



A  
Divine  
Message  
*to the Elect Soul*

by  
William Fenner

1645

H&F Reprint 2011

310  
A  
DIVINE  
MESSAGE

to the elect Soul :

DELIVERED

In eight Sermons upon seven  
severall Texts.

By that laborious and faithful Messenger  
of CHRIST,

M<sup>r</sup>. WILLIAM FENNER,

Sometimes Fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in  
*Cambridge*, and late Minister of  
*Rockford* in *Essex*.

AMOS 4. 10. 12.

*I have sent unto you the pestilence, after the manner of Egypt;  
your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken  
away your horses, I have made the stink of the Camp to  
come up to your nostrils, yet have ye not returned to mee,  
saith the Lord: therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel;  
and because I will doe this unto thee, prepare to meet mee  
thy God, O Israel.*

Printed at London by M. S. for Iohn Stafford, and  
are to be sold at his house in Brides Church-yard,

1645.

DIVINE  
MESSAGE

to the elect soul:  
DELIVERED

In eight Sermons upon Leviticus



Printed at London by W. B. in the Strand, 1711.



THE EPISTLE TO  
the godly Reader of  
these pious Sermons.

**T**HE Author of  
these ensuing  
Sermons, Mr.  
*William Fenner,*


was so deservedly famous  
in the Church of God, and  
so well known unto me in  
particular, and one to  
whom I was so much obli-  
ged when he was living, as  
that I could not thinke it  
sufficient to give a bare

*The Epistle, &c.*

*Imprimatur* unto his Sermons, but have added this *Testimony* also, that thereby all good people might be encouraged to read these works of his, whose life and conversation was a continuall Sermon, and who spent himselfe in studying and preaching, and whose memory will be ever pretious unto

*Your loving friend,*

Edm. Calamy.



## To the Reader.

Good Reader,



*The Author of these Sermons, having served his time, and being fallen asleep, the lot is fallen upon me to appeare in their behalfe, and to seale unto their worth and usefulness for publick service, as farre as thou pleasest to seale unto my judgement and faithfulness in such a case, with thine opinion and approbation. For the truth is, that the strength and value of my testimony concerning them, is like to extend no further, then thine doth concerning me: So that if I adde any thing to their credit and estimation in the world, by my recommendation, it is by the mediation of thine ingenuity & fairness towards me. But if thou shalt please to be at any reasonable cost in the reading of them, and lay thy judgement and conscience as close to the Spirit, as thou must thine eyes to the letter of what thou readest, I make no question but I shall be the gainer, and not they, by this engagement of my selfe for them: true worth especially when*  
it

## To the Reader.

it overcomes, and breakes out of the cloud of obscurity, alwayes returnes more then what it receives from any mans testimony: neither is there any method or trade so proper and certaine whereby to raise an estate of honour and reputation to a mans selfe, as the bestowing or casting honour and reputation upon others, so hee bee carefull and dexterous in the choice of his subject. Iohn Baptist by giving testimony onely to one, Iesus Christ, out-grew the common stature of those that are born of women, in true greatness, Mat. xi. 11. and yet there was little or nothing (in effect) added to Iesus Christ himself by his testimony, Ioh. 5. 34. It is an ingenuous and inoffensive way to serve our selves out of other mens excellencies by advancing them: neither doe the generality of men in their practice, more generally consent upon any principle of reason & equity, then this, to recompence such men with tearmes of honour, who are unpartiall and free in subscribing and acknowledging the worth and eminencie of others. And as many that are but of mean condition in the world otherwise, yet maintaine themselves comfortably, by trimming and dressing the gardens and orchards, and vineyards of rich and wealthy men:

## To the Reader.

men: so may men that want other personall abilities, and excellencies of their owne, subsist upon terms of a convenient reputation, onely by vindicating, adorning, and setting forth the endowments, and gracefull parts of other men.

The subject or argument of these Sermons, is partly that noble & high-importing strain of Christian devotiō, preparatiō for that solemn interview of Jesus Christ in his death at his Table: the great severity of Gods proceedings against despisers of admonitions and reproof. Both theams of savoury consideration for all those that love not death; and more especially for those, who desire not onely to be saved, but to be saved upon sweeter and more comfortable termes then as by fire, 1 Cor. 3. 15. Those that were chastened with weaknes, and sickness, and death amongst the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 11. 30. were yet saved, vers. 32. but this was as by or through fire: though they did not perish, were not consumed by the flames of Gods displeasure against them, yet they were sorely scorched with them: the smell of this fire was strong upon the garments of their flesh: They discerned not the body of his Son Jesus Christ, in his ordinances, but in stead of that holy, reverend, and deep-studied behaviour

## To the Reader.


Viour which was due unto it, both from their inner and outward man, as being a creature of the highest and deepest sanctification that ever God sanctified; sanctified not onely to a more excellent and glorious condition, but also to many ends and purposes of farre higher and deerer concernment, both for the glory of God, and benefit of men themselves, then all other creatures whatsoever, whether in heaven or in earth: They handled and dealt by it in both kindes, as if it had been but a common or unsanctified thing; thus they discerned not the Lords body. And as they discerned not his body, so neither did God (in some sense) discern theirs, but in those soare strokes and heavy judgements which he inflicted on them, had them in no other regard or consideration, then as if they had been the bodies of his enemies, the bodies of wicked and sinfull men; thus drawing the modell and platform of their punishment (as usually hee doth) from the structure and proportion of their sin. And if the morall or spirituall seeds and originals of our outward and bodily afflictions, as sicknesses, weakneses, either upō our selves or ours, declining estates, losses, &c. (which still lie deeper then the naturall) were but carefully and narrowly sought out, it is much

## To the Reader.

much to be feared we should find a great part of them (at least) in the bowels of the same sin so frequent amongst us, I mean of not discerning the Lords body. The just and righteous God builds up the breaches that we make upon the honor belonging to the body of his Sonne, with the ruines of that honour which hee had given unto ours in health, strength, life, and many other outward comforts and supports. But thou wilt hear more of these things in the sermons themselves: the wholsom admonitions & reproofs wherein contained, with the rest of that heavenly provisiō for thy soule, which thou shalt find here gathered together, & laid into thy hand, I hartily wish may be sanctified unto thee by the highest hand of the sanctifier: that so thy sins and corruptions may flie 7. wayes before that Spirit of power which here pursueth them, and never presume to retorne back again unto them more. The God whom wee serve, is able to performe this great petition, by Jesu Christ. To whose grace the peace of thy soule is faithfully and feelingly recommended by


That poore and unworthy  
servant of Christ and his  
Church,

John Goodwin.



The Contents and Heads of the  
eight following Sermons.

The Contents of the first two Sermons from  
H A G. I. 5.

 He Preface shewing the usefulness of Me-  
ditation, together with the danger in negle-  
cting it. Page 1

The opening of the Text in severall particulars,  
pag. 4

Doctrin. Serious meditation of our finnes by the  
word, is an especiall meanes for to make us repent,  
P. 4

The definition of meditation in four particulars, P. 4

1. It is an exercise of the mind, P. 4

2. A settled exercise of the mind, P. 5

3. It is to make a further enquirie into all the parts  
of the truth. P. 6

4. It labours to affect the heart. P. 7

Two Reasons. 1. Because Meditation presseth all  
Arguments home to the heart. P. 7

2. Because meditation fastens sinne close upon the  
soule, and makes the soul to feel it. P. 9

1. Vse. For the reproof of severall sorts of men that  
are loath to put in practise this so necessary a duty,  
p. 12

Four lets of Meditation. 1. Vain company, p. 14

## The Contents.

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 2. <i>Multitude of worldly businesse,</i>   | p. 14 |
| 3. <i>Ignorance,</i>  | p. 16 |
| 4. <i>That natural avernesse that is in the heart of man unto it.</i>   | p. 16 |
| <i>This avernesse of heart consisteth in three things:</i>  |       |
| 1. <i>In the carelesnesse of the heart,</i>   | p. 17 |
| 2. <i>In the runnings and rovings of the heart,</i>   | p. 17 |
| 3. <i>In the wearisomnesse of the heart in meditation,</i>  | p. 17 |
| 2. <i>Use. For terror unto all those that dare sit down in security, never at all regarding this soul-searching duty,</i>         | p. 18 |
| <i>Four means or helps to meditation.</i>   |       |
| 1. <i>With all seriousness tell the soule that thou hast a message from the Lord unto it.</i>                                     | p. 20 |
| 2. <i>Observe fitting times for meditation: viz.</i>  |       |
| 1. <i>The morning,</i>  | p. 21 |
| 2. <i>The night,</i>  | p. 22 |
| 3. <i>The evening,</i>  | p. 22 |
| 4. <i>When the heart is after some extraordinary manner touched with Gods word or providences,</i>                                | p. 22 |
| 3. <i>Call to mind what evil thou hast done ever since thou wast born.</i>  | p. 23 |
| 4. <i>Rouse up thy heart and thoughts as high as heaven,</i>  | p. 23 |
| 3. <i>Vse. For the reprehension of those that meditate upon their sins, and how they may with the more freeness commit sinne,</i> | p. 24 |
| <i>Four grounds upon which meditation must be raised.</i>   |       |
| 1. <i>Meditate on the goodnesse, mercy and patience</i>   | of    |

## The Contents.

of God, that you have oft abused by your finnes, p. 26

2. Meditate on the justice of God that you have so oft provoked, p. 28

3. Meditate on the wrath of God that you have so oft kindled, p. 29

4. Meditate on the constancie of God, who is a constant hater of all sinne, p. 30

Four directions how to carry Meditation home to the heart.

1. Weigh and ponder all the fore-going things in thine owne heart. p. 33

2. Strip sinne, and look upon it stark naked, and in its own colours. p. 33.

3. Dive into thine own soule, and reach thine heart to the quick. p. 34

4. Prevent thine own heart by meditation, and tell thy soule that it will one day wish, that it had not neglected this so necessary a duty, p. 36

Four duties to be discharged, that we may put life to meditation.

1. Let Meditation haunt and dogge thy heart with the promises, and threatnings, mercies and judgments of God, p. 38

2. Let meditation trace thy heart in the same steps, and run over all thy duties discharged, p. 41

3. Let Meditation hale thy heart before Gods Throne, there to poure out thy complaints before the Almighty, p. 43. and let thy complaint be

1. Full of sorrow, p. 44

2. A full complaint of all thy finnes. p. 44

3. A complaint aggravating all thy finnes by all their circumstances. p. 45

4. A

## The Contents.

4. *A self-condemning complaint, wherein the complaint of Ezra is illustrated in 8. particulars,* 46
4. *Let meditation when it hath searched out thy case, and made it appeare how woful it is, cast thee down before God,* 49
- Four motives to stirre up the soule to meditation.**
1. *Consider it is the part of a foole not to meditate; It is a madnesse for a man to walk on in a course, and not to consider whither it will tend.* 50
2. *Consider, not to meditate is the brand of a Reprobate,* 52
3. *He that meditates not, robs God of his honor,* 52
4. *All the service that a man performeth unto the Lord, will be abominable, if he meditate not before it, and after it,* 53
- The reason why we have so many vaine thoughts in our holy exercises, is, because wee prepare not our hearts thereunto by meditation.* 54

### The contents of the third Sermon, Proverbs 1. 28.

1. **T**He opening of the context in 5 particulars, 59
2. **T**he opening of the words of the Text in four particulars, 62
1. **D**octrine. *Those that will not heare the Lord when he calleth upon them by the ministry of his word, and voice of his Spirit, the Lord will not heare them when in their misery they call upon him.* 62
3. **R**easons.

# The Contents.

## 3. Reasons of the point.

1. *The law of Retaliation, of rendring like for like, quires it,* 64
  2. *Because Gods two Attributes of Mercy and Justice, have their season in this life, and when Mercy hath acted her part, then commeth Justice upon the stage for to act her part.* 66
  3. *Because it is Gods manner for to doe so in temporall things, and therefore much more in matters of grace and salvation.* 68
- God giveth to men a day, and no Man nor Angell knoweth how long this day lasteth, or when this season of grace shall have an end,* 71, 73
- And as there is a personall day, so there is a Nationall day,* 74
- Object. 1. A man may be called at the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> houre of the day,* 75
- Ans. Those that were called at the first houre, come in at the first houre; those that came in at the twelfth houre, were not the same that were called at the first houre.* 75
- Object. 2. The day of grace lasteth as long as the day of life,* 77
- The Objection is cleared under three particulars.*
- Ans. And it is answered, that the day of grace may end to a particular man long before his death.*
1. *Because God may harden a mans heart,* 78
  2. *Because God may sear mens consciences,* 78
- Object. 3. Suppose I goe on in my sinne, and repent upon my death-bed, will God hear me?*
- Ans. The answer is negative.* 80
- Object. 4. Suppose I humble my selfe by fasting and prayer,*

# The Contents.

- prayer, will not God heare that? 81
- The answer is negative, if thou neglect the day of grace. 81
5. Obj. At what time soever a sinner repents, hee shall find mercy. 81
- Ans. It is true, if he repent from the bottome of his heart, but a man may have many a degree of repentance, and yet never repent from the heart, 81. Self-love may make a man doe much. 82
2. Doct. It may be this very day, even this particular Sermon, this instant houre may be thy day, that art now in thy sinnes, that if thou repent not at this very one Sermon, thou neglectest eternall life for ever. 82

## Four Reasons of the point.

1. Because Gods patience is in his own breast, and wh: can tell how long it will last? 83
- Wherein Ioel 2. 13. is opened in five particulars. 84
- God usually giveth some signes of death beforehand. 86
- But the day of grace may end, and a man never have any warning of it. 86
2. Because Gods patience giveth no mark or inclings of its ending before it ends. 86
3. Because God keepeth a strict account how many opportunities he hath vouchsafed. 88
4. Consider it is a wonder that the day of grace is not ended already, and that thou art not now in hell. 90

# The Contents.

## The Contents of the fourth Sermon, upon Philip. 3. 18, 19.

1. An explanation of the severall parts of the Text,  
in five particulars. 98
- Doct. That those whose minds and thoughts run ha-  
bitually on earth and earthly things, their end must  
needs be destruction. 99
6. Reasons. 1. The curse of God is the desert of vain  
thoughts. 99
2. The curse of God is the event of vain thoughts.  
99
3. That man whose thoughts are habitually on the  
things of the world, can never truly repent, 100
4. Because that man whose thoughts run habitually on  
earthly things, hath no part in Iesus Christ, 102  
For the thoughts and affections of the heart are  
the feet of the soule. 102
5. Because so long as a mans thoughts run habitual-  
ly on the things of the world, that man hath no true  
love of God in him. 105
6. Because so long as a mans thoughts runne after the  
world, he can never depart from his sins. 106
- 2 Uses. First, for humiliation, because these vaine  
thoughts bearing sway in the heart, they make that  
mans end to be destruction. 108
2. For the terrour of those men who suffer their  
hearts to be taken up with vain thoughts. 111
- Object. But I think of God, and of Christ, of faith  
and repentance. 113

# The Contents.

- Ans. 1. Consider whether thy good thoughts be meerly  
cast into thy heart, or whether they bee raised by thy  
heart, 113
- A wicked man may have a thousand good thoughts,  
and yet go to hell in the midst of them. 114
2. Thou hast good thoughts, but consider whether  
they be fleeting or abiding thoughts, 116
- There are two kinds of vain thoughts: First, vain be-  
cause the matter and substance of them is vaine:  
Secondly, vain for want of durance and lasting,  
though not vain for the matter of them, 116
3. Thou thinkest of God, but consider whether thy  
thoughts be studied or accidentall thoughts. When  
a good thought commeth into a godly mans heart,  
it leaveth a good impression behind it; but when a  
good thought comes into a wicked mans heart, it  
leaves no impression behind it, 117, 118
- A godly man not onely thinketh of God, but hee stu-  
dieth how to think of God, 119
4. Thou thinkest of God, but consider whether thy  
thoughts of God be profitable or unprofitable thoughts  
120
- Thoughts are not free, 121. Not free
1. From Gods knowledge, 121
2. They are not free from Gods word, 122
3. They are not free from the wrath of God, 123
- Three meanes in the use whereof we may rid  
our selves of vain thoughts.
1. Love the word of God, 123
2. Go unto God by prayer, 124
3. Consider thou hast not so learned Christ, 125
- All

## The Contents.

All vain thoughts arise from these three heads.

1. From the variety and abundance of the thoughts of the world, 125
2. From the Fountain of corruption that is in mens hearts, 126
3. From the damned malice of Satan, and his temptations both within and without. 126
  1. Materially, thoughts are vaine,
    1. When the matter of them is vain, 126  
Such are the thoughts of the world, calling or recreation: these are evil,
      1. When we think of them primarily, that is, before we think of God, 127
      2. When we think of them too usually, too often, 129
    3. When we think of them too favourably, 130
    4. When we think of them without counsell, 131
    5. When they are thought needlessly. 131
  2. Thoughts are vain formally, when though the matter of them be never so good, yet the manner of thinking them is evil, 132  
It is possible for a wicked man to goe to hell, though he perform the same things for the matter of them that a godly man doth, 132
3. Thoughts are vain efficiently, when the heart that thinketh upon them is earthly, and vain, 134
4. Thoughts are vain, when the drift and end of the soule in thinking on them, is vain, 136  
Wicked men will be thinking of God,
  1. To make God amends for their dishonouring of him

## The Contents.

- him by their wicked thoughts, 137  
2. To collogue with God, and to flatter him. 138  
3. To smother and choke their owne consciences. 139

### The Contents of the fifth Sermon upon 1 Corinth. 6.2.

1. An explanation of the text, together with the verses foregoing and following. 144  
Doctrin. The Saints shall judge the world, 146  
Objection. How shall the Saints judge the world? 146  
Answer 1. By their consent unto Christs judgement, 146  
2. By their applause of Christs judgement. 147  
3. By their Majesty; then shall they shine as the Starres in the Firmament, and the wicked shall be amazed at the sight of them. 148  
4. By their lives and conversations by their accepting of the Lord Jesus Christ, shall judge the worlds rejecting of him. 148

### Four Reasons of the point.

1. First, because of that mysticall union that is betwixt Christ and his Saints, so when Christ judgeth the world, the whole body of Christ may bee said to judge the world. 149  
2. In regard of their suffering with Christ, as they are judged by the world, so they shall be judges of the world. 149  
3. For

## The Contents.

3. For the greater terror to all wicked men at the day of judgment. 150
4. Because the mouths of wicked men may bee stopped, & that they may have no excuse for themselves. 150
- Use 1. For information in five particulars.
1. Hence we may learn that the Saints, by their now being Saints, doe now judge the world. 151  
Wherein Heb. 11. 7. is cleared from an objection.
2. Hence let the world learn that when any one sinner is converted, there is one Judge more to sit upon them. 153
3. Hence we may learn that it concernes all the world to take notice of every grace in Gods children, because there is never a grace in any of the Saints, but it shall make for the condemnation of them that want it. 154
4. Learne hence, that if the Saints, then much more the Word that begets them, shall judge the world. 155
5. Learn hence also that the Ministers of God by every Sermon they preach, shall judge the world. 157
- Use 2. For to condemne the world, who see not an amiableneffe in the faces of the Saints, who shall one day be their judges, who shall judge both Saints and Angels. 157
2. This sheweth the folly of the wicked, who prepare not for these Judges. 158
- Lastly, it condemnes all those that doe not see glory and majesty in the faces of Gods Saints, he that revileth the Saints, revileth his judges. 159, 160

# The Contents.

## Who shall judge the world,

1. God the Father by way of authority, all judgement is originally from him, 161
2. God the Sonne by way of dispensation, 161
3. God the holy Ghost by way of conviction, 161
4. The word of God by way of form, it being the platform; according to which Christ will judge the whole world, 163
5. All the Ministers of God shall sit as Justices in common, 164
6. All the Saints from one end of the world to the other, shall assist the just Judge of heaven and earth, 164. So that the wicked shall not be able to plead,
  1. Their ignorance, 165
  2. Nor their poverty, 166
  3. Neither their sinning at their masters command, 170
  4. Neither callings nor tradings, 167
  5. Neither the sinfull times they live in, 167
3. Vse. First for the just reproof of many of the Saints of God, because they are not so circumspect over their wayes, as they ought, how will they be able to rise up in judgement against the wicked for such sinnes as they themselves live in? 168
2. It may serve to condemne some of the Saints of God in regard of that little difference that is to be found betwixt the wicked of the world, and them in their lives and manners, that it is hard to tell which is a Saint, and which is a reprobate by their conversations, 170

## The Contents.

3. It may serve to condemne the scandalousnesse of many persons in their behaviour and actions, 171

### The contents of the sixth Sermon, 1 Cor. II. 30.

**D**OCT. 1. from the 18. verse, That whosoever will come to the holy Communion, they must examine themselves, that so they may come worthily, 175

The Apostle gives three reasons of it,

1. From the end of the Sacrament, 176
2. From the wrong men offer to Christ, if they come in their finnes, 177
3. From the woful wrong that a man does to his own soule, that commeth without preparation. 177

The uses of the point are these,

1. For the reproof of those that coming unpreparedly, get no spirituall strength thereby, 178
2. For terrour to unworthy receivers, 179
3. To shew they make themselves liable to Gods temporary plagues, 180
4. For instruction to examine our selves, 180
5. He concludes with an use of exhortation, 181

An explanation of the words,

2. Doct. God doth most severely punish the unworthy receivers of the Lords Supper, 183
4. Reaf. 1. Because Christ himself instituted it, 184
2. Because Christ is the matter of it, and therefore the more heynous the defilement, 187
3. Because Christ is the form of it, wherein confirming grace is sealed to the soule, 190
4. Because Christ is the end of the Sacrament, 191

## The Contents.

Vse 1. For instruction; shewing whence sickness, weaknesse, &c. come.	193
2. From whence comes hardnesse of heart, &c.	194
Vse 2. For comfort unto every poor afflicted soul, &c.	198
Vse 3. For terror to those that come unpreparedly,	199
Object. Doe all that come unworthily eat and drinke their own damnation?	
Answ. A man may eat and drink his own damnation three wayes.	
1. In regard of guilt, and liableneffe to Gods wrath.	203
2. In regard of the seale and obligation in the consci- ence.	203
3. In regard of the sigillation in beaven.	204
Lastly, the conclusion, denouncing terror to all those that dare rush upon this holy ordinance.	205
But for comfort to all them, who wish all diligence set upon the preparing of their soules for this great Or- dinance.	206

### The Contents of the seventh Sermon on 2 Cor. 11. 28.

The words of the Text explained,	210
Doct. 1. We must not rush upon the Sacrament,	210
There are none of the Ordinances of God that a man may rush upon without examination,	211
Three reasons. Naturally we are no invited guests to the Sacrament,	212
2. Though we are invited, yet it may be we are not disposed: for naturally we are strangers to God, and	

## The Contents.

- and the covenant of God, all this indisposition must  
 be wrought off, before we can come comfortably to  
 the Sacrament. 213
3. This is a solemn Ordinance, and therefore an or-  
 dinary disposition will not serve the turn. 213
- Many a reprobate may eat and drink in Christs pre-  
 sence. 214
- Vse. To forewarn men lest they unpreparedly rush  
 upon any of Gods ordinances, especially upon the Sa-  
 crament of the body and blood of Christ. 215
- The Text divided into four parts. 216
- Doct. 2. There is a necessity that we should receive  
 the Lords Supper, and receive it often. 217
- Doct. 3. The manner of performance of duties is to  
 be regarded. 218
- Five Reasons. 1. The Lord commands the manner  
 as well as the matter. 219
2. Circumstances overthrow actions, if they be not  
 rightly and duly observed. 219
1. In Prayer, 219
2. In Preaching, 220
3. In receiving the Sacrament, 221
4. In brotherly reproofe, 221
5. In eating, drinking, and marrying, 221
3. Because onely the right manner of doing duties  
 gets the blessing. 223
4. Because Christ himselfe is an example unto us, in  
 this he did not onely obey his Faiber in the matter  
 of his commands, but in the manner of them. 224
5. Because otherwise we cannot glorifie God. 225
- Vse 1. First, to condemne that naturall Popery that  
 is in the hearts of men, &c. 227
2. Vse

## The Contents.

2. *Use.* For discovery why people are so willing to doe duties for the matter, and not for the manner, 129

The reasons of it are these:

1. *Because the matter of duty is easie, but the manner is difficult,* 229

2. *Duties for the matter of them, may be done with a proud heart,* 231

3. *They may be done with an unholy life,* 232

4. *The matter of duty bringeth not the crosse; and many zealous for the matter, are persecuters of goodnesse,* 234

3. *Use.* To exhort men to labour to perform duties a-right, 235

Three motives to perswade people to perform duties after a right manner.

1. *Because no ordinance at all else can bee effectuall unto us,* 236

2. *All is but hypocrisie if the manner bee not regarded,* 236

3. *It is onely the right manner of doing duties, that pleaseth God,* 238

4. *Doct.* Every man must prepare himselfe before hee come to the Lords Table, 239

4. *Reas.* 1. *Because the Sacrament is Gods Ordinance,* 239

2. *Because the Lord Christ hath made great preparation in providing it,* 241

3. *Because Christ in this ordinance offers for to come into the soul, & he looks for good entertainment,* 242

4. *Because the Sacrament is a part of Christs last will and Testament, therefore when we know our Lords will, we must prepare for the doing of it* 243

The

# The Contents.

## The Contents of the eighth Sermon upon

Proverbs 29. 1.

### I. A double exposition of the Text.

1. Doct. From the first exposition, viz. He that reproveth another, and is guilty himself in the same kind, or in any other kind, and hardeneth his owne heart in it, that man shall be destroyed without remedy, 244
7. Reasons. First because the office of a reprovor bindeth him to be blamelesse,
1. Because such a reprovor as is guilty himselfe, can never reprove to a right end, 250
3. Neither can he doe it in a right manner, 251
4. Such a reprovor is an hypocrite, 252
5. Such a reprovor of another mans sinne, makes him inexcusable in his owne, 253
6. It is an absurd thing for a person to reprove another for that whereof he is guilty himself, 254
7. Such a reprovor is a signe of impenitencie, 254
- Object. Shall not a wicked Magistrate, or Minister reprove others, &c. 255
- Ans. He is bound to reprove in regard of his office; but is bound in conscience to amend himself first, 255
- Use. For instruction, 1. Let every reprovor take heed lest he make himselfe inexcusable, 256
2. Let him endeavour to walk unblameable, and inoffensive, 256

### Two doctrines from the second exposition of the words: viz.

- Doct. 1. The Lord doth not destroy man willingly, but for sinne, 261
- Doct. 2. It is a great mercy for a man to be reprovor for his sin, 261

# The Contents.

## Three Reasons of the second Doctrine.

1. Because reproofs primarily come from love. 262
  2. They tend to the good of a mans soule. 264
  3. It is brutish not to take reproofs in good part. 265
- Vse 1. First for information, that God is bringing destruction upon a Kingdome, when he takes away reprovers from them. 267
- Vse 2. For the reproof of those that despise the reproofe of the wise; they despise not men, but God. 269
- The grievousnesse of their sin who stand out against reproof, is aggravated under severall heads. 270
- Doct. 3. The Lord proportionous punishments to mens sins. 271
- Real. 1. Because hereby a mans punishment appears to be so much the more equall and worthy. 271
2. This stops mens mouths, and convinceth their consciences.
  3. All the standers by may see the equity of it, when the punishment is according to the sinne. 273
- Vse for instruction. First to teach men not to complain of Gods dealing with them, if their punishment be (for the kind of it) according to their sin, but rather let them learn to see Gods immediate hand in it. 274
2. To teach men to consider how God many times proportions punishments to sinnes:
    1. For kind, 275
    2. For quantity, 275
    3. For quality, 276
    4. For time, 277
    5. For place. 277

Some choyce Sermons  
of Mr. FENNERS upon  
severall Scriptures :

The first two upon *Haggai* 1. 5.

