risen, but also that he is the author of resurrection, which is here begun, and shall be perfected in the last day, when he shall change these vile bodies, and make them like his glorious body.

Verse 19. For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell.
For in him it is the good pleasure of God, that the grace of the Spirit should without measure fully dwell.

Verse 20. And by him to reconcile all things unto himselfe, and to set at peace, through the blood of his Cross both the things in earth, and the things in heaven.

That by him he might reconcile unto himselfe, making peace by the death of his Cross, between God and all men, whether it be they which having believed in him before his coming, are now in heaven: or those which believing in earth, do believe in him.

Verse 21. And you which were in times past strangers and enemies, because your minds were set in evil works, hath he now also reconciled.

Wherefore having reconciled all unto himselfe, he hath reconciled you also; which benefit that it might be the better esteemed, consider what ye were when he reconciled you, strangers from God, yea enemies in your very understanding, which is the chiefest, and therefore much more in other parts: which enmity was made manifest by your evil works.

Verse 22. In the body of his flesh through death, to make you holy and unblameable, and without fault in his sight.

I say now he hath reconciled you in his humane nature, like unto ours, by his death, to the end he might make you holy, & without spot, and blameless in all sincerity, as before himselfe.

Verse 23. If ye continue grounded and established in the faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, whereof ye have heard, and which hath been preached to every creature which is under heaven, whereof I Paul am a Minister.

And this reconciliation know no other wise to belong unto you than ye abide grounded and settled in faith, and be not carried away from the hope you have heard in the Gospel, the truth whereof appeareth, in that in a short time it hath been preached to all nations under the cope of heaven; of which Gospel I myselfe am a Minister.

Verse 24. Now rejoice I in my sufferings for you, and fulfill the rest of the afflictions of Christ in the flesh for his bodies sake, which is the Church.
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Wherein it ought not to dismay you that I am in bonds, seeing myselfe do rejoice in it: seeing it is not for redemption (which Christ alone hath wrought) but for the confirmation of your faith, and example of your patience: & seeing thereby are fulfilled the passions which are yet wanting unto the body of Christ, which is the Church, which must be like unto Christ her head in suffering, that it may be like unto him in glory. And finally, since it is not for your good alone, but for the good of the whole body of Christ, which is the Church.

Verse 25. Whereof I am a Minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given me unto you, ward to fulfill the word of God.

Whereof as of the Gospell I am a Minister, and that by the ordinance of God, who committed a stewardship unto me, that in you might be fulfilled the word of God.

Verse 26. Which is the mystery hid since the world began, and from all ages, but now is made manifest to his Saints.

I meane the secret of the Gospell, so worthily called, for that it hath beene hidden from all times and generations hitherto: and now is made manifest not to all, but to his Saints.

Verse 27. To whom God would make knowne what is the riches of his glorious mystery among the Gentiles, which riches is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Even to as many as God of his good will would make knowne the glorious riches of his secret among the Gentiles, which glorious riches is Christ in you, the same alone, by whom we may hope for glory.

Verse 28. Whom we preach, admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisedome, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

The same also whom we do preach, partly admonishing all sorts of men, and partly teaching all sorts of men, all heavenly wisedome; thereby to present men of all sorts, perfectly wise, and blessed, through Jesus Christ.

Verse 29. Whereunto I also labour and strive, according to his working which worketh in me mightily.
Whereunto I labour sore, striving forcibly, which yet would be unfruitfull, were it not that God worketh by his Spirit mightily with my Ministerie.

CHAP. II.

Verse 1. For, I would ye knew what great fighting I have for your sakes, and for them of Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my person in the flesh.

That which I say of my grievous labour and strife for all men, is truly verified of you: for I would not have you ignorant of the great agony and strife for you, and for those that are in the Church of Laodicea, and others that are about you in the Countries of Phrygia, notwithstanding that they never saw my person.

Verse 2. That their hearts might be comforted, and they knit together in love, and in all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to know the mystery of God, even the Father, and of Christ.