*The Preface unto them.*

**T**HE cause of that little heavenli-  
nesse which is in the profession  
of Christianity, is the want of me-  
ditation. Many can meditate cur-  
sorially, but that is not enough: it  
must be a sticking meditation that must affect  
the heart. That place in 2 *Pet.* 2. 8. is marvel-  
lous pregnant, it was the meanes why *Lot* was  
so touched with the abominations of *Sodom*:  
*That righteous man dwelling amongst them, in seeing  
and hearing their ungodly deeds, vexed his righteous  
soul from day to day.* Many heard and saw too, be-  
sides *Lot*, and were not vexed. Why? Other  
matters stucke in their thoughts, they never  
thoroughly meditated on it; but he vexed himself,  
that is, the meditation of those evils, and bring-  
ing

ing them home to his soule, vexed him. The word is a fit word, implying two things: First, the searching and examining of a thing, his meditating heart examined their finnes; how many they were, how grievous, how damnable, how likely to pull down some vengeance or other upon them. Secondly, the wracking or vexing upon triall; so it was with *Lot*, hee observed all their evils, and weighed them in his soul, & then he wracked his spirit with the consideration of them. The Evangelist useth this very word for *tossing*: this word that is here put for *vexing*, he puts for tossing of a ship in the seas, *Matth. 14. 24. The ship was tossed with the waves*: so meditation did toss his soule with vexation, sometimes downe to the deep: O miserable wretches that we are! or, How brutish, how beastly, and how hellish are our finnes? Sometimes up; O that the Lord would humble us and spare us! Sometimes over head and eares in the storme, O foole that I was to chuse my dwelling amongst such men! These meditations vexed his soule: Many have studied meditations, and yet are not acquainted with this cordiall meditation: Many Ministers that study Divinitie all the day, that study the Word all the week, that study their Sermons all the yeare, may yet for all this, be carnall Ministers. Why? Because their meditation is but inventing and mentall meditation; this meditation is a practical meditation, the thing meditated feeds the heart: that meditation is like a fluttering Pheasant that flutters before their eyes; it feeds their eyes indeed, but

but never feeds the stomach, as long as they neither catch nor eat it. The saving mysteries of God flutter before their eyes, and before their understandings, they feed their eyes with knowledge, but never feed their soules unto everlasting life, unlesse they fowle for it, dresse and digest it in their hearts. There is an apt word *Gen. 24. 63.* *Isaac went out to meditate in the field:* the original hath it, to signifie mutuall conference, his mind conferred with the truth, and the truth with him, a mutuall working hee wrought upon the heart, by meditating of it, and it upon him; by leaving an impression upon his soule: this is a rare practice in the world, and yet as necessary as most, it is the art of the soule in being heavenly, it is the inuring of thee to every good duty: for by meditation a man comes to have his mind and heart fixed upon every thing that he would: Would he pray? hee that hath inured his heart to meditate, his mind is fixed in his prayer. Would he receive a Sacrament? He that hath inured his heart by meditation, his mind is fixed in the ordinance. *David* that was excellent at meditation, had a *fixed heart,* *Psal. 57. 7. Psal. 112. 1. 7.*

## H A G O A I I . 5 .

*Now therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your wayes.*

**T**HE Prophet reproveth the people because they could find in their hearts to mind their own houses, and yet were carelesse of the house

of the Lord: the Lord had sent a drought, and a famine, and sundry punishments upon them for this thing, and yet they laid it not to heart, and therefore he sends *Haggai* the Prophet unto them to call them to repentance; & which is an admirable course, and little thought of in the world; he begins with holy meditation and consideration: *Now therefore thus saith the Lord, Consider your wayes*; that is, both in regard of the course of them, your wicked wayes; and also in regard of the bitter fruit of them, your wretched and unprosperous wayes. Here bee two things very remarkable according to the Text;

1. The repetition and inforcing of it again; for he urgeth it again, *Consider your wayes*, in the seventh verse.

2. The benefit that came by it, it brought them to repentance; for *they all obeyed the voyce of the Lord, and the words of the Prophet, verse 12*. So that the Doctrine from hence is this, that,

Doct. I.

Serious meditation of our sins by the Word, is a special means to make men repent.

Meditation is a settled exercise of the mind for a further inquiry of the truth, and so affecting the heart therewith; and therefore there bee foure things in meditation.

I.

The first is an exercise of the mind, not barely closing with the truth, and assenting unto it, and seeing it, and there rests; but it looketh on every side of the truth: *I thought upon my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies, Psal. 119. 59.* saith *David*; that is, I looked on my wayes on both sides, above and beneath; it's taken from

curious

curious works, which are the same on both sides, so that they which work them, must often turn them on every side, used *Exod.* 38. 23. as being workes with two faces, as one well observes: so it was with *David*, I turned my wayes up-side downe, and looked every way upon them: thou never meditatest, unlesse thou look on thy wayes on both sides with all circumstances. An elegant phrase we have, *Dan.* 12. 4. *Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall abound, and bee increased.* [Run to and fro] what is that? It is not the bodily removing of man from one place to another so much, as busie stirring of the mind from one truth to another, so that it seeth the whole selvedge and compasse of the truth: thou wilt never get the truth to be meditated of, till thou runne to and fro in it, meditate it on this side, and meditate it on that side, looke on it in every nook of it. Meditation is like perambulation, when men goe the bounds of the Parish they goe in every part of it, and in every skirt of it: so meditation is the perambulation of the soule, when the soule lookes how far sinne goes, how far the flesh goes, how far the wrath of God against it goes.

Secondly, as it is an exercise, so it is a settled exercise, it is not a sudden flash of a mans conceit, but it dwels upon a truth. When a man is in a deep meditation upon a thing, he neither sees nor hears, nor attends any thing else; the stream of the heart is settled upon the truth received; *The word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the world,* 1 *Ioh.* 2. 14. How came these young

2.

men to overcome Satan? Not by looking into the Word, or onely thinking of the Word; but by letting the Word *abide* in them. When a man hath been offered an injury, his heart is alwayes settled upon it; when he eates, his mind runnes on the injury; when he walkes, and talkes, still his mind runnes on the injury: so thy heart must goe on the truth. *2 Tim. 3. Continue in the things thou hast learned:* that is, take up thy mansion house in them. A wicked man may turn into the word sometimes to think of it; but it is as a man goes into another mans house: there is not his dwelling.

3. Thirdly, it is to make a further inquiry: Meditation doth not onely settle upon the truth known; but it also would faine know more of those truths, that are subjected to it; as a man without might see the out-side of the house, but he could not see the roomes within, unlesse hee come nigh, and draw the latch, and come into the house, and goe into the roomes, and look about them. Meditation pulls the latch of the truth, and lookes into every closet, and every cupboard, and every angle of it. Here is my sin, here is my uncleannesse, and here is Gods anger, here is the wofull evill that will follow upon it, and here is a remedy against it. Meditation searches into all the lofts and closets of the truth. *The entrance of thy word giveth understanding unto the simple, Psal. 119. 30.* The ingresse (as one expounds it) or going into thy word, gives understanding; the wicked stand looking upon the truth without the doores, but it is the ingresse,  
or

or going into the truth, that gives understanding. Indeed the truth is like a neat palace, (saith *Chrysofome*) the Spirit of God is like the light of the Sunne that shineth into it; the wicked they stand without, like fooles peeping in at the windowes, and there bee many thousands of Pearles that are not manifest unto them: The house seems dark to them that stand without. Thou must enter into the word, and into every particular truth in it, and goe up staires, and down staires, and have an eye into every roome. There thou shalt find humility, there contrition, there conversion, there Christ and his Spirit in one closet, there all his Jewels in that, and that box: all is manifest within doores.

Fourthly, it labours to affect the heart; it doth not onely labour to know more and more of the truth, but also it labours to bring it home to the heart. *The good woman considers a field and buyes it, Prov. 31. 16.* that is, (saith *Ambrose*) the good Christian soule, if in civilitie, then much more in Divinity, considers the truth and buyes it, he taketh it for his own, and appropriates it unto himselfe; *Lo this (saith Eliphaz) wee have searched out: so it is, beare it, and know it for thy selfe, Job. 5. 27.* When thou canst say of the truth, loe this it is, we have searched it out; I have dived into it, perused it, so it is, even so indeed: all this is, that thou mayest apply it unto thy selfe, and know it for thy good.

The first Reason is, because meditation musters up all weapons, and gathers all forces of arguments for to presse the same, and lay them

Reason I.

heavie upon the heart : This usurie is spirituall and good, when meditation, like usurers, who grinde and suck the blood of the needy, and are not content with their principall, but will have consideration for every pound they lay out; yea for every shilling, and that for every week, and every month, and every quarter, and every yeare : the poore man could bee content to pay the principall, to exact use upon use, this kills him; so meditation exacteth upon the soule, and holdeth it to use upon use. You have committed evil in a corner, but you shal not carry it away so. Item, it was against the knowledge of God revealed; Item, against many mercies received; Item, against many judgments threatned, against many checks of conscience, against many vows & promises; remember that, O my soul. Item for that, & Item for this, Item for every lust, & every circumstance, thus oft, and in this place, & at that time, in that manner. So meditated the Prodigall. Looke as it is in warres; were there but many scores come against an Army, they might be conquered, or many hundreds, they might be resisted; but if many thousands should come against a small army, it would be in danger indeed. Meditation leavieth a whole Army of arguments, a whole Army of curses, miseries, judgements, commandements against the soul: how ever one misery or plague will not knock it down, but the soule may brook it, and goe away with it: but meditation brings a great Armado of arguments, and tells the soule God is against thee, and against thy wayes: God is  
 against

Luk 15.17

against thee where ever thou art, or what ever thou doest. Then the heart begins to cry out, as *Elisha* his servant did, *Master, what shall we doe?* 2 Kings 6. 15. So many horses against us, so many charets, and so many men against us, *Master, what shall we doe?* so many sinnes, and so heynous, so many judgements and so heavie, and so many evils and spirituall maladies, Oh, what shall I doe to be saved! that I should commit sinne against a God that hath damned innumerable Angels, millions of Kings, Princes, and Nobles, that I should commit it against this God, so mercifull to me, so gracious, so patient, so good to my soule, that I, wretched rebell, should for a cup of drink refuse heaven, for a lust not worth a straw under my foot, cast off Christ, and grace and all: how shall I doe? Then the soule stands in a maze.

The second Reason is, because meditation having bundled up all Items against the soule, and brought in all bills of account, it fastens sin upon the soule, I mean it makes the soule feele it, so that it must needs be convinced without any evasion. Meditation deals with a man, as *Elisha* dealt with the messengers of King *Joram*, the murderer he was comming to doe mischief to the Prophet, and the Prophet did shut the door, and held him fast at the door, 2 Kings 6. 32. and then he made him know that the evill was from the Lord, before he could stirre: so meditation, when the soule would faine out of doores into its old course againe, it shuts the doore upon it, and holds it fast: Meditation tells the soule, this evill

Reas. 2.

evill is from the Lord upon thee, O my soule, if thou stirre in or out upon this or that lust any more; this evill, that curse, that vengeance and damnation, if ever thou stirre forth, thou lovest thy mercy, thou lovest Christ, thou lovest all possibility of comfort. Stirre not out, if thou dost, thou wilt rue it. Sometimes when men heare the word, they goe away touched, they resolve not to commit sinne again as they have done; yet when they are gone, it workes not, but the heart recoyles again, and turnes to its old passe. The reason is, because they meditate not upon the word, they fasten it not upon their consciences.

It is with the word as it is w<sup>th</sup> a salve: if a man that hath never so good a salve that will heale any thing in foure and twenty houres, if a man should doe nothing but lay it to the wound, and take it off, lay it on and take it off, it will not heale the wound: and no marvell. Why? hee will not let it lie on, the best salve will not heal the soare, nor eat out the corruption, unlesse it be bound on, and let lie: so it is with the word, many a soule heares it, heart, conscience, affections, all toucht: but when he is gone out of the Church, all is gone, his affections die, his heart dies, and his conscience becomes unfruitfull. Why? he is still removing of the salve, and will not let it lie on, and therefore the word over-powers not his corruptions: the word is like the salve, conviction of conscience is like the laying on of the salve; meditation the binding of it to the soare.

St. James compares a slight hearer to a man that looks into a glass, who soon forgets his visage; but a good hearer doth two things: First, he stoopes down and looks into it, to take a perfect view of his estate; Secondly, he continues looking into it, James 1. 25. he doth not leave the glasse behind him, but he carrieth away the glasse with him: *This man shall be blessed in his deed.*

If the pills bee never so bitter, yet let a man swallow them speedily, there is no great distaste; but if a man chew a pill, it will make him deadly sick. Thy sinnes are like those pills, they goe down very pleasingly, because thou swallowest them: thou swallowest down thine oathes, lies, ignorance, pride, thou swallowest downe the threats of the Lord; but if thou wouldest chew these bitter pills, and meditate and ruminate, and chew the cud, drunkenness would be as bitter as hell, swearing, and security, and Sabbath-breaking, would be as bitter as wormwood, thou durst not go on in them, they would make thee look sourly upon them for ever: like a man that hath chewed a pill, he can hardly ever see a pill, but his stomach riseth against it. *Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thornes, Hosea 2. 6.* I will not be so precise (saith the heart) I will goe on as I have done, I will goe after these and these courses; *I will hedge up thy way with thornes,* (saith God;) meditation is Gods instrument, and sets a thorne in the way to every sinne, to bring the heart backe again. Would the heart lash out into luke-warmness? Meditation sets a thorn in the way; God will spue thee out of his mouth:

mouth: Would the heart fall forth into any sinne? Meditation sets a thorn in the way, Cursed art thou if thou doest erre from Gods Commandements. The heart cannot step forth into any lust; but meditation meets it with a thorn, this curse, and that curse, this plague, and that plague. Would the heart reach at mercy in its sinne? Meditation pricks it from it; mercie is vengeance unto thee, so long as thou hankrest after sinne: would the heart reach after Christ in his sinne? Meditation pushes it back with a thorn: No Christ for thee, but a severe Judge, so long as thou itchest after thy vanities.

Use I.

What shall we think of them then, which are loath to practise this dutie? Most men are loath, though they bee willing enough to meditate on their worldly affaires. The Mariner meditates and considers his course by his Compass, or else hee might soon runne on the quick-sands; a Pilgrime is full of thoughts; what, am I in my right way? He never comes to a doubtfull turning, but he stands in a study & muses, O which is my right way? The Merchant meditates, and his minde runnes on his Count-book, or else he is soone bankrupt: The voluptuous man, his thoughts run on his pleasures: the drunkards on his cups, the proud mans on his credit. But it is one thing to looke to that which is thine, and another thing to looke to thy selfe, *Take heed to your selves,* saith the Lord, *Deut. 11. 16. Deut. 12. 30. Deut. 4. 9. Exod. 34. 12.* as if he should say, think on thy self and of thy poor soul, let thy meditation run on thy poore soule. The heart is untoward

unto

unto this duty, and as unwilling as a Bear to the stake: the Beare would rather bee rambling abroad, then be baited: so men had rather let their hearts ramble about any thing, then bait them for their sinnes; yea men scoffe at it, saying, shall we alwayes bee poring on our sinnes? shall wee run mad? shall we drive our selves to despaire? cannot men keep themselves well while they are well?

The poore man he hath no time for this tedious duty: the rich man, he needes it not: the wicked they dare not; so no man will: *No man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? Ier. 8. 6.* No man would meditate and thinke with himselfe, what is my case? how stands my condition before God? what evill have I done? In the Ark, and in the old Law, if there were any beast that chewed not the cud, it was a signe of an unclean beast: the word implies the bringing up of their meat into their mouthes again, and sitting downe to chew it again. But now men, like unclean beasts, swallow downe the food of their soules unchewed, and will not meditate thereof, that it may turne to good nutriment; but like Cormorants, they take it down by whole-sale, and are never the better. So the word is to them as the Quails to the Israelites, while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against them, and smote them with a very great plague, *Numb. 11. 33.* so the word of God stickes in their teeth; ere they chew it, or meditate upon it, the wrath of God falls

falls upon them, and strikes them with a very great plague of hardnesse of heart, and leannesse of soule. But the truth is, you that will not now see your finnes, nor meditate on them, you shall see them, and meditate on nothing but on feare. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see, but they shall see and will bee ashamed,* Esay 26. 11.

Let 1.

Now the Lets of serious meditation are, First, vain company. When *Peter* saw the people touched; *Acts* 2. 37. and he said unto them, *Save your selves from this untoward generation,* vers. 40. as if he should say, If you love your selves, God hath touched your hearts, suffer not Satan, and these wicked instruments, to steale away these impressions of terror from your soules. If ever you love your soules, fort not your selves with this untoward generation. See as it humbles you, so let meditation follow upon it, so that it may still humble you. Ill company brings a man to the gallowes (as the proverb is) and ill company will bring a man to hell (say I:) and meditation cannot be admitted to it. *David* would not have a wicked man to abide in his sight, when he was to meditate: he wisht that there were never a wicked man in the world; much lesse would he keep company with them. *My meditation of him shall be sweet; let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more: Bless thou the Lord, O my soul,* *Psal.* 104. 35.

Let 2.

The second let is, multitude of worldly businesse: *A dream* (saith *Solomon*) comes through multitude of businesse, *Eccles.* 5. Multitude of businesse causeth

causeth the mind so to run on them, that they do even dream of them in their sleep, as *Lucretius*, *Seneca*, *Claudian*, & many others of the heathens have observed. He that over-employes himself, his meditations of heaven are dreaming meditations, his thoughts dreaming thoughts, he can never seriously meditate on the good of his soul. Many ingrosse businesse into their hands, never thinking they have enough; they are so greedy after the world, and so carelesse of heaven. So they make their hearts like high-way ground: the word sown in their hearts is like seed sown in the high-way, where is such a through-fare, and a broad Carriers road of earthly affairs, that all the word, and meditation thereof, is troden down as the grasse in the high-way, which cannot grow; so neither meditation in a busie-bodied heart. For a good meditating mind, (*Nemo ad illam pervenit occupatus*, saith *Seneca*) no man ever came to it surfeited with imployments. *David* although he had abundance of State affairs both his hands full, yet hee would not have his hands to be over-charged, but that he might meditate in Gods word: *My hands also* (not all downe to businesse onely in the world, but also up to thy Law) *will I lift up to thy commandements which I have loved, and I will meditate on thy statutes*, *Psal.* 119. 48. Take not too much upon thee, like those grasping worldlings, that wil have a finger in a hundred things: *Martha, Martha, thou art cumbred about many things, but one thing is needfull, and Mary hath chosen the better part*, *Luk.* 10 41 and what was that one thing? *Mary* was sitting  
and

and meditating in, and pondring Christs words, not ( as *Theophylact* expounds it ) as if he would say, *Martha, Martha,* thou art cumbred about many dishes, but one thing is needfull, only one dish; though indeed so it be, yet he here speakes of not only of one dish, but of many cares which hinder that one necessary dutie of hearing and meditating on the word of God.

3.

Thirdly, ignorance. A man cannot meditate of a thing he knows not; nor thou of thy sinnes, if thou be not skilfull in Gods catalogue of thy sinnes; nor of mercies and promises, if thou beest not verst in them; nor of his precepts, if thou be not be not expert in them. The *Psalmist* proveth that hee had more knowledge then all his Teachers: Why? Because hee used to meditate. *I have more understanding then all my Tutors, for thy testimonies are my meditation, Psal. 119. 99.*

4.

Fourthly, avernesse of the heart: The heart is like the swine, meditation is like the yoke: the Hogge would fain get into forbidden fields for to grub them, the yoke that hinders him; but he cannot abide it, every step he takes, he lifts up his foot to strike it up if he could; so the heart would fain break through hedges, and get into forbidden wayes, and if thou wouldest meditate, it would every moment lift up its heele to put thee besides it: If it cannot put thee besides it, it will marre it if it can; and therefore *David* praied to God to settle his heart upon the right, and put his yoke upon him, or it would never be steadfast else upon meditation. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, bee ever acceptable*

ceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer, *Psal. 19. 14.*

This avernesse of the heart consists in three things: First, in the carelesnesse of the heart, the heart prizeth not meditation, nor the things of grace that are to be meditated on; it will not be at the cost and charge, nor at the paines for them. *To what end is a price in the hands of a foole, seeing there is no heart to get wisdom? Prov. 17. 16.* The heart will not bee brought to Gods price; it would fain have the wares at a cheap rate.

Secondly, in the runnings of it, the heart is like a vagrant Rogue, he would rather bee hanged then tied to his parish. Thou canst not bring it to prayer, but it will bee a gadding on by-thoughts: thou canst not bring it to a Sermon, but it will be roving after wandring imaginations: thou canst not bring it to a meditation, but it will bee a gossiping forth. When Christ came to bind men with his blessed cords, and bind their hearts to him, *Psal. 2.* they fall a meditating afterwards, but it was meditating and imagining vain things, *vers. 1.* and when they saw they were to be tied up; *Tush* (say they) *let us break their bonds asunder, and cast their cords from us, verse 3.* What, doe Ministers call us to such strictnesse, thinking to imprison our hearts in their stockes? Away with their bonds, no wee will have none of it.

Thirdly, in the wearisomnesse of the heart: It is as weary of meditation, as a Cur is of the whip, and the chain; Oh how it barks and  
C maunders,

maunders, till it bee loose! yea, though it be never so eager upon it at the first, it's jaded presently. When God called the Jews to sanctifie his Name, they thought in their hearts, *O what a wearinesse is this! and yee have snuffed at it,* (saith the Lord) *yee brought that which was lame, and torn, and sicke,* Malac. 1. 13. What a wearinesse is it to meditate? (saith the heart) it snuffs, it is untoward, it is lumpish; it would faine teare off a piece of the duty, or bring it wanting a legge, or without soundnesse and sinceritie; yet some of them (saith Calvin) were so humbled, that they *thought on the Name of the Lord,* Malac. 3. 16. they thought, and meditated, and forced their hearts to consider throughly.

Use.

This may serve for terror unto all those, who for all this that hath been spoken, dare sit down without it; yea, the world will not beleeve these things, nor meditate therein: yea, they blame Gods Messengers, that call so sore upon them. *Habakkuk* was so served, hee preached the mercies of God to the humble, and the judgments of God to the wicked: they ask him, why he was so mad: Well (sayes the Prophet) *I will stand upon my watch, and see what the Lord sayes unto me, that I may answer to them that reprove me,* Hab. 2. 1. What did the Lord tell him? *Write the vision, and make it plain upon Tables, that he may run that reads it,* vers. 2. Will they not beleeve? Will they rove? Will they not meditate steadily upon these things? Will they not let their hearts stay and meditate and consider? The vision shall be so plain, that hee that runnes may

may read it. If thou wilt not stay, and meditate herein, the Word is so plain to thy condemnation, that if thou didst but think of it with a running thought, thou maist read thine owne vengeance, thine owne woes, in regard of the multitude of them. He that runnes by a way full of holes and pits, though he stand not meditating where are the pits, yet he may run and see them. The book of God is full, leaves and cover, and all, of woes against thee, *Lam. 2. 10.* It is written without, there thou maist read thy sins written; it is written likewise within, there thou maist read thy plagues.

Secondly, in regard of the greatnesse of them; he that runnes along, and loe a great towne on fire, though he stay not to meditate on it, what or where it is, yet he may runne and read it: so is the curse of sinners a great curse, *Zeph. 1. 10.* he that runnes may read it.

Thirdly, in regard of the proximitie and neerneffe of them. Hee that runnes, if a sword come out by his throat, though he do not stop to meditate, what is this at my throat, yet he cannot but see it. *Behold the Judge standeth before the doore, Iam. 5. 9.* Take heed how thou grudgest, or sinnest in any particular, behold the Judge standeth before the doore; behold it, and meditate on it with thy heart; if not, hee is nigh enough, thou canst not step out of doores unto any sinne, but though thou runnest, thou must needs see the Judge that wil judge thee, Iteming thy sinnes, noting thy wayes, observing thy courses, ready to unhaspe the doore on thee, to

hale thee unto hell in thy finnes. *Whose end is destruction.* Whose? Even those that *mind earthly things*, *Phil. 3. 19.* If thy mind and meditation run more on thy ground, cattell, goods, kitchin, house-busines, earthly talk, discourses, thoughts, more then of heaven, thy end is destruction. If thy thoughts will not stay here, doe but runne, and thou maist read it; *Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, I am come to fulfill them, Mat. 5. 17.* Some (saith *Chrysostome*) might think now Christ is come, it is no matter though wee bee not so strict, Christ is enough: Think not thus (saith Christ) but rather thinke and meditate that I am come to fulfill it my self, and to see it fulfilled in those I mean to save, so as to make it the rule of their lives. *The mistocles* said, he could not sleep in his bed for continuall thinking and meditating on *Miltiades* his Triumphs: And how canst thou sleep in thy bed, if thou wouldest but meditate on these places of Scripture? Retire thy selfe apart, there is no casting up of a mans account in a crowd: Let mee alone, I am busie; so wee use to say, when wee would be private. Thou must doe with thy soul as *Ebud* did to *Eglon*, who said, *I have a secret errant to thee, O King*, and so all went out, and he said, *I have a message from God to thee*, and so stabd him at his heart, *Judg; 3. 19.* So (for *Ebud* was a type of Christ, saith *Lavator*) I have a secret errant to thee, O my soule: and so let all goe forth: I have a message from God to thee, a message of wrath for thy pride, a message of wrath for thy vain hopes: Thus, saith the Lord,

Cursted

Curſed art thou, O my ſoule, ſtab it to the heart with this ſpiritual Dagger, wound it with the blade and haft and all, till thou have let out the fat and the dirt, the filth and iniquitie all out. The Prophet ſpeaking of mens looking on Chriſt, whom they have pierced, this meditating and laying to heart that they have crucified the Lord Jeſus, ſaith that *they ſhall mourne every one in private, the houſe of David apart, and their wives apart; the houſe of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the houſe of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; every family apart, and their wives apart, Zach. 12. 2.*

The ſecond meanes, if thou wouldſt meditate aright, obſerve the times of privacie.

Fiſt, the morning, that is the beſt time for ſtudy; *David* choſe the morning for meditation, *Pſal. 5. 1. 3.* Let them heare this (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) that riſe betimes in the morning to ſerve their Hogges and their Dogges, their bellies and their backes, before they ſerve God in meditation or prayer, unleſs it be the mumbling and roting a few [Lord have mercy upon us] that pray not till after many other buſineſſes, it may be not then neither. *David* prayed and meditated in the morning; In the morning thou waſheſt thy face and thy hands, but thy ſoul hath more need, which thou waſheſt not: in the morning thou putteſt thy cloathes on thy body; but thou putteſt not on a freſh the new man upon thy ſoule: in the morning thou ſhakeſt off ſleepineſſe from thine eyes, but thou ſhakeſt not off drowfineſſe from thy ſoule. Thou lookeſt into

Means 2

I.

the glasse in the morning, to see if thy face be as it should be; but thy soul is not composedly looking into the glasse of Gods word. In the morning look up in prayer, look up in thanksgiving, look up in meditation.

2. Secondly, the night too, *O Lord, I meditate on thee in the night watches, Ps. 63.* not as carnal ones do, who when they cannot sleep, then their mind runnes on their Cow and their Calfe, their markets and vanities, this neighbour and that neighbour, like *Petronius* his dogge, that was hunting while he lay asleep in his kennell.

3. Thirdly, in the evening; *I prevent the night watches, that I might meditate, Psal. 119. 148.* hee did not as wicked men doe, sleepe like a horse in the stable on his litter, with his necke tied to the manger: they go to bed with their hearts roped to the world, worldly thoughts, this thought and that thought, and God knowes what.

4. Fourthly, when the heart is touched at a Sermon, or Sacrament, or observing of any judgement or mercy, or act of Gods providence, it is best striking when the Iron is hot. *David* when his heart was touched at the reproaches of the wicked, then he *meditated, Ps. 119. 23.* When the Instrument is in tune, then it is good playing upon it; when a Churle is in a good mood, then it is fittest to deale with him. Oft will thy heart be out of tune, oft churlish and in an ill mood: if thou lettest the opportunity go, thou knowst not when thou shalt have such another. When the fish is nibbling at the bait, then it is good twitching at the angle-rod: when the heart is a nibbling at

at grace, then give a pluck at it by meditation. See *Act.* 17. 11. now while the tide lasts, see thou mayst get into the haven.

Thirdly, rub up thy selfe and thy memory, call as much to mind as thou canst, what evill thou hast done ever since thou wast borne, what in the womb, what in thy cradle, childhood, youth, age, what a servant, what a master, what as a servant, what as a sonne, what as a neighbour, what as an inferiour, what as a superiour, either in thought, or word, or deed; how often thou hast omitted good duties, or done them by halves; Item for this, and Item for that. They shall remember themselves, and turue unto the Lord, *Psal.* 22. 27. First, they shall remember themselves, and say, What have I done, O wretch! how carelesly have I lived! Secondly, so meditating, they shall turn unto the Lord. Many say, Oh! they cannot remember their sinnes. They lie in a thousand particulars: for they can remember to commit them wel enough. See *Lam.* 3. 19, 20, 21. our Greek translation turnes it, *I spake to my selfe, and meditated*: as if they should say, O what a rebell have I been! how unthankfull, how unprofitable under all the meanes of grace! I may thank my sins for all the plagues of the Almighty that are upon me: if hee had damned me, I had been well served. What followes? *The heart bowed, and was humbled*, as it is in the text.

Means 3

The fourth meanes: Rouze up thy heart. As it is with the eye of the body, so it is with the eye of the soul: when a man would look wishly

Means 4

upon a thing, as if hee would looke through it, he sets his eyes on it, as *Paul* set his eyes on *Elymas*, *Ah thou child of the Devil, thou, &c. Acts 13. 9.* Meditation is the setting of the eye of the soul upon a thing: set thine eye upon thy selfe, and say, *Ah thou child of the wicked, why hath Satan filled thy heart! O wretched heart! whence hadst thou thy self-love? hadst thou not it from the Devill? God might doe well to send thee to the Devill, if thou lovest so to bee his Broker. Set thine eyes stedfastly upon thine owne wayes, and thou shalt see infinite hellish evils in thy finnes.*

Use 3.

The third use is for reprehension. What is more usuall then this, that men make sleight account of their sins? Nay, when God tells them in their hearts, Thou shalt not do this, thou shalt not doe that, yet they meditate and think, Why may I not? *Samuel* bid *Saul* stay for directions from him, before hee sacrificed unto God. It seemes that God spake to his heart, Stay till *Samuel* comes to direct thee: yet *Saul* forced himself to disobey, and to doe sacrifice, *1. Sam. 13. 12.* he was bold, as *Vatable* turnes it; hee confirmed himselfe, as *Pagnin* translates it: hee thrust himselfe upon the doing of it. God forbad him, he would doe it: God urged him in his conscience not to doe it, yet he would doe it: God again whispered to him to doe it not, yet hee forced himselfe to doe it, as if he should say, I hope I may doe it, I have stayed seven dayes wanting an houre, or a piece of an houre, and a little piece breakes no squares. No? God rejected *Saul* for

for that venture; God would have forced him by meditation, O no, doe it not by no meanes: he made him think, Oh, it is against Gods commandements, I may not doe it. No, but neverthelesse he forced himselfe to doe it. Thus God deals with thousands and millions in the world: Be not a drunkard; God flings the meditation into the conscience, yet a drunkard thou wilt be: Be not a drunkard again; a drunkard notwithstanding thou wilt be: Be not again; they force themselves, they will goe to the Ale-house. And so of all other finnes. If men will cast off this work of meditation darted into their soules, they cast off their own mercy. God tells them, pray not, hear not, offer not, without directions from me; they dread not the commandement, they will: I trust prayers are good, I will say them. Thus they will not meditate, or if they doe, they break it off before it comes to any strength or perfection: yea, Gods own servants, that desire to look towards Sion, is not this your complaint of: I cannot find sinne heavie: I confesse the Word discovers it to me, but I cannot bee troubled for it? Look as it is with men in the world, if five hundred pounds weight bee laid upon the ground, if a man never plucke at it, he shall never feele the weight of it. Your finnes are not many hundreds, but many thousands, yea many ten thousands: selfe-love, security, hardnesse of heart, base fears, &c. it is impossible to reckon them. The least vain thought that ever you imagined, the least vain word that ever you uttered, were weight enough to presse your soules  
down

down to hell. Therefore what are so many sins, and so great, and so often committed? What are they? they are as heavie as rocks and mountains; yet yee feele them not so heavie. Why? Ye weigh them not, if yee did, yee should finde them heavier then the sand, as *David* did when his sinne was ever before him (*Psal. 51. 3.*) that is, his sinne was ever in his thoughts, and in his meditation, his sinne was ever like a huge Milstone before him, and he was ever tugging and pulling to remove it out of his way.

*Object.*

I, but you will say, How shall I come to feele my burden?

*Answer.*

I answer, three things are here to bee discovered.

First, the ground upon which our meditation must be raised:

Secondly, the manner how to follow it home to the heart.

Thirdly, how to put life and power in it,

*1.* The ground I referre to these foure heads: First, meditate on the goodnesse, patience, and mercy of God, that hath been abused by any of your sins: the greater they have been to you, the greater is every sinne: this maketh them out of measure sinfull, because God is out of measure mercifull. There are many finnes in one, when a man finnes against many mercies. See *Iudg. 2. 2, 3.* *Why have yee done thus?* I have done thus and thus mercifully unto you; why have yee done thus unthankfully to me? Why was my mercie abused? Why was my goodnesse sleighted? why was my patience despised? as if the

Lord

Lord should say, I speak to your owne consciences, thinke of it, meditate of it, why have yee done this? Doe yee thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not hee thy Father? Meditate of it first, and tell me then. For it is a question put to thy meditation to answer. Doe yee thus requite the Lord ye foolish people? Wert thou ever in want, but God supplied thee? Wert thou ever in weaknesse, but God strengthened thee? Wert thou ever in straits, but God delivered thee? When thou wert in sicknesse, he cured thee: when thou wert in poverty, who relieved thee? when thou wert in misery, who succoured thee? Hath not God been a gracious God to thee? Every soule can tell, never poore sinner hath had a more gracious God, then I poore sinner have found to my soule. All my bones can say, Lord, who hath been like unto thee? This heart hath been heavie, and thou hast cheered it: this soul hath been distressed, & thou hast eased it: many troubles have befallen me, and thou hast given me a gracious issue. *This poore man* (saith David, pointing to himselfe) *this poore man cried, and the Lord heard him, Psa. 34. 6.* And shall I thus reward the Lord? shall I sinne against this goodnesse? Then what shall I say? Heare, O heavens, and hearken, O earth; Sunne, stand thou still, and thou Moonbee amazed at this, and be avenged on such a heart as this. *The Oxe knowes his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib*; but here is a heart that will not remember to know the Lord. Heare, O heavens, this villany crieth so loud, that your eares may  
 heare

heare it. Hear all yee Angels, and be astonished, here is villany to make your eares glow: yea, hear Hell, hear Devils, if ever there were worse committed by you. When men are but ingenuous, if they have received any kindnesse from a friend, they were never in want, but hee relieved them, never harbourlesse, but hee housed them; never to seek, but hee found them: Let a man deale thus kindly with a man, if this man should deny him any ordinary favour, he will be ashamed of himselfe, ashamed to come into his presence. What will he think, his house was mine, his cupboard was mine, and his purse was mine, and his friends were mine, and that I should deale thus unkindly with him, even nature rebukes me. This serious meditation will help to breake thy heart.

The second ground of meditation is to meditate on the justice of God: God is a just God as well as mercifull. Speak all yee Devils in hell, Doe yee not feele that he is a just God? Speake Sodome, speake Gomorrah, your fire and brimstone can testifie that he is a just God: Speak *Adab*, *Zillab*, and all yee that were drowned in the old world, your deluge can testifie he is a just God, *His judgements are in all the world*, 1 Chron. 16. 14. What is become of drunken *Nabal*, and swearing *Saul*, and covetous *Abab*, and proud *Iesabel*, and mocking *Iehu*, and envious *Shimei*? What is become of all blind *Jebusites*, and prating cavilling *Diotrepheses*? Justice hath taken hold of them. What is poverty? What is nakednesse? What is famine, sicknesse, the gout, the

the stone, Feaver, plague? These are the little arrowes of Gods justice. What is shame, disgrace, crosses, afflictions, unseasonable raines, dangerous weather, warres, rumours of warres? What are all the evils under the Sunne? They are the little finger of Gods justice. Thou spiest them here and there, in every Town, and in every Parish, in every Countrey: doe they not all witness that he is a just God? Read *Psalm 7. 11, 12, 13.* *God hath bent his bow already (saith David) the arrow is ready to flie out of the string: It will not be long before it hit thee, if thou meditate not upon amendment: God is angry with the wicked every day, as an angry man useth to say, I will be revenged on thee. Wilt thou not give over thy sins? I will be revenged on thee. Read Psal. 11. 5, 6, 7.* Meditate on this, he will neither spare King nor subject, nor rich nor poore, nor noble nor base, nor Judges and Justices: yet Judges and Justices may spare; but God will not spare: they may be bribed to pardon, but God will not be feed to spare them that goe on in their wickednesse; and doe I think to escape? Nay, my soule, thou canst never escape, except thou obeyest.

The third ground is, Meditate on the wrath of God; Oh! what wrath is it? Can I stand against it? *It burns like an Oven, and all the proud, and all that doe wickedly, shall be as stubble, and the day of wrath shall burne them up. Behold this, saith the Text, Malac. 4. 1.* Behold it, and meditate on it. Can I goe naked into a hot fiery oven? Can I lift up my hands against it? My hands will

will be scorched. Can I kick against it? My legs will bee baked. Can I blow upon it with my mouth? my mouth is fiered? Did I ever see lime burned? were I in the limes roome, could I endure that boyling? and yet if I live in my finnes, I shall be *as the burning of lime*, *Isai. 33. 12.* Let thy heart meditate terror: *Who among us shall be able to dwell* (that is the meaning of it, as *Montanus* sheweth) *who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who among us shall burn with everlasting burnings?* *verf. 14.* Gods mercie shall say, Take him wrath: I would have converted him, but hee would not. Gods goodnesse shall say, Take him wrath: I would have been kinde unto him, but he hath abused me. Gods patience shall say, Take him wrath: I have suffered him a great while, that he might have time of repentance, but hee repented not in that time. *God smote Egypt in their first-borne? Why? For his mercy endureth for ever. God overthrew Pharaoh and his hoast: Why? For his mercy endureth for ever, Psal. 136. 15. He smote great Kings, Sihon King, and Og King: for his mercie endureth for ever.* So wil God damne thee that art a drunkard: Why? for his mercie endureth for ever. God will confound thee that art a worldling: Why? for his mercy endureth for ever. God will be revenged on thee that art a Luke-warming: Why? for his mercy endureth for ever. This may well make thee tear the haire of thy head, rather then let thee goe on in thy finnes. See *Jerem. 7. 29.* Meditate on this.

The fourth ground: meditate on the constancie

cie of God. As the Lord was an enemy to wicked men, so he continues the same God still, a constant enemy to them still. As the Lord would not endure sinne heretofore, so hee is constant, hee still will not endure it. Did the Lord once say, *Weep and howle yee drunkards?* *Ioel 1. 5.* he is constant, so he saith still. Did the Lord say, *he would burn up Sabbath-breakers?* *Jer. 17. 27.* he is constant; so he saith still. *Who ever hardened his heart against the Lord, and prospered?* *Job 9. 14.* as if he should say, I put it to thee to meditate of it: canst thou shew me a precedent? did ever any man harden his heart against Gods Word, in his sin, that prospered? Did *Senacherib* prosper in his will-worship? Did *Judas* prosper in his covetousnesse? Did *Jeconiah* prosper in his stubbornnesse? Where is the Scribe? where is the receiver? where is he that counted the towers? (saith the Prophet) *Your fathers where are they,* saith *Zachary?* Did not my words take hold of them? and are they not all now in hell, that have ever lived and died in their sin, from the beginning of the world? Thou canst not shew me one drunkard, or one mocker, or one profane person, or one formall professor, from the day that man was created upon the earth, that is not now in hell, if he be dead. Meditate on this, how canst thou expect to be the one onely in all the world that shalt escape, if thou livest and diest in thy sins? If hell were opened, and the bottomlesse pit were lookt into, thou shouldst see every soul that ever lived, and died in their sins, even every soul; there is not one  
 soul

soul missing. Meditate on this; when I die, do I think I shall not be there? nay I shall be there too, unlesse aforehand I enter into the *strait gate*, and walk in the *narrow way* of newnesse of life.

Now follows the manner, how to follow Meditation home to the heart. Here are foure things to be practised.

First, weigh and ponder all these things in thy heart. It's said of *Mary*, she *pondered*, Luke 2. 19. and kept all these sayings in her heart: v. 51. The words signifie two things: First, she compared these things together. Secondly, she cast them all in the scales together. Dost thou know God is mercifull? ponder it with his justice. Dost thou know that Jesus Christ died for sinners? ponder it with the true drift of it, how that it is not to let men go on in their sins, but to save them from their sins. Dost thou obey God in this or that Commandment? O ponder thy life with the rest, *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy wayes be established.* Prov. 4. 26. A man that eats his meat well, fourty morsels well, yet one crum going awry throtles him. Thou walkest in these and these Commandments, yea but there be other Commandments besides these: dost thou walk in them too? thou must, if thou meanest to have thy wayes to be established. The Jews had their *containers*, *talents*, *mina's*, *sicles*, which were greater weights, so they had also their *gerahs*, and *agorahs*, smaller measures, and smallest of all: so have thou greater and lesse weights; great ones, to ponder  
the

the great Commandments, and lesse to weigh even the least of Gods Commandments: and see thou make true Evangelicall weight, or else all will not be well. Suppose a man were to pay a 100 pound of good and lawfull money, and in weight, upon forfeiture of all that he hath, if he weigh it not; but the creditor doth, and find it light; he is undone. If thou ponderest not thy wayes, *God will ponder them: Prov. 5. 21.* the word signifies, he weighs, and ponders them in a ballance, or scales; he puts the Word of his Gospel in the one, and thy goings and obedience in the other. *Thou art weighed, and art found light, thy kingdom is departed from thee: saith God to Belshazzar, Dan. 5. 27.* So if thou be light, thou shalt be weighed, and so found, thou shalt lose the kingdom of heaven for ever.

Secondly, strip sin, and look upon it starke naked: sin covers and disguiseth it self, with pleasure, profit, ease, and many a whorish garment, and so inticeth the heart. Even a toad, if she were covered over with gold, those that saw onely the gold, would pocket it up; if it were naked, they would sling it in the kennell. Why do men love covetousnesse? why, its hooded with profit. Why carding, dicing, hunting, hawking, tabring, piping, and more then the word alloweth? why? they are cloathed with pleasure, and delight. Its the duty of Ministers to unmask and uncase sin, and pluck off the vail that covers it from appearing unto men. The not doing of this is the cause, that men do not

meditate on the vilenesse of their sins, never are humbled, never escape Gods wrath; even because they do not *discover mens iniquities*. Lam. 2. 14. Alas, the profit of thy sins shall cease, the pleasure cease, the ease cease, and all these goodly suits shall vanish away, when the soul comes to die, or to stand before the judgement seat of Christ: sin will remain, but thy silver, and thy gold; where will that be then? thy laughter, and thy merriment, what will become of that then? thy delight will be gone. Meditate therefore with thy self, my sin is now gainfull, and easie, and pleasant; but what will my sin become, when I come to lie on my death-bed? what good will it do me, when I have most need of succour? I will never acknowledge him my friend that will turn against me, when I have most need of him. Alas, I must die, I must come to judgement, I must go either to heaven, or to hell: the profit that I get now by my sins, will it bestead me then? the pleasure, the ease that I now find in sin, will it help me there? Alas no, it will then be my break-neck, it will be a devill unto me: the more I have been delighted with it, the more it will gall me: the more I have gotten by it, the more it will damne me: the sin which I most of all loved, will most of all torment me. *Ecclesiast. 11. 9.* look thus upon sin.

The third means: dive into thine own soul and heart, there is a tough brawn over thy heart, that it feels not its sins. Now Meditation must look through, and come to the heart at the quick,

quick, and cause the truth to dive into the deep places of the soul. When the timber is hard, the workman cannot thrust in the nail with the weight of his hand: no, he must hammer it in, Meditation is the hammering of the heart. It's a pertinent phrase, *Jer. 23. 24.* *Is not my word like a fire,* (saith the Lord) *and like a hammer that breaketh the rocks in pieces?* There be two similitudes, first, of a hammer: the Word of God is the hammer; meditation is the hand that taketh this hammer, and knocks the nail into the rocky heart, and makes it enter: Wilt thou not feele? Ile make thee feel: (saith Meditation) wilt thou not take notice of thy wretched estate? Meditation comes with blowe after blowe, & makes it take notice. Secondly, of fire; the word is like fire; Meditation kindles it about the heart. A man benumbed with cold is senselesse; the water frozen with cold, though the least pebble would have sunk in it before, now a great milstone is able to lie upon it, and not sink; the water is able to bear it: so is the heart, be it sins never so heavie, as the hill of Basan, yet it bears it and feels no weight: but Meditation thawes the heart, and then every sin pincheth and oppresseth. *Is not my word like fire?* as if he should say, think of it, and muse of it, and meditate of it, and thou shalt feel it as a fire. Meditation is the often smiting of the heart with this hammer: so did *Ephraim*, *smite upon his thigh*: *Jer. 31. 19.* like a man in a miserable agony, he thumps his own breast, and in a vexation strikes his hand

on his thigh. Oh miserable wretch that I am! So did *Ephraim*. Oh what an unruly ox am I! how unwilling am I to bear the yoke of the Lord? Oh and oh the hardnesse of my heart! oh that I could tell how to beat thee black and blue! Many men smite their hearts, but they smite them not often enough. When *Elisha* bad *Joash* smite upon the ground, *he smote thrice and stayed*. The man of God said to him in anger, *Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times, for then thou hadst smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed them: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.* 2 Kin. 13. 19. So men smite their hearts twice or thrice or so, but they will not smite their sins dead: it may be they break the head of their sins, but they recover again, and grow strong upon them, as at first. Thou must smite five or six times, yea fifty times five times, till thou hast quite broken the impostume of thy heart. Meditate on the mercies of God, and with them smite it often and often: meditate on the justice of God, and with it smite it again, and again: Meditate on the wrath of God, which is as a consuming fire, and with it smite it soundly. Meditate on the truth of the Lord, this threatning and that threatning; this commandment, and that commandment; this promise, and that promise, and with all these smite it to powder.

The fourth manner; Anticipate and prevent thine owne heart: meditate what thy heart will one day wish, if it be not humbled, and tell thy soule as much; thou wilt one day wish, Oh that

I had been humbled under the reproofes of the Lord! Oh that I had been wise to have understood mine owne mercie! Cursed bee the day thar ever I neglected the means of grace; so the Lord brings in a foolish obstinate sinner, cursing and banning his own soule, sobbing and howling at the last. *Oh how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproofe! and have not observed the voyce of my Teachers, nor inclined mine care to them that instructed mee? Pro. 5. 12, 13.* I had Ministers to preach to me, but I would not come at them: or if I did, I cared not for their doctrine: I had friends that advised me wel, but woe is me damned wretch! I heeded them nor. Thus thou wilt cast the foole into thine owne teeth, and sling a thousand curses into thine own face, because of thy madnesse. I might have learned, but I would not; I might have been humbled, but I would not: *I was almost in all evill in the midst of the assembly of the congregation, vers. 14.* I lived where the Saints of God were in whole assemblies, but I mockt them, I hated them, I misliked them for being too precise. I was not ashamed of my security, no not in thy sight. Thus thou wilt cry out one day, if now thou wilt not yeeld unto meditation, which must make this as present with thee. Know thou, O my soul, the time of thy visitation is at hand, thou wilt curse thy selfe hereafter, if thou doest not now be moved by Gods mercies, thou shalt never see mercie more: Now be awaked by Gods judgments, or else thou shalt feel them for evermore: now,

or for ever thou shalt roare for them. Then thou shalt curse thy gains and thy profits that bewitched thee, thou shalt curse thy pleasures and delights that besotted thee; curse thine own heart, and thine own soul, and thine own conscience that have damned thee. Meditation may tell thee, thus it will be with thee, unlesse thou obeyest now. *Hear ye me now, oh ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.* ver. 7. hear the word now, and obey it, let it not depart out of thy meditation. Now be humbled with grace, or then thou shalt be humbled with horrour: then thou shalt wish, Oh that I had been ruled! When thou art in hell, then thou shalt meditate, Oh it was good counsell that such and such a Minister gave me; good counsell that such a friend, and such a brother gave me; but wretch that I was, I had not grace to follow it! I had more mind of my pleasures, more mind of my vanities then of grace. Oh if it were to do again, I would not do so for a thousand worlds: but alas, it is now too late. Therefore let Meditation presse this upon thee before-hand.

3. Now follows the third thing, how to put life to Meditation. Foure duties are to be done to this purpose.

1 Let Meditation haunt thy hearr, let meditation dogge thee with the hellish looks of thy sins, and follow it with the dreadfull vengeance of God, haunt it with promises, haunt it with threatnings, haunt it with mercies, and haunt it with judgements, and haunt it with Commandments.

mandments. The heart is like the Beaver, when it perceiveth it cannot possibly escape from the Huntsman, it cuts the member for which it is hunted, and flings it down, and so escapes (saith *Aesop*:) So pursue thy heart with its sins, with the hue and cry of Gods mercies; pursue it with the hubbub of Gods judgments; let meditation haunt it, and let thy soule see it shall never be rid of the haunt; at last it will bee content to part with its lusts. Let meditation say, wilt thou forsake thine own mercies? If thou livest thus and thus, if thou prayest thus and thus, deadheartedly, thou kickest against thine own mercie, wilt thou rush upon the pricks? This mercie thou maist have, if thou wouldst amend; that vengeance thou shalt have, if thou doe not amend: Either cut off thy sinnes, or else God will cut off thy soul. *Return, O Shulamite, return, return,* its the voyce of Christ to thee: Let meditation say, *Returne, O my soule, returne, returne,* and thou mayst be saved; *returne,* or else thou shalt bee condemned. Now what was the effect of this haunting meditation? *Or ere I was aware, my soule made me like the Chariots of Aminadab, vers. 12.* That is, my soule musing and meditating on these and these commandments; it so humbled my soul, that it made me yeeld; yea, and made me run as fast as the Chariots of *Aminadab*, freely and willingly to Christ.

Cant. 6. 13

Deal with thy heart as *Junius* his father dealt with him: he seeing his sonne was Atheisticall, he laid a Bible in every room, that his son could

look in no room, but behold a Bible haunted him, upbraiding him, wilt thou not read me, Atheist? wilt thou not read me? And so at last he read it, & was converted from his Atheisme; So let meditation haunt thy heart, hold forth the commandments, promises, threatnings of the Lord, that thy heart may see them; let meditation haunt thee in thy luke-warmnesse: prayest thou thus luke-warme? This prayer will break thy neck one day. Repentest thou? This luke-warm repentance will cause God to spue thee out of his mouth. Hearest thou, speakest thou, thinkest thou? These luke-warme duties will confound thee ere long, if thou lookest not to it.

Let meditation haunt thee, as they haunted *Nehemiab* with warnings, *ten times* (saith the Text) they sent to *Nehemiab*, *they will bee upon thee*, *Nehem. 4. 12.* Beware of the danger, the enemy will be upon thee: *ten times* they warned him, never giving over till *Nehemiab* looked about him, *vers. 13.* So doe thou haunt thine owne heart: they will be upon thee, this curse, this wrath, that hardnesse of heart, this security will be upon thee. *Ten times*, yea a thousand times *ten times*, never give over thine own soul, untill thou hast made it to submit. Indeed there be some, let God send meditations to haunt them, and follow them, saying, repent, leave this or that sinne, why wilt thou be damn'd with this sin? Oh forsake it, presently they will gagge the mouth of meditation, and of conscience, and strike

strike them stark dead: as *Abner* when *Azabel* would haunt him, and follow him, and turn neither to the right hand, nor to the left, but follow him at the heels. Turn aside (saith *Abner*) but he would not turne aside from following him. Turn aside from me (sayes *Abner* again) or I will kill thee, but he would not turne aside, he would follow him close: Then he up with his Speare and slew him, 2 *Sam.* 2. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. So many deale with the meditation of conscience, when conscience would dogge them, and weary them out of their sins, they will not: when conscience would haunt them, they will not be haunted therewith; when conscience would follow them up with their desperate wilfulness, they gall, and wound, and murder conscience to be quiet. But *David* haunted his heart, and would have it haunted.

The second duty: let Meditation trace thy heart, as it should haunt thee, so also let it trace thee in the same steps. So would the Church, *Let us search and trie our wayes, and turn again unto the Lord:* Lam. 3. 40. The word (in the originall, sayes *Buxtorf*) signifies, *track our steps, step by step*: this step was in the ditch, that in the mire, that step awry: track them all, that we may ungo them all again, and turn unto the Lord. Never pray, but let meditation track thy prayer: this passage was right, that passage was amisse. Never keep a Sabbath, but let meditation track thy keeping of it; this duty was sincere, that was rotten: Never do any thing, but let Meditation track

track it. This thought, this word, this action, was warrantable; that was out of the way: track thy heart, as the Lord tracked *Eliab*, he track him in the wilderness, he tracked him under the juniper tree, he track him in the cave; *What dost thou here Eliab? go forth: 1 King. 19. What dost thou here Eliab? go, return.* He track him in the mount, *Go, return, what dost thou here Eliab?* this is not a place for thee. So let Meditation wait thee: what dost thou here, O sinner? what dost thou here, O drunkard? in thy coverousnesse, or in thy prophanenesse, what dost thou here? this is not a place for thee, unlesse thou mean to perish. It may be thou art now scared out of these finnes, and art run into civill honesty; let Meditation still track thee. What dost thou do here, oh sinner? civilitie is not a case fit for thee, unlesse thou wert better, thou shalt be torn in peeces. It may be thou art driven out of thy civility, and art gone further, to the profession of Religion, though it be without the power of it: let meditation still wait thee. What dost thou here, O sinner? this sorrie kind of profession is not a passe fit for thee: unlesse thou be godlier then so, thou shalt be devoured with everlasting fire.

Meditation is like the coursing of a hare in the snow; the hare fearing to be taken by the dogs, here she stops, there she leaps, here she interleaps, there she goes backward, and forward, upward and downward, and all to deceive the dogs, that they may not find her; but they go smelling and maundring, winding and turning,  
and

and track her step by step, til thy find her: so Meditation in the coursing of the soul, the heart hath a thousand ferches, a thousand meanders and labyrinths, a thousand crosse windings, and compassings, and deceits, and all to puzzle Meditation. But Meditation must track the heart, as God dealt with *Job*, *he counted his steps*, step by step: *Job* 14. 16. Meditation is the souls blood-hound, it will never leave howling, the wrath of God, till it hath taken the hearts sin for a prey; Meditation haunts it out of one sin, and it runs into another; Meditation haunts it out of that, & it runs into a third: Meditation is a good persevant, it prosecutes the sinner, & attaches him

Now because the heart is most cunning, and hardest to be trackt by its sent, when the heart hath taken up abundance of good duties, and attained unto sundrie graces, these good duties and common graces drown the sent of the hearts wickednesse. As Huntsmen observe, that the hounds cannot well hunt in the Spring, as *Theophrastus*, and *Pollux*, and others observe: the sweet odors of the flowers and herbes (sayes *Oppian*) hinder the hounds from smelling the hare: so it is with Meditation; it is hard for it to track the heart in the green Spring time of civill honestie and formalitie. And therefore let Meditation make diligent search, saith he.

The third duty: hale thy heart before God, and let Meditation bring it before his throne, and there powre out thy complaint against it before God, there out with all thy villany, and article

ticle against thy self, and bring as many complaints against thy self before heaven, as there be drops in a bucket full of water. So do the godly: *I powred out all my complaints before him,* (Psal. 102. in the preface) *I powred out my complaints,* as a man powreth out water out of a vessell; generally men are willing to call for mercie, but they are not so willing to bring complaints unto God against themselves: ye shall have them whisper after the Minister, as he is begging for pardon and mercie, but they will not do so, whiles he is complaining of their sins; the hellish and devillish abominations of their heart. These are men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith, and shall never have mercy, till they be as forward to complain of their sins, as to be plaintives for mercy.