And my care and thought is, that through the preaching of the Gospel you might be comforted at the heart by a knitting, setting together, and compacting of your minds one to another, through abundance of persuaded understanding, and acknowledgement of the mystery of God, that is to say, of the Father, and of Christ.

Verse 3. In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

In which Christ are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge treasured up, but yet hidden from the natural man.

Verse 4. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

The drift of all the commendations of the preaching of the Gospel, and of Christ, whom the Gospel doth set forth and preach unto you is that no man by apparant and persuaded speeches do transport you.

Ver. 5. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the
the Spirit, rejoicing and beholding your order, and your steadfast faith in Christ.

Where you ask, how I that never saw you, should be thus careful of you: and should care for you so much, that never came to see you; know, that although I be absent as touching the flesh, yet I am present with as touching the Spirit, rejoicing to see your good order, and policy of the Church, caused through the soundness of the faith which is towards Christ.

Verse 6. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.

Wherefore as you have received the Lord Jesus Christ, so let it appear by your conversation, as in all other things, so in holding fast the truth of the Gospel.

Verse 7. Rooted and built in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Being rooted and built up in him, and strengthened in the faith, and that with thanksgiving for the mercy you have received in Christ.

Verse 8. Beware lest there be any man that spoyle you through Philosophie, and vaine deceit, through the traditions of men, according to the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Looke about you by sound knowledge of the truth, lest any of what opinion, holinesse, or learning forever, by either shew of reason, coming from the braine of men, which hath beene received from hand to hand, and yet is nothing else but a deceit or sleight, or else by the ceremonies of the Law, wherein as by certaine rudiments or A.B.C. the people of God as children were trained to this perfection of Doctrine, which now hath shined out unto you, doe vanquish you, and draw you before them, as prisoners fast bound in chains and manacles of errors: yea, take heed of any doctrine whatsoever, that either taketh anything away from Christ, or placeth any the least jot of salvation other-where than in him.

Ver. 9. For in him dwelleth all the fulnesse of the Godhead bodily.

For seeing that in the nature of Christ, the fulnesse of the Godhead

V
God-head doth personally rest and abide, that both the natures of the God-head & the man-hood, make but one Christ, what is there needful for your salvation, that you may not have abundantly in him?.

Verse 10. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all Principality and Power.

Considering that this fulness of all graces which is in him, he hath not for himself but for you, with all whatsoever you have need of unto salvation.

And the same Christ howsoever a little inferior to Angels as touching his man-hood, yet now according to his man-hood is head, not onely of the Church (as is aforesaid) but of all Powers and Principalities that are in heaven, whereby may appeare their errour, which worship Angels.

Verse 11. In whom also ye are circumcised with circumcision made without hands, by putting off the sinfull body of the flesh, through the circumcision of Christ.

Having all fulness and sufficiency in him, it followeth that what you would have, you seek in him, which is the circumcision of the fore-skinne, who was circumcised not for himselfe but for you. And in him you have a more plenteous circumcision than that which you so greedily pursue: for that is made with the bodily hands of man, which can goe no further than the flesh: whereas this circumcision is made with the finger of God, which entereth into the heart: whereof one fruit is, the cutting off of the whole body and mass of sinne, which riseth and budeth from the carnall corruption of originall sinne.

Verse 12. In that ye are buried with him through baptism, in whom ye are also raised up together, through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead.

Where if you reply, that Abraham and other godly Patriarchs, and Fathers under the law, had this circumcision of the heart, and yet notwithstanding received the outward cutting of the fore-skinne for a seale of that inward circumcision, I grant; and therefore you have for an outward seale of your inward
inward cutting and purging your corruption, the Sacrament of Baptism: a seal, that with Christ you are buried unto sin: that sin is truly mortified and deadned in you, that it should no more reign over you, nor you should live to it.

Another fruit also of this circumcision, whereof Baptism is a seal, that with Christ you are raised up to newness of life, through faith, which God hath wrought in you by the same almighty power, whereby he hath raised Christ from the dead.

Verse 13. And ye which are dead in sins, and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him forgiving you all your trespasses.