When a man in meditation meets with a hard matter, that he cannot sufficiently dive into, he breaks it to another: so do thou to God, break all thy heart to God, tell him of thy hardnesse of heart, of the pride of thy heart, of the desperate prophanenesse of thy heart: but take these rules with thee.

First, thy complaint must be *full of sorrow*: Psal. 55.

Secondly, it must be a *full complaint*, of all thy sins, and of all thy lusts; *Lam. 2. 18. 19. Pour out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord.* Water runs all out of a vessell when you turn the mouth downward; never a spoonfull will stay behind. The wicked will not complain of their  
sins,

sins, *fully*: they make hypocriticall professions.  
 If it be a sin, I am sorrie for it; (saies one) if it be  
 naught, I cry God mercie; (saith another) when  
 their own consciences tell them it is a sinne, yet  
 they will not complain of it absolutely.

Thirdly, thy complaint must be with aggra-  
 vation: thou must aggravate thy sins by all the  
 circumstances, that may shew it to be odious, as  
*Peter did: when he thought thereon, he wept: Mark*  
*14. 72. the originall hath it, he cast all these things*  
*one upon another.* Wretch that I was, Christ was  
 my master, and yet I denied him; such a good ma-  
 ster, that he called me before any of my fellow  
 Apostles, and yet I denied him; I was readie to  
 sink once, he denied not me: I was to be dam-  
 ned once, he denied not my soul, and yet I deni-  
 ed him; he told me of this sin beforehand, that  
 I might take heed of it, and yet I denied him.  
 I said I will not commit it, nor forsake him, and  
 yet I denied him: yea this very night, no longer  
 ago, did I say and say again, I would not deny  
 him, and yet I denied him: yea I said, though  
 all others denied him, yet would not I; and yet  
 worse then all others, I denied him with a wit-  
 nesse, before a maid, before a damosel; nay more  
 filthy beast that I am, I said I did not know the  
 man; nay more, I sware I did not know him; nay  
 more then all this, I did even curse my self with  
 an oath that I did not know him: nay more, all  
 this evill did I, not above five or six strides from  
 my Lord and Saviour: nay more, even then,  
 when if ever I would have stood for him, I  
 should

should have done it then, when all the world did forsake him. Oh wretch that I was, I denied him! he cast up all these circumstances together, and meditating on them, *he went out, and wept bitterly.*

4. Fourthly, thy complaint must be a selfe-condemning complaint: thou must condemne thy selfe, and lay thy selfe at hell gates, and set the naked point of Gods vengeance at thy throat. Thus and thus have I lived, damned cast-away, as I have deserved to be! So did *Ezra* in the behalfe of the Jewes, *Ezra 9.*

For, 1. He *fell on his face*, he did not bow down on his knees, but like a man astonished, he fell on his knees, ready to reele on the ground in amazement.

2. He *spread out his hands unto the Lord*, *verse 5.* as if he should say, here is my heart-blood, Lord, here is my breast, Lord, we deserve thou shouldst stab us with thy wrath.

3. He *blushes to look heaven in the face*, *verse 6.* so vexed to think on the sinnes of his people, that he is even confounded to begge mercy.

4. He is (as it were) dumb and speechlesse before God: *And now our God, what shall we say after all this? for we have forsaken thy commandments, verse 10.* Shall I excuse the matter? alas! it is inexcusable. *What shall we say after all this?* Shall we call for thy patience? We had it, and yet were little the better. Shall we call for mercie? Why, we had it, and yet our stubborne hearts would not come downe. I know not what

what to say for our selves: for we have sinned against thee.

5. He declares Gods truth, that he had *warned them by his Prophets, (vers. 11. 12.)* but no warning can better us.

6. He shewes how God had *punished them*, yet they would not be humbled: for all that God had brought upon them *lesse evils then they deserved*, and wrought *deliverances* for them, which they could not have expected; *What shall we say, should we for all this break thy commandments? verse 13. 14.* What can we expect but hell and confusion?

7. He is sensible of Gods judgements and righteousness: *O Lord, thou art righteous*: as if he should say, How canst thou spare us for this sinne? How can it stand with thy righteousness? How is it that such hel-hounds as we are, should live above ground, when thou art so righteous a God? It is a wonder that the earth opens not her mouth for to swallow us up quick: for, *O Lord, thou art righteous.*

8. He layes down his soule, and all the peoples soules at Gods feet; as if he should say, here we be, thou maist damne us if thou wilt; *Behold, we are all here before thee in our trespasses: for wee cannot stand before thee, because of this, ver. 15.* Behold here we are: rebels we are: here are our heads and our throats before thee, if now thou shouldst take us from our knees unto hel, & from our prayers unto damnation, we cannot ask thee why thou doest so: Oh it's mercie, it's mercie

cie indeed, that we have been spared. Thus meditation must bring our hearts before God, and there complaine against them before heaven.

Meditation should deale with the heart, as the Father did with his possessed child, who carried him to Christ; saying, *Master, my child is possessed with a Devil, even a dumb spirit, and I spake to thy Disciples that they should cast him out, but they could not, Mark 9. 18. Bring him to me (saith Christ) vers. 19. How long is this agoe since this came to him? Of a child (saith the Father) and often it hath cast him into the fire, and often into the water to destroy him; but if thou canst doe any thing (as certainly thou canst doe all things) have compassion on us, and help us, verse 22.* And then Christ helpt him: So let meditation drive thy heart to God, saying, Lord here is my heart (I beleeve) possessed with a Devill; for it is a most abominable sinful heart: I brought my heart to thy Ministers to cure it, to Sermons, to prayer, to all other good duties, but they could not help me: my heart is a Devillish heart, still my heart is wicked, and rebellious still: the Devill, oh! the Devill is in it still! Oh, how he tempts me! he holds me, hee casts me into the fire of this lust, and into the water of ever-flowing iniquity. Have thou compassion, come and helpe me; for my heart is miserably vexed with Satan; when I pray, the Devill stuffes me with dead thoughts, and droufie desires, the Devill fills me with wandring Imaginations, and I know not what; when I hear the

the Word, the Devil makes me to rise up against it, or forget it, or not obey it; when the Sabbath is come, the Devill sets me on thinking my own thoughts, and speaking mine own words; when a Sacrament is come, the Devill hinders me in selfe examination, the Devill disappoints me of my preparation: Oh have thou compassion on me.

The fourth duty; let meditation, when it hath held thy heart before God, there cast thee down before him: when meditation hath searched out thy case, and made it appeare how wofull it is, then let it lay thee along before God, with *What shall I doe to be saved?* So it did with them, in *Acts 2. 27.* as if they should say (saith *Chryso- stome*) We have not one jot of hope to finde mercie, so long as we live as we do. What shall we do? Say what thou wilt, our ears are ready to hear it; command what thou wilt, our souls, what ever it be, are willing to doe it: bid us suffer what ever thou pleasest, tell us what it is, and we will endure it. They did not say, (notes *Chryso stome*) *How shall we be saved,* as wicked men doe: they desire to be saved, but their maine care is not to see *what* they must doe, they are told what they must doe, and yet refuse to doe it; but thy chiefe study must be, to cast thy selfe down before God, with the good Jaylor, *Sirs, what shall I doe to be saved? Acts 16. 30.* First, *what must I doe?* and then *to be saved.* First, thy care must be what to doe to get out of thy sins, how to be rid of thy lusts, and then to be saved;

as if he should say, I see I am at a damned passe, and therefore I was a making away my selfe, the fire of hell did slay my soule: but now is there hope of salvation? is there indeed? Oh tell me, I am willing to do any thing, what must I doe? Keep nothing back of all the will the Lord; be it punishments to suffer, tell me of it, I am ready to beare it; be it precepts for to doe, though never so irksome, O let me know it, and I will not refuse it. *What must I doe to bee saved?* When the heart is thus humbled upon sound meditation, it's willing to do or suffer any thing. *Jonah* is willing to be cast into the sea, being humbled, *Jonah* 1.2. *Here I am, Lord, deal with me as thou wilt.*

Motive

I.

The first Motive. Is it a folly not to meditate? Should a man walk on in a course, and not meditate whither it will tend? When he falls into mischief, what will he say? I never thought of this before, I never considered that this would be the end. Now it is the part of a fool to say, *I never thought*, as the Latin proverb hath it; when the Steed is stollen, if he should then shut the Stable doore, what wouldst thou say? Hee should have thought of that before. The rich man in the Gospel had these meditations in his heart; he thought within himselfe, What shall I do, because I have no roome where to bestow my fruits? He said in his heart, This will I do, I will pull down my barnes and build greater; and will say to my soule, *Soule, soule, thou hast much goods laid up for many yeares, eat, drinke, and be*

be merry; Luke 12. 17, 18, 19, 20. *Thou fool* (said God) *this night shall thy soule bee required of thee; then, whose shall these things bee that thou hast provided?* God said thus unto him; not as if God spake thus familiarly unto him (saith Theophylact) but it is a parable, and God sayes so in his word, *Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soule of thee.* In this night of thy blindness, in this night of thy security, shall they require it: hee doth not say, *I will require thy soule of thee,* but *they*: hee doth not say who, but they, the Devils in hell, God knowes who shall come, thou shalt die, and they shall fetch away thy soule to hell: *they shall require it.* A godly mans soule is not required, but rather he requires God to take away his soule; he is willing to die, that he may be with Christ: but a wicked mans soule is required of him: hee would willingly not die, but that his soule is required of him, and he must die. Doubtlesse the rich foole now thought with himselfe, *I never thought that I should have died so soone,* and therefore now he falls (it may be) to his *Lord, Lord,* and cries *God mercie.* But what will they say to him? Thou shouldst have thought of this before.

*The wise man shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of fooles, Prov. 3. 35.* The wise and prudent, those that truly meditate of things before hand, shall have glory; but fools that hope to be promoted to glory and salvation, shame and confusion of face shall be all their promotion: and when they come thereto, besides their

expectation; what will they say? We never thought it would be thus with us before; but sooles as we were, we thought to bee promoted to heaven: like *Haman*, when King *Abasnerus* said unto him, What shall be done to the man whom the King will honour? O thus and thus (saith *Haman*) for hee thought, I am the man whom the King intendeth to honour, *Esther* 6. 6. but when *Haman* was presently after to be hanged on a gallowes, he might rightly say, I never thought of this before. So what shall bee done to the man whom the Lord will honour? Thus and thus sayest thou, he shall have mercies, blessings, heaven: I, for thou thinkest, I am the man that God intendeth thus to honour; but when thou art come to hell, what wilt thou say then? I never thought of this before, that so it would be.

*Mot. 2.*

The second motive is, Thou wouldst be loath to have the brand of a reprobate: Not to meditate, is that brand; *The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God; neither is God in all his thoughts, Psal. 10. 4.* He scornes to be so poring upon Bibles, to be so wracking his mind with his sinnes; *Hee hath said in his heart, God will not require it, vers. 13.* God requires no such scrupulositie nor strictnesse.

*Mot. 3.*

The third motive is, Thou wouldst be loath to rob God of his honour, and the main part of his service, which is Meditation. *Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; Matth. 22. 38.* How can this bee true of them



THE  
DANGER  
OF DEFERRING  
Repentance,  
DISCOVERED

In a Sermon preached at Maidstone  
in Kent September 25. 1629.

By that reverend and faithfull Minister  
of the Word,

WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.

Sometimes fellow of *Pembroke Hall*  
in *Cambridge*, and late Parson  
of *Rochford* in *Essex*.



London printed by *M. S.* for *I. S.*

THE  
DANGER

OF DRINKING

Repentance

DISCOVERED

In a sermon preached at Marlborough  
in the Sepulchre 27-1732

By the Reverend and Learned Minister  
of the said Church

WILLIAM TURNER, D.D.

Successor to the Rev. Mr. [Name]  
in the Rectory and Parsonage  
of the said Church

Printed by [Name]

at [Name]

London Printed by [Name]



# A SERMON OF

Mr. WILLIAM FENNERS at  
*Maidstone. Septem. 25. 1629.*

PROV. I. 28.

*Then shall they call upon me, but I will  
 not answer: they shall seek me early, but  
 they shall not find me.*



Here is a good English Proverbe  
 amongst us, that *he that neglects  
 the occasion, the occasion will neg-  
 lect him.* Solomon wisely begins  
 his Proverbs with it: for he  
 bringeth in the Wisdom of his

Father in these five particulars: first, making a  
 generall Proclamation in the 20 verse, *Wisdom  
 crieth without, she uttereth her voyce in the streets.*  
 He compareth God unto a cryer that goeth up  
 and down the City from street to street, and  
 from doore to doore, crying his commodity,  
 even the richest that ever was, which is a Christ,

a Christ for redemption, a Christ for sanctification, a Christ to enlighten those that walk in darknesse, and in the shadow of death. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, here is a Christ for you.*

2. Secondly, here is a mercitull reprehension, in the 22. verse, *O ye foolish, how long will ye love foolishness, and ye scorner take pleasure in scorning? Foolish indeed to be without Christ: foolish to be without grace, foolish to chafer away our souls for sin. How long ye scorner will ye take pleasure in scorning? will you still persist in your wickednesse, and never have done with your sins? will you never turn back again, but damne your souls for ever? O ye foolish, how long will you love foolishnesse?*

3. Thirdly, here is a gracious exhortation in the 23 verse: *Turn you at my correction: lo, I will poure out my mind unto you, and make you to understand my words.* As if he should say, Do you not see how you are going apace to confusion; and that the way you take, leadeth unto destruction? turn ye therefore, turn ye back again, for there is a Christ behind you: O turn ye, for if ye go on in your sins, you perish for ever.

4. Fourthly, here is a yearning promise made unto the world, in the end of the 23 verse; *Lo, I will poure out my spirit upon you, and cause you to understand my words.* As if he should say, return back again with me, and you shall have better welcome then you can possibly have, if you go on in your sins: the devill wil never let you gain so much by your living in your lusts, as you shall  
do

do by repentance for them, and forsaking of them. For *behold, I will poure out my spirit upon you*, whereby you shall be far greater gainers, then you shall be by your sins.

Fiithly, here is a grievous threatning against the world, even all those that have loytered out the day of grace. As time and tyde stayes for no man, no more doth the day of grace: *Because I have called, and you refused; I have exhorted, but you have not regarded.* I have denounced judgments against you for your sins, but you have hardned your hearts; now a day of wo and miserie shall come upon you, a time of vengeance and desolation shall overtake you; there will a day come wherein there will be weeping, and crying Mercie (Lord) mercy; but I tell you beforehand what you shall trust to: let this be your lesson, now I call, and you will not hear; now I stretch out my hands, but you will not regard: *you shall seek me early, but you shall not find me: and shall cry, but you shall not be heard.* The words are a thunderclap against all those that procrastinate their repentance, and returning home unto God. Wherein note first, the parties themselves that do prolong this time of grace, *they*: that is, they who when God calls on them, will not heare, when God invites them by his mercies, patience, and forbearance, by his Ministers and servants, by his corrections and judgments, by all faire meanes and foule meanes, yet withstand the means of grace: *they* are the men, *they* shall call, but God will not answer.

Secondly,

2. Secondly, here is their seeking after God, they shall *call upon me.*

3. Thirdly, here is their earnest and diligent seeking unto God, they shall not onely *call*, but *seek* to, and not onely seek, but seek as to labour to find: nay they shall seek me *early*, even strive to go about it with all haste, and flie to repentance, *but they shall not finde me.*

4. Fourthly, here is the unseasonableness of the time of their seeking, *then*: that is a demonstrative, *then*; even a time which the Lord points at: as if he should say, you shall see then these men will be of another mind, *then* they will be glad to be converted, *then* they will be glad to come out of their sins, *then* they will be glad to get grace, and seeke reconciliation with God: but alas! they saw not this *then*, but God foresaw it well enough; *then shall they call, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not finde me.*

5. Lastly, here is the frustration of their hope, which hath two things in it. First, in regard of their selves, in regard of the flaw of their seeking, it being not aright. Secondly, in regard of the justice of God, who rewards every man according to his works. *But I will not hear them.* Whence observe this point of Doctrine.

Doct. i.

Those that will not hear God when he calleth them; God will not hear them, when they call upon him. Those that will not hear the Lord when he calleth upon them by the ministry of his Word, and voice of his Spirit, the Lord will  
not

not hear them, when in their miserie they call upon him.

Thus the Lord dealt with the people in *Ezechiels* dayes; the Lord called them to repentance and obedience: but when they stood out, and neglected the opportunity of grace, and seasons of conversion, see how God deals with them: *though they cry in mine eares with a loud voyce, yet I will not hear them* (saith the Lord.) When men have gone beyond the time of Gods mercie, and out-rowed the tide of Gods forbearance, and will not return, the Lord sets it down with himself, that his wrath shall return upon them, he will no longer forbear: they had a time wherein the Lord did pitie them, and offered grace and mercie unto them, but they neglecting this season, and withstanding this proffer of grace, God resolves with himself they shall never have it again. There was a time wherein God did pitie them, but now he will not pitie them any more; twenty five yeers he called unto them, and sought to bring them home; but because they stood out and refused, the Lord saith, *I will love Ephraim no more.*

Beloved, there is a double day, a white day, and a black day; there is *a day of salvation*, *Isa. 49. 9.* this is the day in the which the Lord said to the prisoners, *Come forth*: and to those that lie in their sins, repent and beleve. Now if any man will come forth and humble his soul before the Lord, let him come and welcome, for it is a day of saluation. But there is another day of damnation,

damnation, which is a dark day, a black and a duskie day, wherein the Lord will visit the sins of the world, and revenge the quarrell of his Covenant. *Hos. 9. 7. The day of visitation is come, yea the day of recompence; the people shall know it; the Prophet is a foole, and the spirituall man is mad.* Beloved, we are fools, and all the spirituall men under heaven are mad, that lay not this day to heart. For the day of the Lord is a day of visitation, and all the world shall rue it, though now men sleep in security. If once mercy be rejected, and God turn away his care from a man, then grace shall be no more, the doore of life shall for ever be shut up against him: and when once this day comes, he hath lost his own peace, and deprived himself of eternall happinesse.

*Reas. I.*

Now there are three Reasons of this point; the first is the law of retaliation, of rendring like for like, which is the justest law that can be made with man, for to give unto every man according to his works, to make him take such as he brings, (as the heathen call it) to give a man *quid pro quo*. Now if God call upon thee, and thou wilt not hear; it is righteousness with God, yea equity with God (that is more) that when thou callest on him, he should not heare thee. For thus runs the tenor of Gods Word, *Prov. 28. 9. He that turns away his care from bearing the Law, even his prayers shall be abominable.* He that turns away his care from Gods Law, God wil turn away his care from his prayer. He that *turns*, it is spoken in the present tense, that is,

is, he that *now* turns away his care, his prayer shall be abominable (in the future tense) that is, the Lord marks what master or servant, what father or mother, what husband or wife, what man or woman it is, that turns away the care of his head, or the care of his heart, from hearing his will, and obeying of his Commandments, the Lord takes speciall notice of it, and sets it down in his Calender, and records it in his Memoriall; keeping a strict account thereof: as if God should say, Well, is it so? I now call, and will not this man or that woman answer? Do I now stretch out my hands, and will not they take care to obey me? Well, let them alone (saith God) there is a day coming, that I shall be a hearing of them, times of sorrow and miserie will take hold of them, and then they in their afflictions will cry unto me, but I will not hear; they will begge for mercy, but I will not regard: they will *seeke me early*, but they shall not *find me*.

It was one of the Articles of high Treason brought in against Cardinal *Woolsey*, that he had the pox, and a stinking breath, and yet durst come into the Kings presence: So it will be an article against thee of high treason before the King of heaven, if thou come into his presence with the stinking breath of thy sins, living in thy lusts, and wallowing in thy filthinesse; all thy prayers are but as so many stinking breaths in the nostrils of the Lord, and every duty that thou performest unto the Lord, shall be as so many articles of high treason against thee, for to condemne thee,

because thou livest in rebellion, and a traitour against God.

*His prayer shall be abominable:* he doth not say, I will turn away mine care from hearing his prayer, which turns away his care from hearing my Law, (that is the true exposition of the words) no, like for like is sometimes in-justice: for if a man should strike a Magistrate a box on the eare, it were not justice for him to give him another: for it is a greater sin to strike a Magistrate, then any other common person; and therefore a greater punishment the Law requireth: So God doth not say, he will turn away his eare from hearing his prayer, but will serve him in a worse kind, he will count it abominable, yea abomination, (in the abstract) it shall be loathsome, yea loathsomenesse it self, in the worst manner, Galat. 6. *As a man soweth, so shall he reape: if thou sowe sparingly, thou shalt reape sparingly: if thou sowe a dull eare to Gods Word, thou shalt reape a dull eare from God to thy prayer: for God will reward every man according to his works.*

Reason 2.

Secondly, because of the time of Gods attributes: both mercy and justice have their season in this life; and when mercie hath acted her part, then cometh justice upon the stage, and after her part: so that God will have his attributes manifested to all the sons of men, yea to the face of the whole world. There is no market, nor Fayre day that lasteth alwayes; if the countrey will not come in, the Tradesmen will put  
up

up their wares, and be gone: but if they come in time, they may have a peniworth: otherwise if they come too late, they will find none. For the Merchant will not alwayes dwell in tents, but away he goeth, and will not stay for them. Beloved, Gods standing is now open, and his shop set wide unto the sons of men; if men will not come in, cheapen and buy without money; whiles God offers his wares, he will put them up and be gone. For the Merchant will not lose his wares, which he should do, if he should alwayes remain in the open ayre with them; if he alwayes continue in the fields expecting customers, his wares would spoyl and rot. So it is with God, how many sweet counsels doth he lose? how many sweet exhortations? how many blessed Sermons, and holy Sacraments, and Sabbaths, doth he lose? how many checks of conscience? how many dayes of grace, and motions of his Spirit have been squandred away in vain? do you think that God will lose all these, and let them rot upon the stall, with staying for you? No, no: the day of grace and mercie will have an end, and grace and mercy will have an end; and then the day of wrath and vengeance will step up. *To day if ye will hear his veyce, then harden not your hearts: then they hardned their hearts, and would not be led by Gods mercies to forsake their sins. Therefore he swore in his wrath that they should never enter into his rest.* If it be so with you as it was with Israel in the wilderness, in the day of temptation, you do not

know but that his finnes may now begin to take vengeance upon you. I tell you, if you harden your hearts this day, you doe not know but this very day the Lord may clap an oath upon your heads, that you shall never enter into his rest. For one and the self-same occasion lasts not alwayes: as every day is not a Market day, nor every weeke in the yeare a Faire weeke, nor every season in the yeare a time of Spring or harvest; so every day of a mans life may not claim to be the day of grace. Therefore if a man fore-slow it, now he fore-sloweth his own happinesse, and putteth off his owne peace for ever.

Excellent is that annotation of Gregory on *Joh 27. 9.* *Will God heare his cry when trouble commeth upon him?* Beloved, now Gods patience is troubled, wilt not thou repent? Now Gods Spirit is troubled, wilt not thou obey? Now Gods justice is troubled, wilt thou not relent? Now Gods word is troubled, wilt thou refuse to hearken? *Will God heare his cry?* He speaketh interrogatively, as if he should say, Art thou so mad, so vain, so foolish, to promise to thy self being an hypocrite, that God will heare thy prayer? Oh no, then justice commeth to take place.

Reason 3

Thirdly, it is Gods use to doe so in other things, even upon the contempt of temporall blessings; and therefore much more in matters of grace and salvation. Thus God promised to give Israel the land of Canaan, *Num. 12. 22.* but

the

the text saith, *They tempted God ten times*, that is, (as some Expositors expound it) many times: or (as others) ten severall times. But what ever the meaning of the text be, certainly it was very many times; so long, til at last *he swore in his wrath that they should never enter into his rest*. Beloved, though there be many a hot swearer that regards not an oath; yet certainly if the Lord swear, we may beleeve him: the Word of God is as strong as oaths: if he say it upon his word, we are bound to beleeve it: how much more then, when he confirms it with an oath? Therefore if the Lord swear thou shalt not, how darrest thou, how canst thou hope or think ever to enter into his rest? This was almost forty years before he died, that the Lord made this oath against them: and God knowes how many thousands of them fell short, not only of the land of Canaan, but also of the Kingdome of heaven.

So God took *Ismael* an hundred and seventeen yeares before he died: twenty yeares God offered him grace and repentance, but he would not take warning; a mocker he was, and a mocker he would be: for he mocked *Isaac* when he was a child of six yeares old; and no meanes would reclaim him, before he heard the voyce, *Cast out the bond-woman and her sonne*: Out with him, (saith God) for he shall never be heire with my sonne: this was an hundred and seventeen yeares before *Ismaels* death.

And so God took *Saul*, five and thirty, or six and thirty yeares before hee died, according to

Josephus Chronology, (if it bee true;) how-  
soever, hee tooke him divers yeares before his  
death; for so the Scripture makes it plain,  
1 Sam. 15. 29. *The Strength of Israel will not lie,  
nor repent: for he is not a man that hee should repent.*  
Therefore because thou hast rejected the word of the  
Lord, the Lord also hath rejected thee from being  
a King. And doe not think that thou by thy  
prayers, and crying God mercy, canst ever alter  
him: for his counsell is immutable, and hee is  
strong in his decrees, and cannot change. Hither-  
to Grace and Mercy have been offered thee,  
which if thou hadst imbraced, thou mightst have  
found mercy from the Lord, and the Kingdome  
should have been established and confirmed un-  
to thee; but now it is too late: for the Strength of  
Israel cannot lie.

God took Esau fiftie yeares before his death:  
for so long he lived, after he sought the blessing  
with teares: but he was a hunting when God  
was a calling: he was following his prophane-  
nesse when God was wooing him to repentance.  
At last when he called for repentance, and sought  
it earnestly, yea his soule was carefull for to get  
it; yet hee could never obtaine it, though hee  
sought it earnestly with teares fiftie yeares before  
he died.

Now if the Lord so severely punish contempt  
of temporall blessings, O how will he punish  
the contempt of proffers of grace and salvati-  
on! I tell you, God will bee more strict in re-  
venging of this sinne, then of any other sinne:

he will come with Martiall law against all those that contemne his Gospel, *Joh. 3. 18.* *He that believeth not, is condemned already.* Doth Christ preach repentance and salvation, and the Kingdome of God, and wilt thou not repent and believe? Martiall Law (belov'd) martiall Law, hang him up; for he is condemned already. Even like a Souldier that rebels against his General, & forsakes his Colours, they doe not cast him into prison, and stay for the Assizes, or Sessions, but give him Martiall Law, even hang him up: So if the Lord found his Gospell in thine eares, and offers thee conditions of peace, knocking at the doore of thy heart by his Spirit, and thou refuse to open to him, thou art condemned already: for the Strength of Israel cannot lie, nor repent. Oh therefore take heed now whiles his word sounds in thine eares, while his Spirit secretly whispers in thy heart to thee, open to him, for else thou art condemned for ever.