And no marvail though you have need of the same power to quicken you, which the Father declared in the raising up of his Son, seeing also you are dead in sins, shadowed & set forth by the circumcision of the flesh, and at once quickened together with him, in having all your sins forgiven you.

Verse 14. And putting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, he even took it out of the way, and fastened it upon the Cross.

As by his death he hath gotten us remission of sins, so by the same he hath blotted out the hand-writing which was witness of our sins, as of a debt, wherein we stood bound to God: which hand-writing stoodeth in rites and ceremonies of the Law which by his death is not only blotted out, but by the same nailes whereby his blessed hands and feet were nailed to the Cross, as it were nailed through and cancelled.

Verse 15. And hath spoiled the Principalities, and Powers, and hath made a shew of them openly, and hath triumphed over them in the same Cross.

Neither is it marvell if by his Cross these enemies were done away, seeing upon the same Cross he hath spoiled the Devil, and all the power and haust of Hell: and having disarmed them, he made an open shew of them, triumphing upon them in his Cross, where they thought utterly to have vanquished and overcome him.

Verse 16. Let no man therefore condemn you in meat & drink,
or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days.

Wherefore as by this means circumcision is taken away, so likewise is taken away difference of all meats and days. Therefore as in Christ, no man should condemne you for the use of any meat and drink, or in respect of a feast-day, whether it be new Moone, or the three solemn Sabbaths; so if any man either ignorantly, or maliciously doe condemne you, you shall not need to feare their judgement.

Ver. 17. Which are but a shadow of things to come: but the body is of Christ.

Considering that these things were but shadowes, which have no more place, Christ the head being come.

Ver. 18. Let no man at his pleafure bear rule over you by humblenes of mind, and worshipping of Angels, advancing himselfe in those things which he never saw, rashly put up with his fleshy minde.

Now having spoken of the Elements of the world, which are the ceremonies of the law, I come to the vaine Philosophy. I gave you warning of; against the which I observe this rule, that you give no man, of what shew soever, this power over you, that for his own lust, in matters pertaining to God, hee usurpe authority; howsoever the doctrine he bring carry a shew of humility: as for example, those that teach the worshipping of Angels, as meanes to come more easilly to Christ. In which thing, what do they else but thrust themselves into things they never knew, only grounded upon a proud conceit of their fleshy mind, notwithstanding their great pretence of humility?

V. 19. And holdeth not the head, whereof all the body furnished & knit together by joynts & bonds increaseth with the increasing of God.

Which error ought so much the more to be abhorred, as they which are infected with it, do not in deed, whatsoever they do in word, hold Christ fast, which is the head of the Church: of whom the whole body, as it were by joynts and bonds, being furnished and compact together, is enriched & increased with an increase which God both alloweth and giveth.

Ver. 20. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ, from the ordinances of
of the world, why, as though ye lived in the world, are ye burdened with traditions?

Now seeing you are dead with Christ, by whose death you are delivered from the ceremonies of God's own Law, whereewith as with certaine rudiments the people of the Jews were trained to further perfection, which now they have attained unto in the Doctrine of the Gospel, why as though you lived still in the world, do you suffer your selves to be charged with the ceremonies of the world?

Verse 21. As touch not, taste not, handle not.

I say that which you and your false Teachers say, Touch not such a thing, taste not such a meat, handle not such a one.

Verse 22. Which all perish with the using, and are after the commandements and Doctrines of men.

All which things seeing that through the use of them they are consumed, have no strength to life everlasting, especially being nothing but the doctrines and commandments of men.

Verse 23. Which things have indeed a shew of wisedome in voluntary religion, and humblenesse of minde, and in not sparing the body: neither have they it in any estimation to satisife the flesh.

I deny not but that they have a colour and shew of wisedome, partly, in that in them there is a worship over and above that which God hath commanded, to whom no service is sufficient which we can do: partly through a kinde of humility, and partly in a hard usage of the body; which yet are of no price, seeing they are of things wherewith the flesh is filled.

**Chap. III.**

Verse 1. If ye then be risen with Christ, seeke those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

Being through faith ingrafted, and incorporated into Christ (as hath beene said, and as your selves professe) as touching sinne, dead and buried with him: and as touching newnesse of life, quickened and risen againe: Now if in truth you
you be risen with Christ, then as Christ rising remained not here on earth, but ascended up into heaven, where under God, as touching his man-hood, he is exalted in power and majesty above all powers and principalities in heaven and earth; so you by seeing, and seeking after the graces that come from above, ascend up whither he is gone.

Verse 2. Set your affections on things that are above, and not on things which are on the earth.

And to the intent you may carefully seek after them, ye must first favour and set your affections upon the things that are above, and consequently not to set your affections upon either the former corruptions of false doctrine, or else upon the defilements of a corrupt conversation of life: or finally, upon the perishable transitory things of this base world, all which are mere earthly.

Verse 3. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Unto which distaste of earthy things you are called, in that you being risen with Christ, are consequently dead with him. Where if haply you should object, that there is small wisdom to quit your former life, not being assured of another, & should aske how it should appeare you live, seeing besides the affections you are exposted unto, you feel the daily incumbrance of sinne, which dwelleth in your mortall bodies: It is true that it is not so apparant, as that which is hidden from the world, and of your selves not so fully and feelingly understood, Howbeit that ought not to dismay you: first, for that it is laid up with God, who is a true keeper of it. And secondly, for that as your life is hidden, so is Christ's life and glory, who is the head.

Verse 4. When Christ which is our life, shall appeare, then shall ye also appeare with him in glory.

And lastly, for that when Christ, of whom you have life, shall be made manifest in glory, then shall you also with him appeare glorious.

Verse 5. Mortifie therefore your members, which are on the earth, fornication, uncleanness, the inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is Idolatry.

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Wherefore being assured of another life, mortifie your members that are earthly and carnall. If you aske what? I cannot reckon up all, but I will touch some, those specially that you are infected with, whereby you may easily conceive of the rest, such as are fornication, uncleane behaviour, wantonnesse, evil concupiscence, and covetousnesse, which besides the excessive desire of goods, is a kinde of idolatry, for that men do put their trust in riches, that are covetous.

Verse 6. For the which things sake, the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.

For every one of the which, the wrath of God cometh on those that remaine in them.

Verse 7. Wherein ye also walked once, when ye lived in them.

And the rather mortifie these sinnes as in times past you have practised them, when being given unto them, your natural corruption as a kinde of life, gave power and moving for the practise of them.

Verse 8. But now put ye away even all these things: wrath, anger, maliciousnesse, cursed speaking, filthy speaking out of your mouth.

Now therefore that you are called to the hope of a better life, lay aside farre from you, as things you cannot abide the sight of, not onely the groller sinnes before mentioned, but also all manner of sinne, without endeavour, whereof there is no true mortification. For example, anger, heat, from whence commeth malice, which breaketh out at the mouth, by railing and reviling.

Verse 9. Lye not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his works.

Specially when you cannot truly charge them, take heed you lye not one against another: but putting off, as an old and rotten garment, the old man, which you bring from your mothers wombe, with the actions thereof, as it were so many tatters.

Verse 10. And have put on the new, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.

V 4 Now,
Now left being found naked you be ashamed, put on, as a new and comely garment, the new man: which if you aske what it is, it is the same part which is renewed in you, to the likenesst of him that made you, which likenesst consisteth in the knowledge of God.

Verse 11. Where is neither Grecian nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond, free, but Christ is all, and in all things.

Whereby shall come to passe, that howsoever the false teachers place it in being a Jew, rather than being a Gentile: circumcised rather than uncircumcised: and the opinion of the common sort is, that the Barbarian and Scythian is in a farre worse case than the Romane, and the servant but a beast in respect of the free-man: yet with God there is no difference, seeing Christ, whom by a new birth they have put on, is in all, and is all that God respecteth, and accepteth of.

Verse 12. Now therefore as the Elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercy, kindness, humility of mind, meekness, long-suffering.