Take notice then, that God doth commonly give men a day, and no man or Angel doth know how long this day lasteth. To some it lasteth to their last gasp; to some, to their old age; and to some, it is cut off in their childhood. God gave the Angels a day, the which because they neglected, they are reserved in chains of darknesse untill the great judgement day. God gave *Cain* a day, *Genes. 4.* During all the time of this day, though *Cain* sinned again and again, and went on in his sinnes a great while, yet he heard nothing but a still voyce, *If thou doe well Cain, shalt thou not*

be accepted? but if thou dost ill, sinne lieth at the doore. But when no meanes will prevaile, but Cain will goe on adding sinne to sinne, and murder unto all the rest of his sinnes, and so let goe the season of mercie, the Lord tells him from heaven, that the day of grace is past, the gate of mercie is shut against thee: for *thou art now accursed from the earth.* As if the Lord should say, Before I gave thee a day of saluation, and offered thee mercie, but thou wouldst not accept of it; but now I have elapt a curse upon thy soul, that thou shalt never claw off. So God gave *Nineveh* a day to repent, *Jonah. 3.* Yet forty dayes and *Nineveh* shall be destroyed. God gave the *Fig-tree* a day, even three yeares, before hee would have it cut down. God gave the old world a day of an hundred and twenty yeares; during this time God sent unto them *Noah*, a Preacher of righteousnes, to call upon them to repent, & so set it down also, that *his Spirit shall not alwayes strive with men, but his time shall be an hundred and twenty yeares:* yet one writes, that the Lord cut off twenty of the hundred and twenty yeares, because of their iniquities, which were so grievous, and provoked him so much, that they hastned him to come before he would have done. In all this space if they had repented, they should have found mercie from the Lord: but when this time was gone, and the day of grace was out, the deluge came in upon them, and God by his judgments overthrew the whole world.

You may ask me when this day or season of grace doth end, or cease. I

I answer, that neither men nor Angels can tell, but this I say; it may bee yet this day of grace lasteth unto thee; now it may bee God speaketh home to thy soul, now it may be God warms thy heart, and gives thee good purposes & resolutions: now it may be the Lord Jesus passeth by thee in a good thought and desire, lay hold on it, for thy day may cease this very night, for ought thou knowest. *Luke 17. 22. The time shall come (saith Christ) when you shall desire to see one of the dayes of the Sonne of man, and shall not see it.* Now is the day of Christ upon you, now is Christ offering and preaching himselfe to you, but if you let this day passe, thou mayst desire to have one of the drops of that blood that hath been offered to thee, and yet never have it: thou mayst desire to feele one rap of that Spirit that hath knockt at thy heart, and yet goe without it: thou mayst intreat for one dram of that mercy that hath been offered, and thou hast rejected, but it shall never be granted to thee: God may clap that fearfull sentence upon thee, *Now henceforth never grow fruit more on thee*, never repentance come into thy heart more. If now thou wilt not repent and be converted, the Lord may set it down in his decree from this day forward, that thou mayst fumble about thy sinnes, but shalt never get victory over them: thou mayest ever bee mourning for thy corruptions, but never mourne aright for them: thou mayest blunder about repentance, but never doe the work.

*Ezekiel 24. 23. You shall not mourne nor weep, but you shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one towards another. There is many a soule for contemning of God, and not taking up repentance while they may have it, this plague of God is come upon them, that they are ever repenting, and are never able to repent, ever poring upon their finnes, but never able to come out of them; they pray and pray against them, but their prayers moulder away under them: for they shall pine away for their iniquities. What is the reason? He sheweth in the 13. verse: Because I would have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged any more. Because I gave thee line upon line, precept upon precept, motion upon motion, Sacrament upon Sacrament, Sabbath upon Sabbath, and ordinance upon ordinance, because I used all fair meanes and foule means, I awaked thy conscience, and stirred up the motions of grace in thee; but because I would have cleansed thee, and thou wast not cleansed, thou shalt never be cleansed. A fearful sentence it is, if mens hearts were soundly opened to consider rightly of it.*

And as there is a personall day, so there is a nationall day; if the nation turne unto God during that time, then that nation shall finde mercy; but if they neglect that day, then God will hide those things from their eyes that belong to their peace, as Christ saith of Jerusalem, *Luke 19. 42. O Ierusalem, if that thou hadst known in this thy day, the things that did belong to thy peace! but now they*

they are hid from thine eyes: in this thy day, if thou hadst known it during that day, it had been happy for thee; but now the day of grace is gone, the Lord hath concealed it from thee, and thou shalt never perceive it any more.

Some mens day of grace God endeth even in their very childhood; therefore if there be any little ones, any children here in this congregation, that are of age to know what belongs unto an exhortation, to them I speak, that they take heed how they rebell against the commandment of a father or a mother, or master, against the teaching of Gods word; for though you be children, yet God may inflict judgements upon your heads; for not onely the day of grace, but also the day of life may be cut off from children, as *2 Kings 2.24* Four and twenty children were torn in peeces for mocking the Lords Prophet. Some mens day of grace is not shut up untill their youth, some not untill their old age, some not untill they are a dying; and if they refuse then, they are like, yea sure to perish for ever; I know the day of grace may have several returns, but at last Gods Exchequer will be finally shut up!

May not a man be called at the eleventh or twelfth hour of the day? The day of grace lasteth alwayes; and doth not the Apostle call the day of life the day of grace? *2 Cor. 6. 2.*

It is true, the Lord calleth men at the eleventh and twelfth hour; but yet look and you shall see in the twentieth of *Matthew*, that they were

Object.

Answer.

were

were not called at the first houre, nor at the second nor third houre, nor at the sixth and ninth houre; i. he doth not say he found the same men that he found at the first, and third, sixth & ninth houres, but he saw others standing idle: No, those that were called at the first houre, came in at the first houre; and they that were called at the third houre, came in at the third houre; and they that were called at the sixth & ninth houre, came in at the sixth and ninth houre. Well; doth God call thee in thy childhood, in thy youth, or in thy middle age, now at the first or sixth, or ninth houre, now come in and labour in Gods vineyard, and worke out your salvation with feare and trembling, and make use of the season of grace, now whiles it is upon you: for if thou be called the first houre, the sixth is for another, and not for thee; if thou bee called the sixth houre, the ninth houre is for others and not for thee; if thou be called the ninth houre, the eleventh houre is for others and not for thee; The Text saith, *He came and found others standing idle in the market place, and said unto them, Why stand ye here idle? And they say unto him, No man hath hired us;* as if they should say, We never had any means of salvation, we have had no Ministers to preach unto us; but now God calls upon thee to come in, this is thy houre, look unto it. If God call thee, see thou come in, whether it be at the first or third houre, at the sixth or ninth houre, lest the Lord in his wrath clap hardnesse of heart upon thy soule.

But you will say, that the day of life, and the day of grace are parallel'd and likened one to another; and therefore there is hope so long as a man remains in the congregation of the living.

I answer, it is true indeed, that the day of grace lasteth so long as the day of life: 1. In regard of others, for others are so to esteeme of it, the Minister is to looke to his people, as to a people to be converted as long as they live.

2. In regard of a mans owne selfe, hee is so bound to believe, for the commandment of faith standeth in force on a man, so long as hee liveth, and therefore infidelity and despaire cease not to be finnes, till a man is actually in hell; when he is in hell, then they are no sins, because then he is not commanded to beleeve, but are part of the punishment of the damned; but whilst a man lives it is a sinne, for men are now bound to lay hold upon Christ and to beleeve, at what houre of their life soever.

3. It may be said to last all a mans life long, because it is bounded within the compasse of life: for no man hath a day of grace after this life. But what is the meaning of all those Scriptures which shew how God doth *deliver up men unto the Spirit of giddinesse*; and unto the *Spirit of slumber*? And what meanes the *hardening of mens hearts*, and *fearing of mens consciences*, but onely to shew that the day of grace may end unto a particular man, ten, twenty, thirty, nay foutry yeares before his death?

The

1. Because God may harden a mans heart, *Jerem. 13. 10.* and deafe with them as with *Is- rael in the Rock*, so shut up their hearts, that they shall never melt at any Sermon; never be wrought upon by any judgment, God having closed them up in a rocky heart, that he saith of them, *Can the blackmore change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may they doe good that are accustomed to doe evill.* The blacknesse of the Blackmore is onely in the out-side of the skin, yet all the art under the heavens cannot blot it out: So if once hardnesse possesse thy soule, all the preaching of the Ministers, and all the means of grace in the world, can never bring it unto that frame and temper, as to make it melt under the hand of God; I tell thee, thou that usest to come unto Sermons day after day, and refuseth to repent, living still in thy finnes, there is no hammer nor beetle in the world more hard than thy heart: as those men and women that sit under the preaching of the word, and heare the doctrine of life, like raine from above, beating and knocking on their consciences, and on their hearts, to awaken them out of their finnes, and yet notwithstanding will not repent at last, they prove to be *deafe Adders*, that stop their eares against the word, charme the charmer never so wisely.

2. God may feare mens consciences; Doth thy conscience tell thee that thou art a luke-warming, and wilt thou not be reformed? Doth thy conscience tell thee that thy prayers and all thy

thy religion is rotten and unsound, and that thy repentance is hypocriticall and naught; and that for all thy vaine hopes, thou art but a dissembler, and yet remainest in thy finnes, and wilt thou not be bettered hereby? Take heed; for that man that runnes on in sinne against the voyce of his own conscience, that man finnes the sinne of *Saul*, *1 Sam* 13. 8. God bid him stay seven dayes untill *Samuel* came: *Saul* staves full seven dayes within one houre, at last his lust began to bawle: What? shall I stay for a Prophet thus long? Stay, sayes his conscience; Why? (sayes *Saul*) I waited for him so long, even seven dayes lacking but one houre. Stay (saith God to his conscience) for the word of God bids thee stay so long: he stayed one day, and two dayes, and six dayes, and seven dayes but one houre; Stay (saith his conscience:) no, hee would not; but, *I forced my self*, (saith the Text) as if hee should say, I hardened my heart to do it, though the word of the Lord, & my own conscience bid me stay and not do it, yet *I forced my selfe* to doe it: What was this mans sinne? Was it his offering of sacrifice, and calling upon God by prayer? No, the Lord commands us to call upon him in time of distresse; and being commanded, it was lawfull. Was it his sinne to meddle with the Priests office? No: for he did but appoint the sacrifice, the Priest offered it. What? was it the breaking of one houres time? No: for he had sinned more against God then so: but this was his sinne, that he went against his own conscience,

science, when God stood in the way, when conscience stood in the way: conscience said stay, but he would not stay: God bid him stay, but he would not stay. And this is the sinne of many thousands amongst us; mens consciences tell them that they must not be drunkards, mens consciences tell them that they must not be worldlings, they must not be swearers, they must not be luke-warme professours, they must pray better then they do, and have other faith then yet they have, if ever they meane to be saved; wile thou yet against thy conscience force thy self to go on in thy sins from day to day, and never be reformed? take heed lest the Lord be provoked to set thy sinne upon thy head, and shut up thy heart, and conclude thy eternall destruction.

*Obj.*

Suppose I go on in my sinnes, and follow my wicked courses now; what if I seek him hereafter, and humble my soul before him with fasting and prayer, and when I lie upon my death-bed, I send a ticket unto my Minister to pray for me, will all this do me no good?

*Ans.*

Surely no, (saith God, *Jerem. 15. 1.*) *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my affections could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight.* Dost thou lie sick upon thy death-bedd? were *Samuel, Job, or Daniel* the Minister of thy Parish, and thou shouldst send thy ticket unto them, desiring them to remember thee in their prayers; if *Noah* stood in the Pulpit, and *Job* and *Daniel* were here before the Lord for to plead for thee, yet he would not hear thee.

But

But suppose I humble my self by fasting and prayer, will not God hear that?

Object.

No. if thou neglect the day of grace. *Jer. 14. i 2. When they fast, I will not bear them: and when they offer oblations, I will not accept their cry: but I will consume them by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.* You may set up your fastings, prayers, and humiliations, you may lament and mourne, and pine away your selves in your sins; but it is not all your prayers and fastings, it is not all your lamentation and mourning, that will do you good, to long as the counsell of the Lord is rejected. *Because I called, and ye would not answer; therefore you shall call, but I will not bear:* they thought that the Lords cares would alwayes be open, and that when they called the Lord would have answered; and that the day of grace would ever remain; but God saith, *I will not bear them,* they would never have sought if they thought the Lord would not hear them, but all their seeking was in vain.

Answer.

You will say, *At what time soever a sinner repenteth he shall have mercy.*

Object.

It is true, if thou *repents from the bottome of thy heart,* but thou maiest come with many a degree of repentance, and yet never repent whilest thou livest: if thou repent from thy heart, and root out thy sins, then God will put away thy sins; but thou maiest go on in repentance and calling upon God, and performing many duties of Religion, and yet be hardned; look how much Religion will stand with self-love, so much thou

Answer.

maiest have after the day of grace is gone. Self-love may make a man flie to prayer, and run after Sermons, and go on in many holy duties, and give over many sins; look how far self-love may drive thee unto holy duties, so far thou maist go, and yet notwithstanding remaine hardned. O therefore let us not delay, nor put off the time of grace, nor let go salvation while it may be had: *then* shall they call, but I will not answer: he doth not set down when this time is, it may be it is now, it may be not this seven yeers, it may be not till thy death.

*Doff. 2.*

*Doff.* It may this very day, even this verie Sermon, this very houre may be thy day that art now in thy sins: that if thou repent not at this very one Sermon, thou neglectest eternall life for ever; lose the benefit of this Sermon at this time, and thou maiest lose eternall salvation, and never have it more. The thiefe that robd this day, how doth he know but this one robbery may bring him to the gallows? So the man that sins this day, how doth he know but that this very dayes work may bring him to hell? *Deut. 32. 35. To God belongs vengeance: their feet shall slide in due time.* Therefore if a man sin against him, he may stand to day, and to morrow, and many dayes; but when the *due time* comes, even the time which God hath set, then up goes his heels, he shall slide and break his neck: thy houre-glasse runs in heaven, and thou seest not when the sand comes to the bottome, but when t is out, th n down thou goest to hell for ever.

There

There was one resolved to kill *Julius Caesar* such a day; the night before, a friend sent him a letter to acquaint him with it: but being at supper, and busie, I wil not look upon it now, (saith he) to morrow is a new day. The next day when he should have read his letter, he was stabd. Whence this proverbe came in Greece, To morrow is a new day. God sends thee a letter and a message from heaven to day, hear his voice to day, repent and come out of your sins, or for ever to hell; to day be converted and sanctified, or for ever be hardned. Dost thou refuse to hearken to day, and putt it off untill to morrow? it may be to morrow may be a day of Gods wrath, and then thou mayest be hardned, seared, and bound over unto the great day of Gods vengeance: to morrow God may set the decree upon thy soul, that thou shalt never repent. Therefore if thou refuse this, thou refusest all; for what knowest thou, but this very day may be thy day?

The reason is, because Gods patience is in his own brest, and who can tell how long it will last? Hast thou *Mims* his glasse-window, to look into Gods secret counsell? hast thou a key-hole to look into Gods treasurie? canst thou stand on tiptoe, to look over Gods shoulder, to look into Gods decree, to see how long his patience will last? It may be God hath suffered thee till this day, thou art guiltie of ten thousand sinnes, and yet he is patient towards thee; God hath stayed thus long for thee, that hast I worne

Reas. 1.

I know not how many oaths, God hath born thus long with thee that hast told I know not how many lies, prophaned I know not how many Sabbaths, contemned I know not how many ordinances, and sleighted I know not how many judgements, yet Gods patience is in his own brest, it is the long sufferance of God. Thou mayest say, I would fain have it to morrow, and this seven yeers, but alas, it is his long sufferance and not thine: and how dost thou know when he will conclude it? it may be this day as well as to morrow. *Joel 2. 13. Rent your hearts, and not your garments,* (saith the Prophet) *for the Lord be is gracious, and mercifull.* This word [*for*] hath a great deal of force in it: 1<sup>o</sup>. It is a *descriptivum* [*for*:] for he is gracious and a mercifull God: therefore rent thy heart, and let thy soul burst within thee, that thou hast sinned against him: for he is a mercifull God, and it may be he will pardon all thy sins, and heal all thy rebellions committed against him.

Secondly, it is an upbraiding [*for*:] upbraiding thee for thy sins: rent thy heart therefore, why? he is a patient God; wilt thou go on in thy sins against such a patient God? and rebel against such a loving Father, that hath loved thee with so much compassion? Rent thy heart, for he is patient.

Thirdly, it is a comforting and encouraging [*for*:] rent thy heart, for there is encouragement for thee to repent, give over thy sins, and go to the throne of grace. For there is much  
mercie

mercie to welcome thee, and great patience for to bid thee come home, and abundance of grace for to incourage thee; therefore rent thy heart and come home unto the Lord, for he is patient and long-suffering.

Fourthly, it is a forewarning [*fo* : ] rent your hearts, for the Lord is gracious and mercifull, slow to anger, and of great kindnesse; yet his mercie lasteth, yet his patience endureth, yet he hath all his attributes, and yet he is pleased to manifest the same, still tendring grace and mercie unto thee. Oh turn unto him, while these endure, or else thou shalt perish for ever.

Fifthly, it is a threatning [*for* : ] now he is gracious, now he is mercifull, but his mercy will end, his patience will end, and then if thou hast not rent thy heart before, it will be too late then. Therefore as ever thou lovest thine own soul, now rent thy heart, and turn unto God.

It is Gods own proclamation; *The Lord, the Lord, slow to anger, and of great mercie, forgiving iniquity and sin.* Yea what man soever he be, that humbles his soul before him, he shall find grace and mercie with him; yea abundance of mercie, pardoning iniquitie, transgression and sinne; yea any thing: Let but a soul come prostrate before him, humbling his soul, he will pardon his sin. But as it followeth in the words; *He will by no means clear the guiltie;* if notwithstanding all Gods patience and mercie, thou go on in thy sins, the Lord will never forgive thee, but will visit thy sinnes upon thee unto the third and

fourth generations, because thou hast withstood the day of grace. Beloved, men run on in their sins, as if so be an Angel from heaven should cry unto them and tell them, yet God will be good unto them, yet God will shew them mercie, and forbear them. Beloved, let your consciences answer, if you ever heard the Lord God say to any of you, thus long I will forbear you. No, Gods patience is in his own breast, and therefore no man knows how long it will last.

*Reas. 2.*

A second reason is, because Gods patience giveth no marks or inklings of it, before it ends: commonly when God strikes a man with death, he giveth some signes of warnings of it before, as sicknesse, and pains, and gray hairs, and many sorrows, &c. Now because thy life is in Gods hands, thou carest not for it, but venturest to go on in thy sinnes, hoping to have some warning, though thousands be cut off without it; but the day of grace may come to an end, and yet thou never have any inkling or warning of it before-hand: commonly when God strikes a man with death, he tels him of it before-hand by aches and pains, as if the Lord should say, Now thou shalt die, now will I take thee out of the world. But when the Lord taketh away the day of grace from a man, though the spirituall man may take some notice of it, yet there is no sensible apparition of it, but after the day of grace is set upon a man, he may be as strong and lustie as before, he may come to Church as well after as before, performe religious duties, and do many good things,

things, as well after as before; as *Saul* went on in duties of Religion, as well after *Samuel* had pronounced the Lords doome upon him; how many times was he offering sacrifice unto the Lord after the Prophet told him, that he was a man *reiected*? how many good speeches came from him? as when *Samuel* met him, he salutes him with these words; *Blessed be thou of the Lord, I pray thee turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord.* A man would have thought that *Saul* had been a good convert. No, no, before all this his judgement and doome was set upon him; God steals upon him and saies nothing; he claps his plague upon their souls, and holds his peace.

*Isa. 42. 14.* *I have a long time held my peace, I have been still, and refrained my self; now will I cry like a travelling woman, I will destroy, and devoure at once.* The Lord shews here how he deals with men, they go on in their sins, but the Lord holds his peace; they provoke him every day, but the Lord refrains his anger: but now all at once his wrath breaketh forth upon them. *Psal. 64. 7.* *God will shoot an arrow at them suddenly, their stroke shall be at once.* The Lord suddenly shoots a swift arrow at thee, no sooner it is shot, but it enters into thy bowels. When the Lord comes upon a man, he comes suddenly, when he ends the day of grace upon him he doth it suddenly. He ended the day of grace on the Scribes and Pharisees even in the very Sermon time, while Christ was preaching unto them, they were de-

livered up to hardnesse of heart: so many were delivered up to hardnesse of heart in the time of *Hosea's* propheticie, *Hof. 4. 17.* *Ephraim is ioynd to idols; let him alone* (saith God:) as if he should say, Sermon, let him alone; Preacher, let him alone; Spirit, let him alone; Christ, let him alone; Beloved, if we stand out against God, and reject the day of grace, the Lord may say, Word, let such a man alone, and never convert him; Christ, let such a man alone, and never rede-me him; Spirit, let such a man alone, and never sanctifie him; Sacraments, let such a man alone, and never seal up any comforts unto him: a fearfull signe that men are come to this houre, do we not see that men come to the Word, and the Word lets them alone in their sins? do not men come to the Sacrament, and the Sacrament leaves them still in their filthinesse? men come unto good duties, but good duties let them alone, and do them no good: and this is the condition of many thousands in the world. Therefore oh think upon this you that have made a league with your sins, and an agreement with hell: hear this delivered to you this day, that the day of grace may be ended, and God may come and clap his curse upon men, and never give them any inkling of it at all.

*Reason 3.*

A third Reason is, because God reckons upon every houre, if God kept not a strict account of time, how many Sermons you have had, how many mercies you have enjoyed, how many crosses he hath warned you by: if God kept not a true

true talle and account of every houres time, you might rub on many dayes, and moneths, and yeers, and spend much time in fulfilling of your lusts; but God keepeth a reckoning of these things, yea of everie houre, and of every minute.

*Acts 17. 30. The times of ignorance God regarded not; but now he admonisheth all men to repent.* Alas, when men live in their sins through blindnesse and ignorance, and know not God, the Lord takes no such strict notice of them, but lets them go on longer and longer; but when the Lord sends them his Word and Gospel, and affords them the means of grace, he doth the more strictly look unto them, and takes the more exact account of them, before they had the means of grace, the Lord winked at them, and did not so narrowly watch them, but looked over mens ignorance, (as the originall hath it) but now God sends his Word and Gospel, he *admonisheth all men to repent*, he winks at never an houre, but sets down how oft thou hast had exhortation from thy Minister, how often thou hast had warning by sicknesse and afflictions, how often thou hast had checks from thine owne conscience, how many admonitions thou hast had from thy friends, how many times thou hast had the sound of the Gospel to sound in thy eares to bring thee home unto God. *John 2. 7. 11. This is the first beginning of miracles that Jesus did. John 4. 58. This is the second miracle that Jesus did, saith the Text, God sets down this, is the first, this is the second time: This is the second Epistle I wrote to you,*

you, saith *Paul*. Oh this is the third time I wrote unto you, 2 *Cor.* 13. that when I come I will not spare: so God sets it down in his catalogue, this is the first time that I have warned this man, this is the second time, this is the third time, that when I come, I will not spare; the Lord counts how long he hath sought unto thee, and intreated thee by his mercies, how long he hath allured thee by his Word, how long he hath warned thee by his judgements, how oft he hath smote thy heart with fears, and thy conscience with terrours. Now if for all this thou wilt not return, just is it with God to cast thee downe to hell for ever.

Reas. 4.

The fourth Reason, and last: it is a wonder that the day of grace is not ended already, and that thou art not now in hell. When a thing in this kind is looked for to be done, it is a wonder that it is not done: it is a wonderfull mercie of God unto this Kingdom that yet the day of grace is continued amongst us, in regard of our long fear and expectation of the contrary. For from the highest to the lowest we have highly revolted more and more, and provoked God his very face. What contempt of Gods Word? what neglect of Gods ordinances? what prophaneations of Gods Sabbaths? what scoffing and deriding of Gods servants? how doth wickednesse and prophaneesse stand up in the highest roome, climbe up into the highest chambers? But as a whore condemned to die being with child, is reprived for a time, untill her child be brought forth: so  
this

this Land hath gone a whoring from God, yet so long as God hath some children to be brought forth, which are not yet come unto the birth, he lets his grace and Gospel continue untill these children be brought forth. Therefore now (beloved) if we stick at the birth and come not forth, an hundred to one but we shall miscarrie.

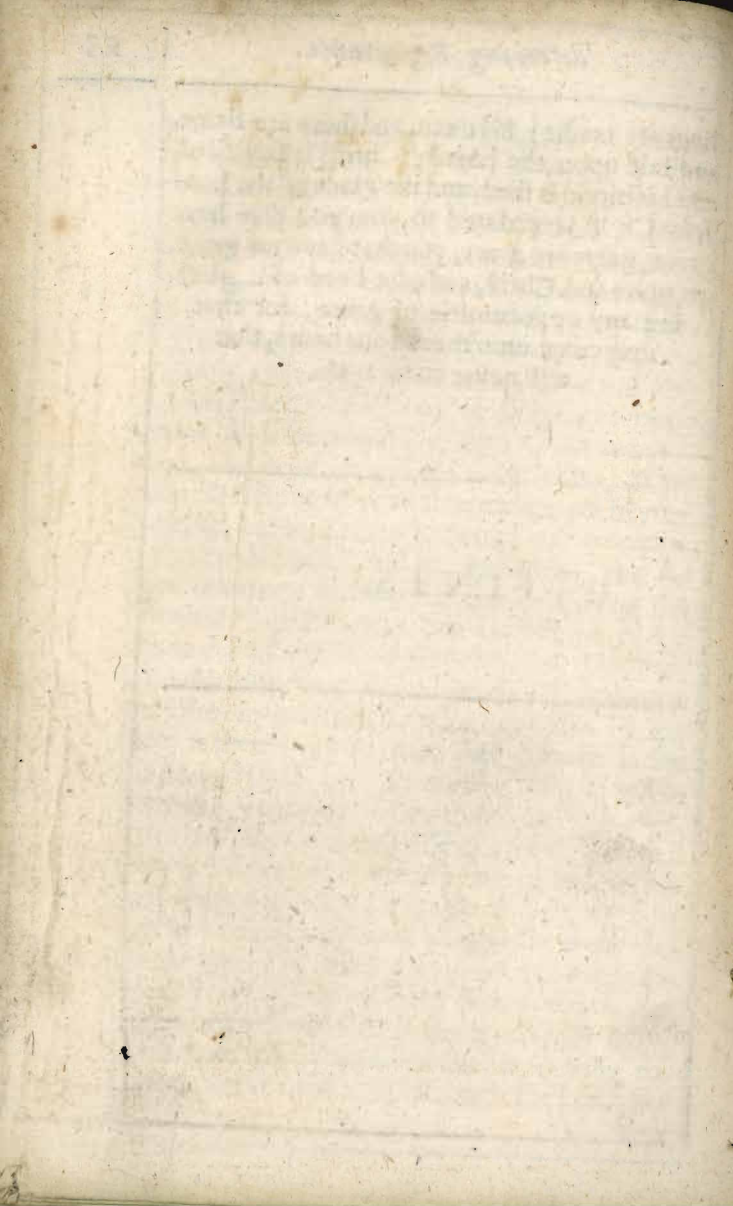
When Christ comes first to thy soul, he witnesseth grace and mercy to thee, if thou wilt repent and amend; yea he witnesseth forgiveness of sins, redemption, and salvation, if thou wilt beleeve; but if not, he will be a *swift witnessse against thee*, Malachie 3. 5. if thou continue and goest on in thy sins: *Agree with thine adversary, while thou art in the way quickly*, Matth. 5. 25. Now God is in the way with thee, Christ and his Spirit are in the way with thee, thou needest not now say, who shall go up to heaven and bring down the Spirit to thee; Christs Spirit is now knocking at thy heart, and now God offers his mercy to thee, now thou art in the way, now he calls unto thee to accept of his mercie, now he commands thee to take Christ, now hear him calling to thy heart, now he tenders grace unto thee, imbrace it: now receive Christ and make up thy peace with him: remember the saying of the Apostle, 2 Corinth. 13. 5. *Examine your selves whether you be in the faith; prove your selves. Know you not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you except you be reprobates?* As if the Apostle should say, I have been an Apostle to you this yeer and half, I have preached thus and thus long  
unto

unto you, I have wrote one Epistle to you to reform those abuses that were among you, and now I write this second Epistle, to declare the whole will and counsell of God to you. Now cast up your reckoning, examine your selves, and make up your account: see if you have gained Christ. O, I have Christ, (saith one) I have Christ, (saith another.) I, but *prove it*, saith the Apostle, and try your selves: know ye not that by this time *Christ is in you*, or else you be *reprobates*? As if he should say, if yet Christ be not in you, and grace wrought in your hearts, if yet you lie festring in your sins, and go on in your wicked wayes, it is to be feared you are reprobates: either you or we are reprobates, you for not obeying, and we for not delivering the truth of God unto you: *But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates: vers. 6.* God forbid that this word should be ever spoken unto any soul in this congregation: but this let me say, is there any man here that goes on in his lusts, and in his carnall course of life, in pride, security, hardnesse of heart, and impenitencie, that hath not the soundnesse of grace? he hath a fearfull signe and brand of a reprobate, whose conscience is stified: it is a fearfull signe, if he be not a reprobate before God, yet he is one that is not approved, but for the present in a wretched and miserable condition. Now is the time of grace wherein God hath spoken to your souls; remember that vengeance that is coming towards you if it be rejected; now the Lords fat-

lings

lings are readie; his oxen, and sheep are slaine, and laid upon the board; **Christ** is sacrificed, and his blood is shed, and the grace of the Lord **Jesus Christ** is tendered to you; you that have grace, get more grace; you that have no grace, get grace and **Christ**, and take heed of neglecting any opportunitie of grace, for that may come unto thee in one houre, that will never come again.

**FINIS.**



VAIN  
THOUGHTS  
ARRAIGNED

At the Barre of Gods  
IVSTICE.

SET FORTH

In a Sermon preached at Linton  
in Kent September 29. 1629.

By that vigilant and painfull Minister  
of the Word,

WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.

Sometimes fellow of *Pembroke Hall*  
in *Cambridge*, and late Parson  
of *Rochford* in *Essex*.



London printed by *M. S.* for *I. S.*

THE THOMAS  
AIR ALIGNED

At the Court of God

IN SENATE

THE NORTH

In a session held at London  
of the Senate of the

of the Senate of the

of the Senate of the

of the Senate of the

of the Senate of the

of the Senate of the

of the Senate of the

of the Senate of the

of the Senate of the

of the Senate of the



# A. SERMON OF

Mr. WILLIAM FENNERS,

preached at *Linton*, Septem. 9.

1629.

PHIL. 3. 18, 19.

*For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose belly is their God, whose glory is their shame, and who mind earthly things.*



THE Apostle in the closure of this Chapter, setteth out unto us a twofold kind of life: First, the life of the godly, and that

1. by way of exhortation, verse 17. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as you have us for an example: 2. by way of declarati-

H

or,

on, verse 20. *But our conversation is in heaven,* whence also we look for the Saviour, even the Lord Jesus Christ. Then secondly, hee sets forth unto us the life of the wicked, which walked otherwise then the Disciples and Apostles of Christ walked, in these words read unto you. The Apostle warned those wicked men again and again, but they would not take warning, neither did they thinke themselves so bad as hee made them, and therefore they thought they should speed well enough, he preached to them in the pulpit, and wrote unto them, though hee were six hundred miles and more distant from them, (and that weeping too) that they are enemies to the *Crosse of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, who minde earthly things.*

The words may be construed two wayes; either as being meant, 1. Of severall wicked men, as first of Heterodox walkers, such as walk contrary to the Apostles: 2. Of wicked persecuters of the Gospell, enemies to the Crosse of Christ: 3. Of Drunkards and hypocrites, *whose God is their belly;*: 4. Of Ambitious and proud persons, *whose glory is their shame:* and 5. of covetous and carnall minded men, *who minde earthly things:* or as Chrysostome expounds the word (& so it seems is the meaning of them) to be meant of one sort of men, *who mind earthly things,* they are such as walk otherwise then the Apostle walked. Who are they that *mind earthly things?* they are *enemies of the Crosse of Christ:* Who are they that *mind earthly things?* Whose hearts  
and

and affections run more after the things of this life, then after the crosse of Christ: Their God is their belly: Who are they that *mind earthly things*, and think onely how to increate their living, and enlarge their estate, and make them sure unto themselves? *their glory is their shame*. Who are they that *mind earthly things*? that give their hearts (the flower of man) and their affections (the flower of their soules) unto the world, and unto the base things of the world, still they are they that *mind earthly things*, which set either their loving thoughts, or their carking and caring thoughts, or their fretting and vexing thoughts; or their eager, covetous, and vain thoughts on earthly things, they are they that walk otherwise then the Apostles of Christ walked; These are those that are *enemies to the crosse of Christ, whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things, whose end is destruction*.

Hence then will we observe this point:

That those whose minds and hearts run habitually on earth and earthly things, their end must needs be destruction.

*Jerem. 6. 19. Hear, O earth, (saith God) behold I will bring evill upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not bearkened unto me, but rejected my Law.* Wherein we may see 3 things, 1. That the curse of God is the desert of cursed evill, & vain thoughts: 2. That the plague and curse of God is the event of evill and vaine thoughts; evill thoughts doe not onely deserve

Gods plagues, but also bring them: 3. Here is notice given to all the world; *Heare, O earth:* as if he had said, Here is a reckoning that you little dream of, I will bring a plague upon you not onely for your idolatry, for your whoredome and fornication, but even for your vaine thoughts, *Prov. 24. 9. The thoughts of the wicked are sinne;* the Lord doth not only condemne the actions and courses of wicked men, but sets his curse upon their very thoughts. Sinne is of an homogeneall nature, of which every part of a thing is the whole; every piece of stone is stone, for it hath the nature of the whole: even so it is with sinne, the least part of sin, the least thought of sinne, the least shiver of sin, is sin, and abominable before God.

Reas. 1.

The reasons why those, whose hearts and thoughts run habitually on earth and earthly things, must needs end in destruction, are, 1. That mans end must needs be destruction, that never repents: Now, so long as a mans thoughts run usuallly and habitually on the things of the world, that man never repents; repentance not onely cleanseth the outside of man, but the inside also, even the heart; repentance goeth as farre as the Law of God goeth, where the word of God begins, there repentance must needs begin: now the word of God begins and strikes at the heart, as saith the Apostle, *The word of God is sharp and powerfull, sharper then any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the soule and spirit, the joynts and marrow, and is a discerner*  
of

of the thoughts of the heart, Heb. 4.12. Now then, if the word of God strike at the thoughts of the heart, then repentance must goe and reach to farre to reforme and amend the things of the heart, or else he never repents. Let a man sweep his house never so much, yet it is not clean so long as there remains one Cob-web in it: so if thy heart be swept from drunkenesse, whoring, and swearing, and yet if the old Cob-web of vaine thoughts remaine in any corner of thy heart, not washed out, nor swept down, thou hast not as yet repented: *Oh Jerusalem* (saith God by his Prophet) *wash thy heart from wickednesse, that thou mayst bee saved: how long shall thy vaine thoughts lodge within thee?* Jer. 4.14. Mark how the Lord inforceth his exhortation: see how he backs his counsell, [*that thou maist be saved.*] as if he had said, thou canst not bee saved, unlesse thou wash thy heart from vaine thoughts: *how long shall thy vaine thoughts lodge within thee?* He doth not say, why doe vaine thoughts come in thee? for they will come into the best & most holy heart; but how long shall they lodge within thee? If but vaine thoughts do lodge in man, & take up their nest in his heart, if a man let his thoughts dwell upon vaine things, and hee give way unto them, and use them as his market, trade and recreations, hee cannot be saved; it is an emphaticall kind of speech: as if the Lord should say, O Jerusalem, thou never considerest this, and thus he doth as it were pity and compassionate them in their blindnesse and ignorance, and

horrible befottednes, that think that thought is free. Beloved, when the Lord comes to reckon w<sup>h</sup> the world, he wil not only reckon with them for their pounds and shillings, for their hundreds and thousands of sins; for their murders, whoredomes, blasphemies, &c. but he will call them to account for their least sinnes, the pence and farthing sinnes, even their very thoughts: Agree with thine aduersarie quickly, while thou art in the way, lest he deliver thee up to the Jaylor, and thou be cast into prison: thou shalt not come out untill thou hast paid the utmost farthing; thou must deliver up thy farthing as well as thy pound sinnes, or else thou never agreest with thine aduersary. When the Lord by his Prophet calls upon his people, exhorting them to repentance, he willeth and exhorteth them to *change their thoughts*, *Esay 55. 7.* Repentance is the change of the thoughts, according to the English proverb, (*I have changed my thoughts:*) *Look unto thy feet when thou entrest into the house of God, Eccles. 5. 1.* Thou canst never go to the house of God without thy feet: the thoughts and affections of the heart, are the feet of the soule, and thou canst never go to God without them, and therefore if thy heart and affections run habitually on earthly things, thou didst never repent, and so thine end is damnation.

Reason 2

The second reason is, that mans end must needs be destruction that hath no Christ in the world: now so long as thy thoughts run habitually on earthly things, thou hast no Christ. It is not e-  
nough

nough for a man to hang on Christ, for many a man doth so, and yet is cut off from Christ, and perisheth for ever: thou must not onely hang upon Christ, but thou must also get into Christ. As in the old world, when the deluge came, and the waters increased so greatly, that the mountaines and high hills were covered with them, and the people could not save themselves by getting unto the tops of the mountaines, no question but many seeing the Ark swim above the water, did climb up and hang upon the sides of the Ark, thinking to save themselves, yet none of them were saved, but those that were gotten into the Ark: so many a man will catch hold of Christ, but his hold will be gone, and hee perish for ever, unlesse he get into Christ. Now a man can never get into Christ, unlesse his heart bee purged from vaine thoughts: For Christ when he entreteth into a man, cleanseth his heart from vaine thoughts, 2 Cor. 10, 5. If Christ once come into the heart, he will set up his throne there: he will hold up his Scepter of Righteousnesse in it: when Christ commeth, see what a work he will make in the heart, he will not suffer a proud thought to remain there to upbraid him: he will not suffer ever a sinfull lust to stand up to beard him; but he wil *cast down every imagination, and all high things that exalt themselves, and hee will bring every thought into subjection unto himself.* Therefore if thy thoughts run after the lusts of thy owne heart, thou hast no Christ in thee: for Christ (beloved) will never dwell in a foule house: I

know there is no wheat without some darnell, no gold without some drosse, no wine without some lees; so there is no man but hath some sin; no man so clean, but hath some defilements of sin upon him: therefore if a man have not the cleansing grace of Christ in him, cleansing his heart from vain things, there is no Christ in him: for Christ will never dwell in a foule heart. Now beloved, the very vain thoughts of a man defile him: as Christ saith, *Matth. 7. 21, 22, 23.* *Out of the heart proceedeth evill thoughts, and they are they that defile a man.* All these, not onely murders, and adulteries, and uncleanneses, and all other abominable sins, which mens consciences startle at; but *evill thoughts* defile a man: Assure thy self that so long as the league of these evill thoughts is not broken, thou hast no Christ as yet within thee. Hence is that exhortation of the Apostle, *Colos. 3. 1, 2.* *If you be risen with Christ, then seek those things which are above.*

Brethren, you must remember that there be two kinds of exhortations in Scripture: the one, if a man do them, blessed and happie is he; the other, if he do them not, yet he may find mercie: it will be a grief and a sorrow to him, but it follows not that he shall miscarrie. But there are exhortations that tye to obedience, that must be obeyed, or else there is no salvation, as this exhortation of the Apostle; it is not left to our choice to do or not to do, but *if a man be risen with Christ*, he must do it: he must *seek the things that are above*: that man then that hath his thoughts

thoughts run habitually on the world, that man hath no Christ in him; and therefore his end must needs be destruction.

Thirdly, that mans end must needs be destruction that loves not God; now so long as thy thoughts run habitually on the things of the world, thou hast no true love of God in thee. For thus runs the Commandment of love, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* *Matth. 22. 37.* It is as if Christ should have said, thou shalt love God *with all thy heart, and with all thy heart, and with all thy heart*: for the *soul, mind, and heart* are all one, that no man might dare to keep any part of their heart from God. Every one will say, I love God with all my heart, I go to Church and serve God with all my heart: I hear the Word, and pray with all my heart: I receive the Sacraments with all my heart: Dost thou so? and yet let thy thoughts run upon the world? dost thou pray, and yet lettest vain thoughts lodge within thee? dost thou hear the Word, receive the Sacraments, and yet letst vain thoughts distract thee? Dost thou walk in thy calling, and yet lettest vain thoughts steal away thy heart, and yet sayest thou, I love God with all my heart, when thou takest away thy heart from God? How dost thou think thy thoughts, with thy heels, or with thy heart? Surely thou sayest, with my heart: Why then if thou lovest God with all thy heart, thou must give thy thoughts unto God; God that calls for thy heart, calls for all the heart: now  
the

Reas. 3.

the heart is nothing but all a mans heart, all the affections and desires, all turnings and windings, all things that are in the heart do but make up the heart : and therefore when God calls for thy heart, he calls for all the powers and faculties of the soule. And therefore the Prophet *David* would blesse God *with his soul, and all that was within him.* Psal. 103. So thou must give thy thoughts, and all that is within thee to God, or else thou givest God nothing; therefore that mans end must needs be destruction that loves not God.

Reason 4.

Fourthly, that mans end must needs be destruction, that never gives over his sins : and so long as thy thoughts run after the world, thou canst never forsake sin : thou maiest resolve and think on the contrary, yet so long as thy thoughts run habitually on the things of the world, thou dost not forsake sin. Wicked and carnall men may have the eyes of their consciences opened, and their hearts awakned, whereby they may see their sins, and the hellish evill and danger of them: whereupon they may resolve and purpose to forsake them; and then they will make a covenant with God that they will not do thus and thus; I have been touchie and cholerick; but I will be so no more; I have been a prophane swearer and blasphemmer of the Name of God, but I will be so no more; I have been a drunkard, and an unclean person, but Lord thou shalt see a reformation in me. Nay it may be he will tell his Minister of it, and his father and his mother,

his

his wife, his children, and all his friends too of it: but when he comes to his cold blood again, and these cold braces which fluttered so, come to be cold in him, so that his heart comes to it self again, then vain thoughts rest in his heart, and he returns to his old sins again, as the dog ro his vomit, and the sow being washed, to the wallowing in the mire.

The Apostle excellently describes a man that can never depart from his sins: *They have eyes full of adultery, which cannot cease to sin: 2 Pet. 2. 14.* where the Apostle speaks not onely of that adulterie which is a breach of the seventh Commandment; but of such an adulterie, which is a perfect breach of every Commandment, when the heart runneth a whoring after every sin and vanitie: when the eye of the soul is full of adulterie, the heart cannot cease to sin; when the eye cannot see an object of gain or profit, but the mind is presently agag, and runs after it; when it cannot see an object of delight and pleasure, but it is straightway caught by it: when he cannot see any wrong or injurie done unto him, but presently he is inflamed with revenge, and his heart runs after it: I say that if thy eye be thus full of adulterie that thou canst not see the occasions and hits of sin, but presently thou art insnared, and thy soul is taken by it; thou art the man that canst not cease to sin: therefore untill thou turne the eye of thy soule, which is the thoughts and affections of thy heart, another way; thou wilt never cease to sin. For wherefoever

ever thou lookest, thou wilt be insnared, so long as thy thoughts are evill and vicious; either upon pride, or covetousnesse, or ambition, or envie, or delights; thy soul will look asquint on God: and untill these vain thoughts of thine be crucified, thou wilt onely look upon the satisfying of these vain lusts of thine.

*Prov. 3. 6. In all thy wayes acknowledge God, and he shall direct thy paths.* In all thy wayes think on God, or else thou maiest go to many duties in Religion but never be directed in thy going; thou maiest pray a thousand times, but never be established in thy prayer: thou maiest go from Lecture to Lecture, and yet never be established in thy service: thou maiest go about many things and never be established in any thing, unlesse God be in all thy thoughts: a man may go on in a course of Religion, but it is at hap hazard, he is inconstant, and unsteadie in his course, unlesse in his heart he think upon God; and therefore his end must needs be destruction.

This then may serve, first, for humiliation to the godly: secondly, for matter of condemnation to the wicked.

*Use 1.*

First, for humiliation; are vain thoughts thus damnable, that when they beare sway in the heart, they make that mans end to be destruction? How then ought this to fill the faces of them that have the Spirit of Christ, with shame and confusion, and to make them in a holy manner to be confounded of themselves, and to think of the emptinesse, naughtinesse, and vanities

cies of their hearts? Beloved, thou canst not go to prayer, but abundance of vain thoughts will be about thee, like wasps to assault thee; thou canst not go to the Word, but these vaine thoughts will be a humming in thy eares; thou canst not go about the works in thy calling, but vain thoughts will haunt thee, and creep into thy meditations, and take away the main burthen of the work all the day long. Beloved, this should make a godly man ashamed, and confounded in himself in the consideration hereof. The Prophet *David* was so confounded and ashamed hereat, that had not God poured in mercie and comfort into his soul, he had been distracted, and should have despaired, considering the company of vain thoughts that lodged within him, *Psal. 94. 19.* where he shews what abundance of distracting thoughts he had; that if God had not sustained him with comfort after comfort, he had even been overwhelmed in despaire by them.

*Augustine* saith, a mans thoughts are not in his own power: the heart of man is like tinder; and if the devill cast a spark into it, thou canst not hinder it from taking fire; but thou maiest hinder it from burning further. A ship may have leakes in her, and thou canst not hinder the coming in of water into her: but by thy pumping and industry thou maiest save her from drowning in the water; even so evill thoughts, though they be rooted out, yet they will come in again; A mans heart is like to the fig-tree that grew out of the stone wall, which *Epiphanius* speaketh

speaketh of: the branches were lopt off, and it grew again; the boughs were lopt off, and it grew again; they cut down the body of it, yet it grew again: they pluckt up the roots of it, yet it grew again: till at last the stone wall and all was faine to be pulled down: Even so it is with vaine thoughts in the heart, a man may lop them off by godly sorrow; he may cut them down, and root them up by mortification, and yet they will be sprouting up, and rising up again; till the whole body of sin be pulled down, and destroyed in a man. *Gregory* speaks of them, and saith, man may pluck them up, but yet not so but that they will rise again.

The consideration whereof should humble us, and make us lowe in our own eyes: Oh then think with thy self and say, Oh that my thoughts should be so base, earthly and vain! what, have I not a God, a Christ, a heaven to think upon? have I not excellent Commandments of my God, and thousands of sweet and precious promises in Scripture to think upon? and must I be thinking on every bable? of every straw, not worth the thinking on? Take the Apostles exhortation, *Whatsoever things be true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are iust, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any vertue, if there be any praise, think on these things: Phil. 4. 8.* What, are there so many vertuous things; so many holy and pure things; so many admirable and glorious things; so many heavenly graces, and divine promises;

so many blessed passages of holy Writ to take up my mind? and shall I spend my thoughts and time upon such vaine and cursed things as wil yeeld me no profit? This should astonish the hearts of Gods people, and greatly humble their souls.

The second Use may serve for matter of condemnation unto the wicked: let this doctrine strike terrour into the hearts of those men, that suffer their hearts to be taken up with vaine thoughts: as *Peter* said unto *Simon Magus*, so let me say unto them, *Repent of this thy wickednesse, and pray unto God (vers. 8.) that if it be possible, the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee.* The Apostle doth not onely wish him to repent of his simonie and briberie, but also of the least vaine thoughts of his heart: pray unto God, if perhaps the very thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee: for beloved, the very least vaine thoughts that thou thinkest, without repentance, is unpardonable: there is an impossibility of remission of vaine and idle thoughts without true repentance.

Use 2.

Oh what fearfull news is this to the world that lay not this to heart! Beloved, may we not now run into the eares and hearts of all earthly men with this point, whose minds and thoughts are earthly? Is it so that he whose thoughts run habitually on the world, his end is destruction? Then they that make no conscience what their thoughts are, what their imaginations are, what they think of as they go up and down, how can  
such

such escape the vengeance of hell? Tell me then what thy thoughts are, are they not of thy hawks and hounds, of thy cattell and grounds, of thy gardens and orchards, rather then of Christ? When thou walkest in the streets whereon run thy thoughts, but on thy pleasures, and profits, and earthly delights? yea of every vanitie, and every delight canst thou think, rather then of God and his commandments. Thou comest to Church, thou prayest, and hearest the Word of God, but do not vain thoughts come along with thee? thou goest home again, but do not vaine thoughts haunt and dog thee?

It is the brand of a wicked man, *not to haue God in all his thoughts*: Psal. 4. 10. when goods and cattell, plough and cart, pleasures and outward contentments are in his mind & thoughts; when ruffs and cuffs, houses and dishes, tables and faire hangings; or any thing but God can take up their thoughts; they can haue thoughts of every thing, but of God they can think none; this is the brand of a wicked man, that he hath no blood of a Christian in him.

It is a true description of a Pagan and Infidel, that hath no knowledge of Christ, *to be vain in his imaginations*: Rom. 1. 21. *When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, but became in their imaginations vain*: vaine in their disputes, vaine in their reasonings, vaine in their thoughts; in their carriages and dispositions; so then, though thou knowest God, and hast things enough in thy mind, that convinceth thee that  
this

this God is to be worshipped; and understandest the worship of God, and the commandments of Christ: yet if thou glorifiest him not as God, giving thy heart and affections to him, but art vain in thy imaginations, thou dishonourest God. Hear what God saith unto such, *All the day long have I stretched out my hand unto a rebellious and gain-saying people, which walk in a way that is not good, but after their own thoughts, a people that provoke me continually to my face.* Isa 65. 2, 3. As if God had said, I sent Prophet after Prophet, Minister after Minister, to instruct them in the knowledge of my ways, I laboured to convert them, and to bring them home unto my self, and to work better thoughts in them; but still they are a people that *walk after their own thoughts, that provoke me continually unto my face.* There is never a thought of thine, but it is in the verie face of God, both thought and imagined.

But some man may say, I think of God and of Christ, of faith and repentance, and of calling on God, of mending of this and that course; I think of death, and of my last account, and every foot I have holy thoughts in my mind.

But beloved, give me leave, I pray you, for to speak something unto you, which, it maybe, may stick by you while you live: I will propound these foure things and distinctions unto you; which I will use.

First, what? dost thou think of God and of heaven? then tell me whether thy thoughts be injective thoughts into thy heart, or thoughts

raised by thy heart ; for there is a great deal of difference betweene thoughts injected and thoughts raised : God casts good thoughts into a godly mans heart, which being fit soyl, it fructifies, and brings forth fruit. Again, God casts good thoughts into a wicked mans heart, but because his heart is not sanctified, and therefore no fit soyl to harbour in, they die and vanish: God casts in, and they cast out : God casts in again, and they cast out again : therefore if thou hast good thoughts, examine and try whether they be thoughts raised from thy heart or no; see whether thy heart be a renewed heart, a sanctified, an holy heart, fit to bring forth good thoughts every day. Beloved, a wicked man may have a thousand good thoughts, and yet go to hell in the midst of them all : God cast a good thought into the heart of the King of Babylon to go against Judah and Jerusalem for to punish his people for their sins, and to avenge himself on them for the breach of his Covenant : but what saith the text? *Howbeit he thought not so.* Isa. 10. No, his onely ayme was how to get honour, how to enrich himself, to enlarge his territories, and to bring down the Nations under him, and to make his name and fame to be spread, and declared through all the world. So God casts many good thoughts into many a wicked mans heart to repent, and to leave his drunkenesse, his pride, his swearing and whoring, to be holy and religious: howbeit hee thinks not so, but hee thinks how to eat and drink, how to be proud  
and

and haughtie; how to be rich and great in the world; how to be vain and licentious: yea thy thoughts are vile and vain all the day long.

On that men were wise truly to understand this! the want whereof is the cause why many thousands goe to hell and are damned for ever. I will make it plain to you: A wicked man reasons thus with himself; I confesse, and it is true, I sinne every day against God, and sometimes drink a pot with my friend, though sometimes I let fall an oath, and am overtaken in my infirmities, yet I thank God, hee hath sanctified my heart; for I think of God and of Christ, and I oft call upon his name, and let my thoughts run on good things; God and heaven are many times in my mind, and I am sorry when I doe amisse, and the Lord hath blest me with a large portion of outward things. Besides, I see these and these signes of grace in me, and therefore I think my case to be happy. And thus securely they live, and so they goe on, and so they die, and so goe to hell and perish for ever and ever. Here is the misery of it, many think of God, and of Christ, of death, and of their last account, of heaven, of hell, of faith, and repentance, of leaving sinne, of crucifying their lusts, and practising of holinesse. Now men think that their thinking of these things, is a part of their discharge, when indeed they are additions to, and peeces of their talents, which increase their judgements. God casts in a thought of repentance, of holinesse, of the remembrance of death, and last account:

Dost thou find thy heart never the better and holier by them? Then know it is only Gods haunting of thy heart, and Gods calling upon thee, and Gods inviting thee unto repentance, to leave thy finnes, to come out of thy deadnesse and formalitie, to prepare for thy death and judgement; and therefore I say, if thy heart now think not so, if thy heart do not repent, beleeve, and grow more zealous, and thou art not drawn the neerer to God; I say then, that the more of these good thoughts that thou hast had, the greater thy doome will be: if thou hast had ten thousands of them, if they have been onely Gods haunting of thy heart, thinke thou then now of grace, of God, of thy poor sou', which is not bettered by them, nor made holy, then know they are peeces of thy talent, and it doth make thy torments in hell the greater.

2. Secondly, thou hast good thoughts, but the question is, whether they be fleeting or abiding thoughts: Many think of God, of grace, of heaven, of the word of God; and when they heare a Sermon, they will think of God; but these thoughts, though they come into their mindes, yet they goe away presently, they are in and out at an instant, in a trice, they pass away & are gone. Beloved, there are two kinds of vain thoughts; 1. vain, because the substance and matter of them is vain, and so all worldly thoughts are vain: 2. or else for their want of durance and lasting: and so are all thoughts of heaven, of God, and grace, and of Christ, if they vanish away, they are all  
vain

vain thoughts, though they seem otherwise. Here what God saith, *Gen. 6. 5. God saw that the wickednes of man was great upon the earth, and all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart are onely evill continually*: [all the imaginations] great is the emphasis of this word [all] all the thoughts: yea all univerally, are onely evil continually.

But you will say unto me, Doth not a wicked man think that there is a God; why, that is a good thought; doth he not think that this God is to be observed and worshipped? why, this is a good thought; doth he not think that sin is to be forsaken? that is a good thought; doth he not think of heaven, and of Christ? how then are their thoughts *onely evill*, and that *continually*?

I answer, because all the thoughts of a wicked mans heart are vaine: that is, vanishing thoughts, not vain for the matter, which sometimes may be good and holy, but vaine because they soon vanish away; thoughts that come and tarry not, that leave no impression in their hearts behind them, these are all vaine thoughts, according to that of the Apostle, *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain*: 1 Cor. 3. 20. Beloved, in a godly mans heart, when a good thought comes, it abides, and dwels a good while in him; and when it goes away it leaves a good impression behind it; it leaves a sweet smell and savour in the heart after it is gone, it's made more holy, and sanctified by it. When a good thought comes into a godly mans heart,

it leaves the print of it behind; when a wicked man hath a good thought, he tosseth it up and down, and suffers it not to stay, but presently puts it away: let a thought of the world come in, and he can give it entertainment for seven dayes, yea for seven yeers, yea all his life he sets his heart as a wide gate open to receive them, and to entertain them: but if a thought of God, or of repentance, of holinesse and salvation come into his mind, he is tyred out with it, and it soon vanisheth away; therefore so long as thy thoughts are thus vain, though for the matter good, if thou hast never so many of them, yet if they abide not, but thou thinkest and unthinkest them again; if they come and give thy soule a jog, and so away; the more I say thou hast of them, though thou hast many millions, the greater will be thy doome at the last day.

3.