To come to a more particular description of the new man, decke your selves (as it becommeth the Elect of God, and such as are holy through his love, the cause both of your election and holiness) with tender compassion, easinesse to be imploied, humilitie, mildnesse, long-suffering.

Verse 13. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrell to another; even as Christ forgave you, even so do ye.

Which vertues must be declared effectually, not onely in forbearing one another, but also in frankly forgiving one another, if any have a quarrell one against another, even as Christ hath frankly forgiven you; even so do ye.

Verse 14. And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectnesse.

And though those be singular vertues, yet above them all, as the root and mother of them, decke your selves with love, which is as it were a bond to bind in a bundle those, and all other vertues tending to perfection, and, without which there
is no soundness in any of them, what glittering shew soever they carry.

Verse 15. *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which ye are called in one body, and be ye amiable.*

And though the spirit of the old man within you, hath a desire to contend, yet let the peace of God bear the sway, and overcome: unto the which peace you are evidently called, in that you are members of one mystical body: for the better entertainment of which peace, be grateful one to another, as well in conferring, as in requiting benefits.

Verse 16. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you plenteously in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing your owne selves in Psalms, and Hymnes, and spirituall Songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

To the end you may refrain all the vices aforesaid, and practice all the virtues aforesaid, together with all other vices to be avoided, and virtues to be embraced, it is necessary that you be exhorted, that the Word of God be as familiar unto you, as if now in one house it dwelt with you, that you have it also plentifully, and as it were treasured up against the day of need. Last of all, that you have it in all wisdom, making choice both of the things that are most important in it, and especially that which doth most concern your selves, & your owne particular use, avoiding all curious questions, tending rather to strife, than to edification of God; which is by faith. And as you must have it for your owne use, so also for the use of others, as well in teaching those that are ignorant, as in admonishing those that walk not according to their knowledge they have received.

And in your meetings to make merry, let your mirth be shewed forth in Psalms, singing as well with instrument as with voice: also with Hymnes of thanksgiving for benefits received: and for further variety against irksomenesse which our nature easily falleth into, with songs of praising God for his noble acts, all spirituall unto the Lord, not only with the voice, but especially with the heart, with such both tune and gesture as may give grace to the hearer.
Ver. 17. And whatsoever ye shall do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God even the Father by him.

To conclude (because it is infinite to speak of all things particularly) whatsoever you do in word or deed, let it be such, as calling on the Name of God in Jesus Christ, for the good direction in them, you may returne with thankfulness to God the Father through Jesus Christ, the only Mediatour betweene God and us.

Verse 18. Wives submit yourselves unto your husbands, as it is comely in the Lord.

Having instructed you in the duties which are generall to all, I come to informe you in those that are speciall, according to the severall callings of every one of you, as those which will easily come from you, if you have well profited in the former. Now according to the order God himselfe keepeth in the first Commandement, I will begin with the duties of inferiours.

You wives therefore, notwithstanding you have other duties, I exhort you to that which is hardest for you, wherein you are customably shortest, and being performed, others will easily follow; that you be subject and obedient, as to others that may be above you (as Parents and Magistrates) so especially unto your owne husbands, as that which is the most comely thing of all, because you I know strive to comeliness. Which obedience and subjection is not yet so absolute, and so generall, but it hath this exception, so farre as you are commanded things not unlawful by the Word of God.

Verse 19. Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter unto them.

You husbands although you owe sundry duties unto your wives, yet specially I exhort you to love them dearly, as that which you are most customably shortest in; and which being throughly settled in you, will easily pull all other duties after it. And therefore be not bitter towards them, which cannot stand with love.

Verse 20. Children, obey your parents in all things, for that is well pleasing unto the Lord.

You children, from a heart subdued, and truly humble, obey your
Upon the Colossians.

Chap. 3.

your parents, not by halves, and so farre as they command things to your liking, but in all things not contrary to the Word of God, although it be to the crossing of your desires: for which cause let it be always before your eyes as a goade to stirre you up to this obedience, that in so doing you shall not onely please your Parents, but do a thing acceptable to the Lord himselfe.