Thirdly, thou thinkest of God, but the question is, whether thy good thoughts be studied, or accidentall thoughts: a wicked man that runs gadding in his thoughts here and there, over the whole world upon this and that, and I know not what, in the midst of a lottery of thoughts he cannot chuse but stumble upon some good: he thinks on God, he thinks on Christ, he thinks on heaven; but it is by the by, these thoughts of his are not naturall; but if he think of the world, of his pleasures, of his outward delights and contentments, these thoughts arise naturally out of his heart, they are his owne. Now it may be a thought of God comes by the way, but

a godly man not onely thinks of God, but he studies how to think of God: it is his continuall endeavour to bring his mind to be fixed upon God; it is his whole care for to have good thoughts to dwell habitually in him. There is an excellent phrase used to let it forth, *Malac.* 3. 16. *They that feared the Lord spake one unto another, and the Lord bearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him of all them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name.* Where I pray you for to mark, that *thinking upon Gods Name, and the fear of God* are joyned together; for thinking on God, comes from the fear of God; a godly man thinks upon God and fears him; he thinks that God is alwayes with him in every place, and he trembles before him: he thinks God beholds all his thoughts and affections, and he trembles at him: he thinks as he walks up and down in his way, as he is employed in his calling, as he is performing of any duty of Religion, that Gods eye is upon him and beholds him: and therefore he fears to offend and displease him. A wicked man will sweare and blaspheme the name of God, and by and by it may be he will cry God mercy, and so he thinks of God. The man breaks out, it may be into wrath and malice, fury and passion, and then it may be a thought will come into his mind for to cry God mercy for it, and thus he thinks of God: The man is carelesse, earthly, dead, and luke-warme in the performance of good duties; and because his conscience tels him

it is not good, he will ask God forgiveness: he will be proud, vain and rotten in his speeches, and then it may be a thought will come into his mind to ask God forgiveness, and so he thinks of God; he will think of the world, of his pleasures, profits, and of his lusts and finnes, and then it may be a good thought will come into his mind, and then it may be he will think a little of God too. Beloved, this is carnall and devillish thinking on God; thy thoughts then of God must be joynd with the feare of God.

Fourthly and lastly, thou thinkest of God, but the question is, whether thy thoughts of him be profitable or unprofitable thoughts: a godly man thinks of repentance, and repents upon it: he thinks of calling upon God more faithfully and fervently then hee did before: and hee accomplishes his thoughts: for hee goes about it, and his heart is the better for it: Thus it was with *David* when he said, *I thought on my wayes, and turned my feet into thy testimonies*, Psal. 119. 59. *I thought on my wayes* (there was his good thoughts) *and turned my feet into thy testimonies*, (there was the profit of his good thoughts.) But on the contrary thou thinkest on God, but God hath never the more service of thee: thou thinkest of leaving of thy good fellowship, and merry companions; but for all thy thoughts, thou retainest them still: thou thinkest to give over all thy deadness: and luke-warmness, and to get more zeale and fervencie: yet day after day, and yeare after yeare, thy heart

is as dead, vain and secure as before, as ever before. Examine thy selfe then and see, thou hast good thoughts (thou saist) but where is the profit of them? thou thinkest of leaving thy wrath, and of bridling thy filthy passions: but art thou inabled by thy thoughts to put up an injury the better? It may be thou thinkest on death; but is thy life the more holy and sanctified by it? Thou thinkest on Christ and his blood, but is thy heart purged by it? Oh the wretched misery of most men in the world, because of the unprofitableness of their thoughts! they have many good thoughts, but they want the profitable use of them, they get no good by them.

There is an excellent description of the thoughts of wicked men (though it be Apocrypha,) *The heart of the foolish is like a Cart wheele, and his thoughts like the rowling Axletree.* As the Cart wheele goes round all the day, and yet remains on the Axletree; so is it with wicked men, their thoughts wheele and wheele them up and downe a thousand thousand times, their thoughts run upon this thing, and then upon another thing, and so they rowle up and downe continually, yet their heart is at the same passe it was stil; an earthly heart it was, & so it is still, a profane heart it was, & so it is still; a carnal proud heart it was, and so it remains still. But let these know, that the time hastens wherein God will judgethem even for heir very thoughts.

Where are they then that say *thought is free*? It is true indeed, it is free from mens knowledge,  
and

and from mens Courts, but not from Gods : they are not free from Gods all-seeing eye, and knowledge. *Thou hast tried me and known me* (saith the Prophet) *thou understandest my thoughts afarre off,* P<sup>sal.</sup> 119. Beloved, as you are in the Ale-house, or gaming-house, as you walk abroad in the fields, as you are imployed in your callings, or about any holy duty, God seeth all thy thoughts, what is going in, and what is comming out : there is never a thought in thy heart, but God sees it; how then can thought bee free? *God will weigh the thoughts of men,* Prov. 16. 2.

Beloved, what a fearfull day will that bee, when God shall take his Scales and weigh (no mans bodies and estates, for then it may bee that rich men and fat and grosse men, will out-weigh them that are better :) but hee will take mens thoughts and weigh them, hee will weigh their soules : he will take mens good thoughts, and put them into one scale, and their bad, earthly, carnall, and unprofitable thoughts, into another scale, and so try which weighes heaviest : Now if thy earthly and sinfull thoughts weigh heaviest, then downe thou goest into eternall damnation.

2.

Secondly, as thoughts are not free from Gods knowledge, so are they not free frō Gods word; for Gods word can meet with them : for it is *lively and mighty in operation, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,* Hebr. 4. 12. Doth the word of God discern the thoughts of mens hearts? Then much more doth the God of

of this Word: and therefore how can thoughts be free?

Thirdly and lastly, they are not free from the condemnation of hell and damnation. *I am hee* (saith God) *that searcheth the hearts and reines, and I wil give to every one of you according to his works;* or as some translations have it, *according to your thoughts: Rev. 3. 23.* Now if God will so severely punish thoughts, take heed then how thou retainest any evill thoughts.

I should here give you some meanes in the use, that so you might rid your selves from vain thoughts.

First, love the word of God, if ever thou wilt come out of them, prize the truth of God, and labour to get thy mind and thoughts to be set on better things; and then the thoughts of the world, and all vain things will vanish away. This course the Prophet *David* took, *Psal. 119. 113. I hate vain thoughts, but thy Law doe I love.* How came it to passe that he hated vain thoughts? namely, by loving of Gods Law: if hee had not loved Gods Law, and those excellent things therein, and set his heart on them, hee could never have hated vain thoughts: The way then to break off thy league with vain thoughts, is to be in league with good thoughts. Dost thou complain of vain thoughts in prayer, in hearing the word, in receiving of the Sacraments, and art thou stuffed and filled with them, that thou canst not think upon God and holy things? thou dost hereby bewray thine owne rottenesse and

3.

Means I

cor-

corruption. And therefore know, that if thou lovest the Lord and his Word, and didst set thy thoughts upon him, thou wouldst never have them so much employed about such base things.

2. Secondly, if ever thou wouldst rid thy heart of vain thoughts, especially when thou art in holy action, thou must goe unto God by prayer; there is no greater bridle to restrain a man from vain thoughts, then this consideration, that hee is to goe to God. I speake not this to the men of this world: Carnall men, who can rush into Gods presence hand over head, without any fear or reverence, they can set upon any duty without any preparation: but I speake it to the godly man, whose heart dreads and stands in awe of God: Wilt thou let thy mind rove and run all the day on worldly things? how then wilt thou call upon God? Dost thou not know that this is the cause of thy dulnesse, thy deadnes and wandrings of thy heart, when thou art about any good duty, namely, because thou sufferest thy heart to be lashing out, and roving abroad on the world all day, no marvel if it keep his haunt at night: and therefore thy heart being vain, God will never heare thy prayer, *Job 35. 13. God will never heare vanity.* Comest thou to God with a vain prayer? God will never heare it. Comest thou with a vain care to the hearing of the Word? God will never heare it; or with a vain heart to the Sacrament? God will not regard it. Lay this seriously to thy heart, if ever thou wouldst

wouldst have thy heart to the duty thou art about, busie thy mind upon good things, for if thy heart be accustomed to vain and wordly things all the day, it is no marvell if it returne to his haunt again at night.

Thirdly, consider that you have not *so learned Christ*: It is the Apostles argument, *Ephes. 3.* consider then what you have learned of Christ; hath Christ taught you so? hath Christ taught you such a love, and given you such a liberty, that you should love the world more then him, and imploy and bestow all your thoughts wholly in seeking after vain things? Hath Christ taught you such a faith as this? Hath Christ taught you such a repentance as this, to have your thoughts more upon the world then upon Christ? to repent of sin, and yet never forsake sinne? Have ye *so learned Christ*? Hath he not taught you such a faith as purifieth the heart, such a sanctification as cleanseth the soul and the minde such an obedience as bringeth everythought into subjection unto himselfe? Therefore if now thou shouldst still retaine thy vaine, dead, earthly and carnall thoughts, it is not to learn of Christ: Christ teacheth thee no such doctrine, nor giveth thee any such licentious libertie; but thou learnest of the Devill, and of thine owne heart: for all evill and vaine thoughts arise from these three heads.

First, from the variety and abundance of the thoughts of the world, which our Saviour calles *the cares of this world.*

Second-

2. Secondly, from the fountaine of corruption in mans heart, the heart of man being alwayes like a sink, naturally running with filthinesse, or like a living quickset, alwayes bearing: so is it with the heart of man, alwayes imagining vain thoughts.

3. Thirdly, from the damned malice of the Devill, and his fearfull suggestions and temptations both within and without: the Devill is fitly called a *tempter and trier*; for by these suggestions and temptations hee feeles and tries mens hearts; and thereby knowing to what they are most inclined, and which way they are soonest overcome, accordingly he fits his temptations for to intrap them. Now these thoughts are infinitely variable, according to the constitution; place, quality, passions, affections, and conditions of men; as of the poore man in his beggerly, of the rich man in his abundance, of the Minister in his calling, of the Magistrate in his, and so of all other men. Now the whole world is not able to fill the heart, how then shall wee number the thoughts of it? But for the better understanding, wee will rank them into these foure heads, to shew how thoughts become vain.

1. 1. Materially, mens thoughts are vain, when the matter of them is vain.

2. 2. Formally, when though for the matter, they are never so good, yet the manner of thinking them is evill.

3. 3. Efficientially, when the man that thinkes them is vain.

4. When

4 When it is a thought that might become the best Saint upon the earth, or a glorified Angell in heaven; yet the drift of the soule being carnall and vain, the soule thereby becomes vain also.

4.

First then materiall vaine thoughts, are all thoughts of the world, of the works of thy calling, of thy recreations, eating, drinking, sleeping, thoughts of thy wife and children, and the like; they are vain thoughts, not sinfull necessarily, yet they may come to be sinfull five manner of wayes.

1.

First, when we think of them primarily, that is, in the first place, when wee think of them before we think of God. Tell me then, what are thy first thoughts in the morning? Hereby a man may know his thoughts whether they bee good or evill. Consider, I say, what it is, that first presents it selfe unto thy thoughts: certainly, that which the heart is most haunted withall, and most taken up with, is most naturall unto it: If the heart be carnall and earthly, it will have carnal and earthly thoughts: if it be a godly and gracious heart, it will labour to make God the first in his thoughts. I know the godly man fails in many things, and many unruly thoughts in him may rebell; but it is the very grieft of his soule, and he will never rest nor be at quiet, till he hath got Balm from Gilead, strength from Christ for the subduing and crucifying of them, even of those vain and sinfull thoughts that stick closest unto their hearts, and are most prone unto them

*Manner*

1.

them naturally: so that it is the practice of a godly man first in the morning to lift up his heart with his hand unto God; and when he is up, his thoughts are wholly upon God. See this in *David*, who considering that the Lord was present every where, made this use of it, *When I awake I am present with thee*, *Psal. 139. 18*. His heart was lifted up to God, he did endeavour to shake hands with God (as it were) in his holy meditations, worshipping and adoring God with his first thoughts: he would be sure to give God the flower and Maiden-head of his first service and thoughts; as soone as ever hee was awake, his heart was in heaven. This shewes that the thoughts of men that live in their sins, are damnable thoughts: Thou that art a drunkard, a swearer, a prophane person, a carnall worldling, that never hast repented; I tell thee, that the very thinking of thy meat and drink is damnable, the very thoughts of thy recreations and of thy sleep, are damnable thoughts; to thinke of the workes of thy calling, yea of setting thy foot upon the ground, or of anything that God hath commanded thee for to doe, are all damnable thoughts. Why? Because thou givest not God thy first thoughts. Wilt thou think of thy belly and back, before thou thinkest of God, and how to be converted unto him? Wilt thou think of thy Markets and Faires, before thou thinkest of thy reconciliation with God? The first thing that every soule is bound for to doe, is to get in with God: *First seek the Kingdom of God,* (saith

saith our Saviour) and the righteousnesse thereof, *Matth. 6. 35.* Where our Saviour doth not forbid our taking of thought for the things of this life, but that they should not be sought after in the first place; so that our first thoughts and endeavours should be after the Kingdome of heaven. Therefore all thoughts whatsoever, which are conceived before a man bee converted, and so thinkes of God, are all damnable thoughts.

Secondly, all worldly thoughts are finfull, when we think of them too usuall (as *Chrysofome* speakes) because we think of the universalitie of them. Beloved, it is lawfull to think of the world, and to think of our trade and employments, to think of our corn, of our cattell, fields, barnes, wives, children: for if God have commanded or commended these things unto us, then surely he gives us leave to think on them, that so we may accomplish our businesse the better; but let us take heed they bee not too usuall with us: for we have soules as well as bodies, and there is a heaven as well as an earthly businesse to think upon: thou art not to live here alwayes, therefore take heed that thy thoughts bee not too usuall and common upon the things of the world, let not earth and earthly things have too much of thy thoughts. As the Prophet *David* seeing the thoughts of wicked men wholly to run after the things of the world, he tells them, *all their thoughts perish*: and so I tell you, if that your thoughts on the world run together with heap

Manner

2.

and crowd, and then bundle them up in bundles, (as it were) they all prove damnable, and shall perish.

Manner

3.

Thirdly, worldly thoughts are sinfull and damnable, if thou thinkest of them too favourly: a carnall minded man thinkes favourly of the things of the world, the thoughts of earthly things are favoury unto them; a wicked man hee will thinke of God, and of the world; but which is the savourest thought to him? He will think of Christ, of heaven, and of the word of God, and of such a Sermon he heard, but alas, hee finds no savour, taste, nor relish in them; he finds no sweetnesse, joy, or delight in them: but when he thinkes of the world, of his gold and silver, of his lands and livings, Oh these are merry thoughts unto him, these are sweet unto him, and pleasant to him, and his heart it not at home in his owne nest, he can think of these seven dayes, nay seven moneths, nay seven yeares together, and yet never be weary, but his thoughts as full and as fresh as at the first: But bring him to a Sermon, or to a prayer, and he is jaded presently, his heart is empty, and his thoughts are at an end: For (saith the Apostle) *they that are after the flesh savour the things of the flesh*, Rom. 8. 5. It is a true note of an earthly carnall, fleshly heart, to be thinking on earthly and vain things favourly. Thou maist think on the world, but it must be onely with a cast of thy thoughts, as one that lookes upon a thing with a squint eye: but when thou art to think on God, or on the things of God,

God, then thou must gather all thy thoughts and affections, thou must lay all the powers of thy soule together, and thou must imploy them on-ly to this work.

Fourthly, worldly thoughts become sinfull, when we think of them without counsell; then (saith Solomon) *they come to nought*, when a man considers not afore-hand what thoughts are necessary and needfull, and so restraines and keeps off all impertinent thoughts; then his thoughts will prove distrustfull, carking thoughts, caring for the morrow, contrary to the rule of Christ, *Matth. 6. 33. Take no care for to morrow, let to morrow care for it selfe.* He doth not forbid here Christian provident thoughts: for godly, honest, and sober thoughts, are fitting and necessary, but he seems hereby to cut off all distrusting, carking thoughts.

Fifthly, worldly thoughts come to be sinfull, when they are thought needlessly: And here I will shew how farre a man may thinke of the world; namely, so farre as his necessary busines requires. Suppose a mans businesse be upon merchandise, it is lawfull to think of it, and of his shop and wares; but if thou wouldest know how farre; why so farre as is it for thy businesse: But if thou hast so many of them, that thy heart is taken up with them, and thy mind still on them, then they are sinfull thoughts. There is many a man that in following of his businesse bestowes more thoughts then his businesse requires, hee hath ten thousands of super-

Manner

4.

Manner

5.

fluous thoughts; but let such remember the exhortation of the Wise man, *establish thy thoughts by counsell*: counsell will tell a man when hee hath thought enough, and what thoughts are fit for his imployment. Not that any man can carry himselfe alwayes in that golden mediocrity or mean, but a Christians care must bee daily more and more to pare off all superfluous thoughts of earthly things.

2. Now we come to the 2<sup>d</sup> thing: 2. Thoughts are vain formally, when though the matter of them be never so good, yet the manner of thinking them is evill. It is possible that a wicked man goe to hell, though he performes the same things for the matter of them, that a godly man doth: a godly man comes to Church, so doth a wicked man; a godly man prayes in his family, so doth a wicked man; a godly man reads the Scriptures, so doth a wicked man; a godly man repeats Sermons, and conferres of good things, so doth a wicked man. There is no work that comes to the outward act, that a godly man doth, but a wicked man may do the same: here onely is the difference, in the manner of working. I will set it out to you by a place of Scripture; *In a great house* (saith the Apostle) *there are not onely vessels of gold, and of silver, but also of wood and of stone, some to honour, and some to dishonour*, 2 Tim. 2. 20. Mark how the Apostle here sets out the reprobate and the elect, comparing them to vessels of honour, and dishonour: the vessels of dishonour are of the same matter

matter that the vessels of honour are of: suppose it be pewter or silver, cast it into an honourable forme, and it will bee a vessell of honour; but cast it into a dishonourable forme, and it will be a vessell of dishonour, for base and mean service; even so it is between a true Christian and a meere formall professor, the matter of their service is one and the same; suppose it be hearing the Word, or receiving of the Sacraments, prayer, or the like, the substance and action is the same; but take the same prayer, and let a godly man cast it in his forme, and it is holy and prevails with God: let a wicked man take the same prayer, and cast it into his dishonourable forme, and it becomes sinfull, not regarded, and abominable in Gods eyes. For hearing of the word of God, the godly man heares, and the wicked man heares; the matter in both is the same; the godly man he casteth the Word into a godly mould, he heares the Word, and he trembles at it, he heares the Word and beleeves it, he heares the Word, and his heart bowes to it, and resolves to practise it: a wicked man hee heares the Word too, but he casteth it into a dishonourable mould, hee heares it with deadnesse and dulnesse, without trembling, without faith and obedience. So a godly man may think thoughts of God, and so may a wicked man think thoughts of God, the matter of both is good; yet the thoughts of the wicked are vaine, though hee thinks of God, because he casteth it into his dishonourable frame: he feares not God, his heart

trembles not at God, but his heart is as full of dead earthly affections as before; hee thinkes of hearing the Word, but it is after his own fashion, he thinkes of praying, but he prayes with his owne spirit, and not with the spirit of Adoption.

The Psalmist tels us, that the whoremaster, the drunkard, and the thief, thinks of God, but it is after his own fashion: *Psal. 50. 21. These things hast thou done (saith God) and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest that I was even such a one as thy self:* A wicked man goes on in his sins, and thinks that they are not so devillish and abominable, as some say that they are: and he thinks that God thinks so too; he is earthly, carnall, luke-warme, and dead-hearted, and if he repent at the last, hee thinks all will be well, and he thinks God is of the same mind too: he goes on in his drunkennesse, swearing, pride, and hypocrisie; and he thinks if he do but remember to ask God mercy, and to cry, Lord receive my soul, when he is going out of the world, he thinks he shall not go to hell, but be carried to the joyes of heaven, and he thinks God is of his mind, that God thinks so too: But mark what the Lord saith, *I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thee. Ob consider this you that forget God, lest he teare you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.*

3. Thirdly, mens thoughts are vain, when the heart that thinks upon them is earthly and vain; wherefore if all the wicked men in the world should

should lay their heads together to think a good thought, yet they cannot: for their hearts are vain hearts, sinfull hearts, they may think of excellent propositions concerning God, his worship, his word, and service; but so long as the heart that thinks upon them is carnall and vain, they cannot speak that which is good, as saith our Saviour: *Math. 12. 34. How can you speak good things?* Why, may some man say? may not a wicked man read a Chapter in a Bible? are the words so hard to be understood, and pronounced? cannot a wicked man take a Sermon and read it, and heare a Sermon and repeat it? what are letters and syllables so hard to be pronounced?

I answer, (beloved) that is not the meaning of our Saviour [*how can ye that are evill speake good things*]: no, no, a wicked man may read Gods word, and propound good questions, as well as a true Christian; but he cannot speake good words, that is, he cannot speak them from a good heart; and therefore his heart being carnall and vain, good words in his mouth are as a jewell in a swines snout: It is a word indeed, but not a speech, when he reads or pronounceth Gods word. *Aristotle* saith, that speech is nothing but the expression of that that is within the heart. Now then, if the word and truth of God be not ingrafted in thy heart, if thy heart be not heavenly when thou speakest of heavenly things, thou dost pronounce them, but not speak them. But when thou speakest of earthly

things, then thou speakest to the purpose; because thy heart is set upon them, and thy minde and thy tongue goe together, there is no jarre or discord betwixt them: but if thy heart be not pure, though thou speakest good things, or holy things, yet in Christs sense thou speakest them not: For (say I) how can a vain, evill, corrupt heart think good thoughts? *An evill tree cannot bring forth good fruit, (saith our Saviour) he doth not say, that an evill tree cannot be made good, for it may bee grafted into another stock, divers wayes there are to make it good: but so long as it is a corrupt tree, it cannot bring forth good fruit; Doe men gather grapes of thornes, or figges of thistles?* Dost thou goe to a drunkard, and thinkest there to finde any religion in him? or to a whoremaster to finde grace in him? Dost thou goe to a swearer, or a prophane person, and thinkest thou to find any feare of God in them? Indeed sometimes there may bee some morall good found in them, but they are as a pearle in a dung-hill, out of his place.

Fourthly, all mens thoughts come to be vain, when the drift and end of the heart and soule in thinking of them, is vain.

But thou wilt say unto mee, the end of my good thoughts is Gods glory. What? is it not to Gods glory that we goe to the Word and Sacraments, that we pray and give almes?

I answer, the end of every good work in it selfe is Gods glory, but is it the end of the worker, speaker, or thinker? I make no  
question

question but the end of a good action in it selfe, is the glory of God; so the end of prayer is the glory of God, the end of all preaching and Sermons is the glory of God, the end of giving of almes, and of all good thoughts, is the glory of God: but the end of the man that prayes and preaches, what is that? the end of the hearer and giver of almes, what is that? the end of him that speakes well, what is that? Beloved, most men have false and corrupt ends, which we will branch out into these three heads.

For the first, men will be thinking and plodding from morning till night of their worldly businesse: Now because they know they must think on God, to make God amends, perhaps they will think on him at night, when they have dishonoured him all the day. So men will swear and swagger, drink and be drunk, and when they have done, say, Lord have mercy upon me, and so they think to make God amends. What (beloved) will yee swear, swagger, drink, be drunk, and lie, be secure and worldly, and then ask God forgivenesse to make him amends? This is to break *Priscians* head, that you may give him a plaister. Will you trespassse your neighbour, that you may ask him forgivenesse? This is a damned and devilish religion, yet this is the religion of many men in the world, you shall have them keep dayes and weekes and yeares in the observation of the times of Gods worship, they will keep the Sabbath in comming to Church, they will hear Sermons, pray and think of God,  
but

but all this is to make God amends for the wrong that they have done him: they know they have offended God, and therefore they will doe something to make him amends: like those wicked men in *Jeremies* time, who did *steale, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after the Gods whom they knew not*, and then come and stand before God in his house, which was called by his name, and said, *We are delivered, though we have done all these abominations.* As if God should say unto wicked men, What, will yee swear, steale, lie, and be earthly, giving up your selves unto all manner of lewdness in the breach and contempt of my commandements, and then thinke by making a prayer unto me, and by lifting up your eyes unto me, and by giving your ears to hear my word, thereby to make me recompence? No, no, *I have shewed thee, O man, what is good, Micah 8.*

Secondly, the end of mens thoughts is commonly to collogue with God. Let a man be under the crosse, in calamity, pain and misery, then God shall heare of him often, then he will think of God, and of his finnes: nay, the beastliest wretch in a whole Parish, upon his sick-bed, then, Oh how will he call upon God, then send for the Minister, let him pray for me, read a chapter or some good booke; then God shall have service upon service, then he shall have the first, second, and third course. But all this is but to be raised up again; and then when hee hath received a litle strength, he falls off againe: like  
the

the Jewes, who when God slew them, they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God; nevertheless they did but dissemble him with their moutbes, and flatter him with their double hearts, Psal. 78. 34. There is many a man that seeks to God, yea, that seeks to him with tears, and performs many a good duty, and yet he doth but flatter with God, he doth it but to curry favour with him; hee is afraid of sicknesse, crosses, plagues and death, and curses upon him, if hee should not doe so: and therefore to prevent this, he will dissemble some service to God.

Thirdly, to smother and choak their owne consciences; their hearts think and tell them, that they must think of God, their consciences tell them, that they must have some holinesse, some religion, that they must keep the Sabbath in some sort, that they must pray, and goe to Church: and hence it is, that the drunkard, swearer, whoremaster, will sometimes have thoughts of God, and will be performing some outward acts of Religion. Why? his conscience otherwise would not let him be at rest; but it is as the Devils bandog to drive him to it.

Thus when the Prophet commanded the people to worship the Lord, to reverence his name, to hallow his Sabbaths; their consciences told them, that they must doe so, or else all the threatenings of wrath and vengeance denounced by the Prophets, would come upon them. Hence it is that the Lord by his Prophet exhorts, saying, *Arise yee, and depart, for this is not your rest; your minde*

minde hath another haunt, you have this and that back lust, this is not your rest. Doth thy heart rest on God and good things? If thy heart be good and holy, so that it takes up its rest in God, and in Christ, then it is well; but if thou onely turnest aside to good duties, and fallest as it were by chance upon holy things; away, away, (saith God) this is not your rest. *Aristotle* saith, that the being of a thing consisteth in the end of a thing. Therefore if the end of thy thoughts and courses be earthly and vaine, then certainly thy religion is earthly and vain. Thou goest up and down; what is it that thou lookest after? Is it that thou maist have grace, or that thou maist follow thy calling, & get thy living? Is it this that thou wouldst have, for which thou keepest such a digging and scraping, and such a laying up? Then thy end is carnall and vain, and thy drift and end declareth the truth of thy soul, that it is carnall and vain.

THE  
JUDGEMENT  
OF THE VVORLD

By S A I N T S at the  
last Day :

DELIVERED,  
And learnedly discoursed in a  
Sermon preached

By that vigilant and painfull Minister  
of the Word,

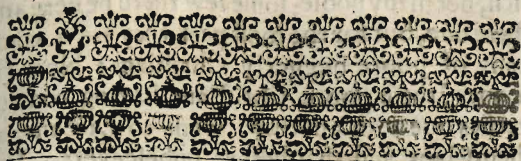
WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.

Sometimes fellow of *Pembroke Hall*  
in *Cambridge*, and late Parson  
of *Rochford in Essex.*



London printed by *M. S.* for *I. S.*





A SERMON OF  
 Mr. WILLIAM FENNERS,  
 upon this ensuing Text.

1 Cor. 6. part of the 2<sup>d</sup> verse.

*Know yee not that the Saints shall judge the  
 world?*

**T**HE Corinthians thought Paul had converted many poore mean men amongst them, Chapter 1. 26. 27. *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty: yet the Nobles, the Lawyers, the Counsellors, the chiefe men in the Citie, the Apostle had not converted one of them, or at the least very few.* Brethren, you see your calling, who they are that be converted to the obedience of the Gospell of Christ from the evill of their wayes: not many wise men after the flesh, not many rich,

rich; not many noble; some few there be here and there one, but for the most part they are a company of poore beggerly Christians: Now (it seemes) these poore Christians having controversies one with another, went to Law among themselves, and that before unbelievers. The Apostle condemnes this their going to law, and would have them cease their suits and quarrels one against another before the unjust and unbelievers, and that by foure Arguments:

1. First, by the shamefulness of it, verse 5. *I speak it to your shame*; as if he should say, Are you such fooles, that you cannot take up these matters among your selves? that you cannot make references of your wrongs to mediate one to another, but that you must goe to law before unbelievers?
2. Secondly, from the scandalousnesse of it: It is a ching so so scandalous and offensive to those that are without, that I wonder any of you dare bee so bold as to goe to law one with another. What will the world think? What, are these the men that professe the Gospel? Are these they that have the *Wisdom* of God in them, and that are led by the Spirit of God? And have they no more understanding in them, then when they have any matter of controversie, they cannot end it amongst themselves, but must goe to law before *the unjust and unbelievers*? (as they term them.)
- 3.