Verfe 21. Fathers provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

You Parents abuse not the authority or the playle mindes of your children, either by commanding things unlawfull, or by hard usage of them to provoke them to any undutifullnesse towards you, or to have no courage or comfort to do the things required of them.

Ver. 22. Servants be obedient unto them that are your Masters, according to the flesh, in all things, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singlenesse of heart, fearing God.

You Servants, from a minde subdued, obey your Masters, whose commandement over you, is but for a time, whiles you are in this fraile estate, and that in all things which may stand with the keeping of a good conscience. Now your service must not be alone when your Masters stand by and looke on, as seeking onely to please your Masters: but in singlenesse of heart as fearing God, whose eye is always upon you, when your masters eye is off.

Ver. 23. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.

Your service ought also to be voluntary and cheerefull, as that which is due to the Lord, who loveth a cheerefull giver, and not as unto man that cannot discern whether it be done frankly.

Verfe 24. Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Knowing that you shall receive in reward from the Lord, life, as an inheritance which he will freely, as upon his children, bestow upon you: for it ought to uphold you in your dutifull service, that you serve not so much your Masters which are
are but men, and therefore sometimes unthankful and unable to recompence; but the Lord, who is both able, and will recompence your well-doing.

Verse 25. But he that doth wrong, he shall receive for the wrong that he hath done, and there is no respect of persons.

Remembring on the other side that whosoever he be that doth wrong, whether master or servant, thereof he shall receive the punishment from the Lord: who accepteth neither the person of the servant to pity him, because of his poore and base estate, nor of the master to spare him, because of his dignity and high degree.

Chap. III.

Verse 1. Ye masters, do unto your servants that which is just and equall, knowing that ye also have a master in heaven.

You Masters, looke that you yeeld unto your servants both wages, and meat and drinke, as that which is right, and with moderate rest and recreation some further recompence, according to the good service they have done: as that which is equall: considering that as your servants are to render an account unto you, so you must give an account unto your Master which is in heaven.

Verse 2. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanks-giving.

And now to returne againe to the generall duties, and yet such as for the most part belong rather unto you, than unto other persons and Churches not so stated or affected as yours, I exhort you to take paines, and to continue in petitions, and requests unto God, with heed taken that it be not done carelessly and drowsily; the which both with continuance, painfulness, and watching, must be done and performed in thanks-giving for graces already received.

V. 3. Praying also for us, that God may open unto us the door of utterance
utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, wherefore I am also in bonds.

Praying in both sorts as for all men, & the faithfull above others, so especially for me and Timothy, that God would open our mouthes wide; as a gate (otherwise shut) is set open, that we may speake the secrets of Christ, naturally hidden from all men, and by dispensation of God, alwaies to the coming of Christ, obscurely knowne to the faithfull, yea, to the Angels themselves: for which I am in hold.

Verse 4. That I may utter it, as it becommeth me to speake.

In which respect you are yet further to strengthen and stretch out your prayers for me, that all feare set apart, I may make it manifest as it is meet, both in regard of the excellency thereof, and the speciall trust of the Apostleship which is committed unto me.

Verse 5. Walke wisely towards them that are without, and redeeme the time.

And seeing you dwell amongst those that are strangers from God, walke wisely, that you be neither infected with their evils, nor they have occasion to speake evil of the truth; & that by the light of your godly conversation they may be allured to give eare to the truth: therein following the example of diligent Merchants, that to redeeme their losses they are past, watch to take all opportunity of gaining.

Verse 6. Let your speech be gracious alwaies, and powdered with salt, that we may know how to answer every man.

More particularly, looke to your speeches, in the wise ordering whereof Christian wisedome is singularly discerned, that it be alwaies (as favorie meate) well seasoned, whiles you shall be able to answer every man according as their particular estates require.

Ver. 7. Tychicus our beloved brother & faithful Minister, and fellow servant in the Lord shall declare unto you my whole state.

In the love & care I beare unto you, I have sent Tychicus unto you, who shall inform you of all my estate, wherof I know you will be glad to hear; whom that you may receive as it becometh, I commend unto you for a brother, worthy to be loved: alfo.
also for a faithfull Minister, & my fellow in the Lords service.

Verse 8. Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your state, and might comfort your hearts.

Whom I have sent, as to let you understand of mine affaires, to know what case you are in, thereof to make report unto me, and especially that hee may comfort you at the heart, against the storme of persecution raised against you.

Verse 9. With Onesimus a faithfull and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall shew you of all things here.

And with him, that the embassage may have more authority, and that in the mouth of two witnesses the things concerning you or me may be better assured, I sent Onesimus a brother both faithfull and worthy to be beloved, howsoever hee hath slipped in time past; who is also one of the members of the same Church: these two shall give you to understand of all things that may concerne you that are done in these parts.

Verse 10. Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus Barnabas his sisters sonne. (touching whom you received commandement, if he come unto you, receive him.)

Aristarchus in love saluteth you.

Verse 11. And Jesus which is called Justus, which are of the circumcision. These onely are my worke-fellowes unto the Kingdom of God, which have beene unto my consolation.

So doth Marke and Jesus: whom that you may be provoked to love againe, I would have you to understand, that touching Aristarchus, he is my fellow-prisoner for the Gospell, touching Marke, he is sisters sonne to Barnabas that notable servant of God, of whom you have had commandement, that if hee come unto you, you should receive him accordingly.

And touching Jesus, his conversation hath beene such as thereby he hath gotten the surname of Just. And of them all three together, there are great causes why you should respect them, for that they are of the race of the Iewes, with whom God hath made speciall covenant: especially seeing that of so great
great a number of f ewes that are here, only these three help to advance the kingdom of heaven by giving assistance unto me.

Verse 12. *Epaphras the servant of Christ, which is one of you, saluteth you, and alwayes striveth for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect, and full in all the will of God.*

*Epaphras saluteth you,* between whom and you there is a speciall bond, by reason whereof even now absent from you, yet he is one of you; and being as you know a worthy servant of Christ in the Miniftery of the Gofpel, whereby his prayers are more effectuall, he prayeth continually with great strife and earnestnesse for you; that having entred into the holy profeffion of the Gofpel, you may stand and abide in it, with daily increase both in the knowledge and obedience of the whole will of God, untill such time as by death you shall be compleat and perfect men in Christ.

Verse 13. *For I beare him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and for them of Laodicea, and them of Hierapolis.*

For, howsoever, I am not privy to his private prayers, yet I dare be bold so to write, because I my selfe am witnesse how (notwithstanding his absence) he burneth in much love towards you, and towards the brethren in Laodicea and Hierapolis, the rather for your sakes which may either be furthered by their good, or hindered by their ill estate.


*Luke the Phyfitian, one worthy to be beloved, saluteth you,* and so doth Demas.

Verse 15. *Salute the brethren which are of Laodicea, Nymphas, and the Church which is in his house.*

Salute the brethren in Laodicea from me, especially Nymphas and his family, which for their piety and good order in it, I may not unfitly terme a little Church.

Verse 16. *And when this Epistle is read of you, cause that it be read in the Church of the Laodiceans also, and that likewise ye read the Epistle written from Laodicea.*
And when you have read the Epistle in the Church, to testify your communion, as in all other good things, so especially in this sacred treasure of the word of Christ, procure it to be read in the Church of Laodicea; as on the other side, that you also read the Epistle which was written from Laodicea.

Verse 17. And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry, that thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.

Tell also Archippus your Pastor and ordinary Minister, from me, that he looke more diligently to his charge of ministry, which he hath received of the Lord: that hee doe it not by halves, but that he performe it in every respect, both of cheerfulfull teaching, and of good example of life unto the flocke.

Verse 18. The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you.

Finally, I have sent you also my salutations, not by the hand of my Scribe, (as the other salutations,) but by mine owne hand: whereunto (for a close of my letters) I adde my request unto you, that you would in your prayers remember my bonds, for the obtaining of whatsoever my captive estate doth require.

And further, my humble prayer is for the grace of God, to be with you: and so I am assured that it will be.

FINIS.