Thirdly, from the unseemingnesse of it, in the second verse. *Doe you not know that the Saints shall*

shall judge the earth? What? hath God made you Judges of the world, and doe you goe to be judged by the world? Or, as *Ambrose* speaks, hath God appointed you to be Judges of the men in the world, and are you not fit to bee Judges of the things of the world?

Fourthly, from the strangeness of it; *Dare any of you?* He speaks interrogatively (ver. 1.) It is a strange thing that you should come to that impudencie against the Gospel of Christ: one would think that you should tremble and quake at such a thing as this is. What, is there never a wise Christian amongst you? never an understanding Professor that is able to take up a controverſie, or decide and judge between his brethren? What a strange thing is this? Then hee backs it with foure Arguments.

1. Because they were Brethren, ver. 6. *Brother goes to law with brother.*

2. Because it was about *the things of this life*. What? hath God made you judge of heavenly things, of *Angels*, and are you unfit to judge of *the things of this life?*

3. It was about *small matters* (ver. 2.) whereas you shall sit upon *men* and *Angels*, and the weightiest matters in the world; the greatest things of Gods law, judging them to the greatest penaltie and punishment, even to eternall damnation: and are yee *unworthy* then to judge even of *the smallest matters?*

4. And lastly, Because it was about such things, as the meanest Christian in the towne might have

4.

1.

2.

3.

4.

taken up, and have ended : *Set up them that are least esteemed.*

*Doe you not know, that the Saints shall judge the world?*

Doct.

I need not goe far for a point, the word affords it: The Doctrine is; That *the Saints shall judge the world.*

It is an old truth, yea as old as the world it selfe : you may reade it in the fourth verse of *Judes Epistle* : That *Enoch the seventh from Adam* prophesied, saying ; *Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his Saints.* God will not onely come to judgement him selfe, but he will come attended with all his Saints, even with all the godly, to execute vengeance upon all the world. So our Saviour told *Saint Peter*, and not onely him, but all that follow him in the regeneration : *They shall sit on thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.* Mat. 9. 18. *They shall judge the Nations, and have dominion over the people,* Wisd. 3. 8.

And now because doubt is the best way to attaine unto knowledge, let me answer a doubt, that may creepe in by the way ; How shall the Saints judge the world ?

*Ans.* Not by pronouncing of judgement upon the world, for that Christ alone shall doe : *Then shall the King say to them on his left hand, Depart yee cursed,* Mat. 25. But the Saints shall judge the world these foure wayes :

1.

1. They shall judge the world, by their consent unto Christs judgement. God traines up his children in this world, & educates them, and teacheth them

them how they may judge the world hereafter; he teacheth them in this life how to assent with his proceedings in the world; so that they are able to say, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are thy judgements*, Psal. 119. 137. Now if the Saints be trained in this life to assent unto Gods proceedings with the world, much more then will they be able to know and consent unto Christs judgement, when he shall come with his Saints to judge the world: Now the Law saith, that consenters are agents: and therefore because the Saints shall consent to the judgement of Christ, therefore they are said to judge the world.

2. The Saints shall judge the world by their applause of Christs judgement: they shall not only give consent unto the judgement of Christ, but they shall also applaud it and commend it: when God shall say to all drunkards, swearers, lyers, Sabbath-breakers, and to all unbeleevings, impenitent, and graceles sinners, *Depart ye cursed into hell fire*, then though it were his owne father that begate him, or his mother that bare him, though it were his owne brother or sister, wife or childe, that hath been as deare as his own life and soule to him; yet they shall clap their hands for joy, and applaud the most righteous sentence of God upon them; and they shall sing *Hallelujah, salvation, and honour, and power, be to the Lord our God; for true & righteous are his judgements*, Rev. 19. 1, 2. Let them goe accursed as they are; for it is a righteous sentence passed on them.

L 2

3. They

3. They shall judge the world by their Majestie; they shall not onely stand against the wicked, and consent to, and applaud that sentence that Christ shall passe against the wicked, but they shall be invested with robes of majestie, and with a diademe of glory: then shall the righteous shine as the starres in the firmament, and the wicked shall be amazed and astonished at the sight of them: as you may read in that platforme of judgement, *Matth. 25.* where Christ sets his Saints over against the world, that so the world may look upon them, and be confounded at their sight.
4. They judge the world by their lives and conversations; (as *Ambrose* saith rightly) then is the world judged by them, when as the courses and manners of the world are not found upon them: Therefore it is a pretty observation of *Hilary* (if it be the meaning of the Text) (I will not say it is) upon the 2 *Psalme*; *Be wise yee Judges*: God hath appointed you to be Judges, to sit on his bench with his Sonne; learne then to be wise, get to be indued with spirituall wisdom and understanding, and to shine in all integritie and righteousnesse; and then turning his speech to the wicked, he say's, *Kisse the Sonne lest he be angry.* However it be, yet this is a truth, that by the lives of his Saints, he will judge the world; their faith shall judge the worlds infidelitie; their repentance shall judge the worlds impenitency; their accepting of, and taking the Lord Jesus, shall judge their rejection and neglect of Christ

Christ Jesus; their zeale shall judge the worlds lukewarmnesse, and their holinesse shall judge the worlds prophanenesse.

1. Because of the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Saints; He is the head, and they are his members; now that which the head doth, we ascribe to the whole body; when the head speakes, the whole body speakes; when the head sees, the whole body sees: so when Christ judgeth the world, the whole body of Christ may truly be said to judge the world. *As much as you did it unto one of these (saith Christ) you did it unto me:* so in as much as Christ passeth sentence, even all the members of the mysticall body of Christ judge with him.

Reas. 1.

Secondly, in regard of compassion: I speake not of the word [compassion] as it signifies [pitie] but of compassion of suffering with Christ, seeing that Christ was reproched, contemned, hated, misused, and condemned by the world, the Saints are likewise with him; seeing they partake of the afflictions, humiliations, and debasements of Christ here, they shall also be made partakers with Christ in his glory. Here the wicked judge the Saints, and call them hypocrites, and dissemblers, and laugh and scoffe at them, and wonder at them, as the Prophet brings in Christ speaking, *Esay 8. Behold, I and the children that thou hast given me, are for signes and wonders in Israel:* The wicked count them for wonders and monsters in the world, judging them hypocrites and liars, which have nothing in them but rotten-

Reas. 2.

nesse and dissimulation. Now the rule of like for like shall take place here, and as they were judged by the world, so they shall be Judges of the world.

Reason 3.

Thirdly, for the greater terror to all wicked men at the day of judgment: for as it is with a thiefe, not onely when the Judge shall command to hang him, but all the Justices, and all the Countrey shall cry out, Hang him, hang him, he is judged the more terribly; so God will not onely say of all wicked and ungodly sinners, Damne them, damne them, but he will have all the Saints in heaven, and all the Saints on earth to cry out, Away with them, away with them, let them be damned, *Psal. 50. 4. 5.* This will make their judgment so much the more terrible.

Reason 4

Fourthly, the Saints shall judge the world, because God will so convince them, that their mouths shall be stopped, they shall have never a syllable to excuse themselves withall, when they shall see men flesh and blood as themselves are, when they shall see men and women, that have lived in the same towne, enjoyed the same ordinance of God, lived in the same family, that did partake of the same blessings, and of the same crosses and afflictions with themselves, subject also to the same corruptions and sinnes as themselves, when they shall see these at Christs right hand, they shall have never a word to excuse themselves withall: As when the Apostles had healed the creeple (*Acts 3.*) if the people had judged them for wicked and pestilent men, the creeple

creepie would have convinced them, and shewed that they were of God; if they should have cried, Root them out, the creepie would have condemned them, and told them, that they did good. And when the wicked should see the Saints at Gods right hand, would they call them hypocrites and dissemblers? they themselves shall see, that they are sincere; will they call them Puritans? why, they shall then see that their purity stands them in good stead: then *the ungodly shall not stand in judgement, nor the sinners in the congregation of the righteous*, Psal. 1. 6. Thus the point is cleare.

The first use then is for instruction, whereby we may learn, that the Saints by their now being Saints, doe now judge the world: if by the lives of Saints then God doth judge the world, then there is never a Saint in a towne, or Citie, or Parish in all the countrey, but he judgeth all the wicked that are about him: How? By living godly, by hating the finnes of the times, by keeping his or their garments clean from the pollution of the world: For by doing this, he judgeth the world. See it in *Noah*, Heb. 11. 7. *By faith Noah being warned of God, as yet moved with feare, prepared an Ark for the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world.*

But some men will say, Could *Noah* be said to condemne the world, by making the Ark? All the world did not see him when he did it.

Beloved, *Noahs* making the Ark an hundred and twenty years, though it was not seen of all

Use 1.

Obj.

Ans.

yet all the world must needs heare of it, it being such a strange thing. Now hee condemned the world, in that the whole world did not come unto *Noah*, to enquire of him in sober sadnesse, and not to have mockt him as they did; they thought him to be a peevish melancholy man, and not well in his wits, and so scoft at him, saying, Will he make an Ark to swim upon dry land? whereas they should have asked him soberly, the cause why he did it, and if they had done so, *Noah* no question would have told them, that the wrath of heaven was upon the world, and that the floods of Gods vengeance were shortly to be poured down upon us: and because my heart hath been naught, and I have sinned and provoked the Lords wrath, I feare if I get not into this Ark which the Lord hath comanded me for to make, I shal perish. Now because they would not come unto *Noah* to ask him this reason, therefore the world was condemned by him: even so the Saints, by making an Ark for their poore soules, even by getting into Christ, (as the Ark was a type of Christ without whom none can be saved) the Saints, I say, by getting into Christ, do judge the whole world, when they heare there be men that be no swearers, and no drunkards, and that there be men that wil pray, read, heare the word, conferre of God and of Christ, and that weep and mourn for their sinnes, that spend their times in the mortification of their lusts, and endeavour after holinesse and sanctification; the whole world, I say, is judged by them. How?

why

why, they should say : Sirs, what is the matter that you doe so run after Sermons? that you keep such a stirre about getting faith and repentance more then other men? that you pray, weep, fast and mourn, and are so strict in your workes? If thus men would but come unto Gods Saints, and ask them the reason of all these things, the Saints of God would tell them, that the wrath of God would come upon them if they did not doe thus : they could never be saved, if they did not thus beleeve, and thus repent, and thus pray, and walke thus holily and precisely, they should be all damned. But the world it falls a mocking and a scoffing at them, and never seekes to prevent the wrath of God ; but it suddenly seisseth on them to their destruction.

Secondly, this teacheth us, that when there is any one sinner converted from the wickednesse of his wayes, and is become a Saint, then all the world may know, that there is a new Judge come to sit upon them. Seest thou a drunkard, a swearer, a prophane person converted from his finnes, and now walkes soberly, holily, and purely ; seest thou a man and a woman struck at a Sermon? Then know that unlesse thou comest out of thy finnes, unlesse thou doest repent, and walk holily, there is a new Judge added to the rest, that shall judge thee. As our Saviour told the Pharisees, *If I through Beelzebub cast out Devils, by whom doe your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges*, Matth. 12. 27. where Christ tells them, that their children  
who

who were his Disciples (for some of the Pharisees children did beleve in Christ and follow him, and had power from Christ to doe the same workes that Christ did;) Now they liked it well enough in their owne children, but they could not endure it in Christ: and therefore hee tells them, that their children, whom God had converted, and to whom he had given power to doe the same workes that he did, even they shall bee their Judges to condemne them: And even so may it be with thee, thou that art a father or a mother, God having converted any of thine own children, that child shall be thy Judge and condemne thee, if thou repent not. It may be God hath converted thy brother and sister, and thou art not converted; thy own brother and sister shall condemne thee, if thou doe not repent and come out of thy finnes.

3. Thirdly, we may learn that it concerns all the world to take notice of every grace in Gods children. There is never a grace of God in any of his Saints, but it shall condemne the world if it be void of it. The wayes of the Lord are all judgements, because they judge them that will not walk in them. Every grace, yea the very thoughts of the righteous are called *Judgements* by *Solomon*, *Prov. 12*. You may know a crooked thing by laying it to a straight line, and by that it is judged to be crooked: so the thoughts of the righteous which are right, holy and pure, shall judge the impure, unholy, and crooked thoughts of wicked men. Is the child of God  
humble

humble? His humility shall judge thy pride. Is the child of God meek and patient in suffering of wrong and injuries? His meeknesse and patience shall judge thy choler and revenge. Hath the child of God faith given him to beleve in the Lord Jesus? His faith shall judge thy infidelity. Hath the child of God the Spirit of prayer given him? It shall condemne thee that praieſt only with thine own spirit. Hath he zeal? His zeale shall judge thy luke-warmnesse. Doth his ſpeech and communication adminiſter grace to the hearers? It shall condemne thee that ſpeakeſt of vain and idle things. Yea, all the actions of the godly shall judge the wicked: and hence the Saints are ſaid *to doe Gods judgements*, Zeph. 2. 3. that is, they doe according to Gods judgements whereby he will judge the world: Thus they that doe mourne, doe judge them that doe not mourne: they that bewail their wickednesse, and the finnes of the times, judge them that doe not: they that faſt, weep, pray, and humble themſelves for the miſeries of the Church in theſe dreadful dayes, they judge them that make no good conſcience of their duties.

Fourthly, learne hence, that all the Texts of Scripture, all the whole word of God, that is it that begets theſe Saints, and therefore they muſt needs judge the world: the word of God begets mens hearts unto ſanctification and holinesse, whereby they become Saints: and therefore if they, then much more shall the Word it ſelfe judge the world: and hence it is that all the words

words of God in the Scripture, are called *Judgements*, Psal. 105. 5. And our Saviour saith, *The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you in the last day*, Joh. 12. 48. *The word that I have spoken*, where mark, he doth not say, *The word which you have heard*: No, there are many swearers, and drunkards, and prophane ungodly wretches, that will not come to Church to hear the word; there are many wicked men, and dead hearted worldlings, and rotten livers, that will not be brought to heare Gods Word; it may bee at this present there is many whoremongers, drunkards, and wicked persons, that wallow in their filthinesse; in the Ale-house, Game-house, or Drab-house; or in the fields, or beds, or at their sports. Well, this Word that is now a preaching, whether they will hear it or no, shall judge them at the last day. Now all the wicked in *Asbfoord*, that heare the word of God calling upon them to repent, and to come out of their sinnes, but will not, or out of contempt of Gods word, will absent themselves from it; this word shall judge and condemne them. There is never a drunkard, swearer, or prophane person, though his pew be empty, but this word of God that denounceth the eternall wrath and vengeance of God upon them, if they come not out of their sinnes, this word shall rise up in judgement against them, and condemne them eternally. Oh that they could but hear it! but the word that I have spoken shall judge you, whether you heare it or not.

5.

Fifthly and lastly, hence it follows, that all the Ministers of God shall also judge the world. *Sonne of man* (saith God to the Prophet *Ezekiel*) *wilt thou judge the bloody City? Yea, thou shalt shew her all her abominations*, Ezek. 22. 2. As if he should have said, *Sonne of man*, they are drunkards, wilt thou not tell them of it? They are whoremasters, wilt thou not tell them of it? They are filthy idolaters, wilt thou not tell them of it? They live in their sinnes, and in their abominations, and wilt thou not tell them of it? *Sonne of man*, tell them of all their abominations, and tell them that they shall goe to hell, if they repent not, tell them that they are damned men if they goe on, and come not out of their sinnes: *Wilt thou not judge them* (*son of Man?*) Beloved, there is never a Minister in *England*, nor ever a Sermon that is preached by them, but it judgeth every Parish, and every man & woman in the congregation, that doe not labour to doe what is commanded them, and leave undone what is forbidden them: I say it judgeth them, or else it is a judgment unto them.

This then serves to condemne three sorts of things in the world: First, shall the Saints judge the world, that see not amiableness in their faces? All the countrey doth reverence the face of the Judge when he rides circuit; Let the Judge come into the Countrey, and all the Knights, Justices, and Gentlemen in the Countrey will goe out to meet him, and bow unto him; yet these Judges are but Judges of a few rogues, malefactors,

Use 2.

factors and peafants of the Countrey : Alas, they are far from the dignitie of the Saints ; for the Saints shall judge Saints and Angels : all the world, Kings and Queenes, Lords and Nobles, and Captaines of the earth, the pooreft Saint in Christendome shall judge them. The Apostle, or rather our Saviour faith, *To him that overcometh, and keepeth my words untill the end, to him will I give power over the Nations*, Rev. 2. 26. Whatfoever he be, if he doe the workes of Christ, and walke in the Ordinances of Christ, shall have power over the Nations, not onely to contemne their poms and vanities, their lusts and corruptions, but also to convince their consciences, and to condemne their soules for ever.

2.

2. Shall the Saints judge the world ? Then what fooles are the wicked that prepare not for these Judges ? When the Judge comes to an Assise, all men prepare for him ; the Constables make ready their Presentments, the Juries are warned, and the Clerkes make ready their Bills, &c. lest the Judge should clap a fine upon them : and shall the Saints be Judges, and dost thou not prepare thy heart by grace ? Dost thou not get puritie and holinesse against that day ? Surely, if thou dost not, the very Saints will judge thee unmeet for heaven, and fit onely to have thy portion in hell. When Christ said, *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne*, Rev. 3. 21. He addes, *Let him that hath an eare heare* : Will God make his Saints to judge the world ? Then let all wicked men give eare and heare what

what God saith of his Church: The Saints shall judge the world: therefore let all men take notice of it, and prepare themselves for their judgement.

Lastly, It condemnes all those that doe not see glory and majesty in the faces of Gods Saints. There is majesty in the face of a Judge; yea a man may discover in them a kinde of a soveraigne majesty. Even so the Saints of God have a majesty in their courses, in their lookes, in their thoughts, and in all their waves; and in all these they shall judge and condemne the wicked. The wicked may give the Saints nick-names and scorne, flout, contemne, and deride them now in this life, but let me tell them, that how lightly soever they esteeme of them, they shall be their Judges: They may cry out against the Saints, as long since the wicked *Sodomites* did against good *Lot*, Gen. 19. 9. *This fellow (say they) will be our Judge*: Why, what had *Lot* done unto them? Alas, he did nothing, but when they would have done that Sodomish villany against the two Angels that came to him, *Lot* went to them and said, *I pray you my brethren, doe not so wickedly*. So let the godly be in the company of wicked men, that abuse the good creatures of God; say, I pray you my brethren, doe not so wickedly, be not drunkards, be not swearers; brethren, I pray you doe not so vainly, nor so prophanely use the name of God in your mouths; I pray you my brethren, doe not prophane Gods Sabbaths, doe not lye, doe not cheate, nor cozen; if you doe these and these

3.

these things, the wrath of God will plague us for it. Oh then presently they cry out, *Who made you our Judges?* As once the Hebrewes did of *Moses*, *Act. 7. 39.* Dost thou call Saints hypocrites and dissemblers, men that judge before the time? Thou foole, wert thou not as good to suffer the Saints to judge thee now, whereby thou mayst see thy wretchednesse and misery, and by faith and speedy repentance prevent that doome, which otherwise they tell thee will come upon thee, as hereafter, when if thou hast not repented, thou shalt never escape that doome and vengeance, to which the Saints shall judge thee? What, wilt thou not suffer them to call a drunkard, a drunkard? an adulterer, an adulterer? a blasphemer, a blasphemer? a carnall man, a carnall man? a worldly man, a worldly man?

It is a pretty observation out of *Cyprian*, that because Christ did reprove all sorts of religious, and spared none, he reprov'd the Scribes, the Pharisees, the Lawyers, the Souldiers, &c. and yet doth not reprove the Priests, because they were Judges of the people, not because he durst not, but he would not: If thou revilest the Saints, thou revilest thy Judges. Take heed then, how thou casts the least aspersion upon the Saints; doe not say, they are rash Iudges, uncharitable censurers, dissembling hypocrites; for they shall be your Iudges. O that the people would hearken & be admonished in time, to prevent this judgement. Our Saviour saith, that *this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men hate it,*

it, Joh. 3. 19. But the children of God, whom God calls *the light of the world*, these lights are come into the world, and men *love darknesse more then the light*. How can the wicked escape damnation, that have so many thousand Judges to condemne them? If the malefactor that is indicted for murder, or felony, cannot escape condemnation, that hath but one Judge to lit upon him: thou that art a wicked man, living in thy finnes without Christ, how canst thou escape, that hast so many millions of Saints to judge thee, yea from *Adam* the first, till the last Saint that shall be upon the earth? Surely the wicked shall never escape condemnation: for,

1. God the Father who judgeth by way of authoritie, he will condemne thee; all judgement cometh originally from him; he that hath often commanded thee to repent, and to come out of thy finnes, he shall condemne thee, because thou hast not obeyed him.

2. God the Sonne, he will judge thee, who judgeth by way of dispensacion, *Act. 10.* First Christ preacheth to thee repentance and remission of finnes, to which if thou yeeld not, then know, that there is a day appointed, wherein he will judge thee. That Saviour that thou sayest thou desirest, if thou part not with thy lusts, he himselve will be thy Judge that will condemne thee.

3. God the Holy Ghost will judge thee, that Spirit that now strives and wrestles with thee, that suggests good motions into thy heart, that

puts thee in minde of repentance, bidding thee leave and forsake thy finnes, and live holily: but if thou wilt not, this Spirit shall judge thee by way of conviction.

4.

4. The Word of God shall judge thee, and that by way of forme, it being the platforme, according unto which Christ will judge the whole world. Now suppose there be fortie prisoners in the Gaole together, one in for murder, another for theft, another for treason, (that man that knows the Law, if there be equitie and justice in the Assise) he, I say, that knows the Law, knows who shall be hanged, or quartered, or burned, or set free: even so, Beloved, that man that looks through the Scriptures, that reads this or that Chapter, this or that sentence, may know that or this man will to hell, if he repent not. Say I this of my selfe, or sayes not the Scripture as much? *The fearfull, and unbelieving, and all that love and make lies, shall be cast into that lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever,* Rev. 21. 8. By this text will the Lord Iesus come and judge the world; and therefore as for all such as live and dye in their finnes, wee may all know, that they shall be all damn'd in fire & brimstone for ever. Hereby I know that all they that make no conscience of *idle, vain, and earthly speches, and reproachfull words,* they shall *give an account* for them by this Text, *Mat. 12. 56.* Doth the Scripture say, that *all the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the Nations that forget God?* I know it shall be so by that text, *Psal. 10.* for all things

things shall be done according to the Scriptures. Rom. 2. 16. *In that day (saith the Apostle) when God shall judge the secrets of mens hearts by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel; that is, just as Gods Ministers preach; just as you finde it written in the same Scriptures, so will he judge at that day.*

Beloved, There is never a Text throughout the whole Scripture, that commands you to leave and forsake your sinnes, but it shall judge you, if you doe not: there is not one Text of Scripture, that commands performance of any holy dutie, but it shall rise up in judgement against thee, if thou performe it not. Doth the Scripture say, *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excesse? Eph. 5. 18.* It shall judge and condemne the drunkard, that drinkes excessively. Doth the Scripture say, *Mortifie your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleannesse, inordinate affection, evill concupiscence, and covetousnesse, which is Idolatry? Col. 3. 5.* It notwithstanding these sinnes live in thee, this Text shall rise up and condemne thee to hell. Doth the text say, *That the fathers to the children shall make knowne Gods truth, Esa. 28. 9. Eph. 6. 4. Parents bring up your children in the nurture and information of the Lord?* It shall rise up in judgement and condemne those parents that have not instructed their children to feare God. Doth the text say, *Thou shalt teach the Word of God unto thy children, and thou shalt take of it when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou goest by the way, when thou*

liest downe, and when thou risest up? Deut. 6. 7. It shall judge thee, because thou makest no conscience of holy conference. All these and the like Texts of Scripture, shall rise up and stand in rank to condemne thee, that hast not swayed thy heart, and framed thy life according to the Scriptures.

5. All the Ministers of God shall sit as Iustices in common ( from the first preacher of righteousness unto the last. ) *Moses* shall judge thee, *Joshua, David, Esay, Jeremy, Hosea, Daniel, Paul, Peter, &c.* they shall all judge you: just as Gods Ministers judge you here, so will God; he will take all their Sermons, and clap them upon the heads of all rebellious hearers, and so damn them for ever.

6. Lastly, The Saints shall judge you; yea, all the Saints from one end of the world to the other, they shall assist the just Iudge of heaven & earth, and they shall be interpretive Iudges.

Beloved, how can the wicked escape condemnation, that have so many thousands of Judges, so many thousand exhortations and reproofes, so many thousand admonitions and invitations, so many thousand mercies & proffers of Christ? When God the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost shall judge them, when heaven and all the Angels in heaven, and all the Saints on earth, shall judge them and condemne them? How canst thou escape? Is there never a drunkard in this congregation? Is there never a swearer? never a prophane person? never a mocker? never

ver a railer in this towne, that refuseth to hearken to the word? The men of Niniveh shall rise up in judgement against them, and condemne them, becaute they still live in their finnes, notwithstanding they have had not three dayes preaching, nor forty dayes space onely for repentance, but many yeares of grace calling upon them. The Queen of Sheba shall condemne many that live in these finnes, who went many hundred miles to heare the wisdom of *Solomon*, (for going and comming it was well-nigh two thousand miles) but you have the word of Christ preached in your eares, and saying, the Kingdom of God is come among you; but you will scarce step out of your doores to receive it, or take any paines for it. This one woman shall judge them. There will be no way for the wicked to put off their judgment: then the sonnes of *Eli* shall have none to advocate between God and them, none to cloke or cover their wickednesse; they shall then have no excuses for themselves: for would they excuse themselves? the Saints shall judge them: would they send out excuses? the Saints shall cut them off.

Would they in the first place say, Alas! I was ignorant, I knew not how to pray, or to read, or to meditate on the Scriptures, nor to catechize my family, I was dull and blockish to conceive such points as were taught me; and if I did live in sinne, it was ignorance that taught it me; I was never book-learned? Saith *Augustine*, this *Ignoramus* that was as ignorant and as little

book-learned as thou, he eschewed those finnes that thou livest in, got the anointing of Gods Spirit to anoint his eyes, to see and know the things of God, which thou hatt neglected to get; he shall condemne thee.

A second excuse is poverty: I have no means to live on; if I should run after Sermons, I should beg my bread: I have a great charge to keep, and nothing but my labour to maintain them: and therefore I cannot spare time for meditation; I have no while to study the Scriptures, to pray and to mourn for my sins, and to get grace. Well, the poore Gowler that lived next doore to Saint *Anthony*, shall rise up and condemn thee; hee was as poore as thou, and had as great a charge to keep as thou: yet hee mourned and wept, hee got grace, and hee set time apart for prayer, reading, meditation, holy conference; he shall judge and condemne thee.

Thirdly, they shall have no excuse by employment, I am a servant, I am commanded to doe this or that, I find so much businesse to follow, that I cannot finde any time for such things. Another saith, I have great employments, I have many Irons in the fire, and therefore God, I hope, will be mercifull unto me. Well then, *Cornelius* that had as many and as great employments as thou, and *Eleazar* (*Abrahams* servant) who was a servant as well as thou, yet in as much as they walked with God, and waited upon him in his ordinances, they shall judge thee.

Fourthly, they shall have no excuse from their callings and trades, I am an Inne-keeper, and if I should not suffer drinking, and swearing, and gaming, I should not live. Another saith, I am a tradesman, & if I should ask at first just so much as I could take, I should never bring customers to my price, and so I should not live of my trade. Well, *Rahab* was an Inne-keeper, as well as thou, and yet she lived by faith, and did not suffer such wickednesse in her house. So may a tradesman, that had the same trade, and the same imployment with thee, and as great a trade as thou, and yet have avoided these finnes and evils that thou fallest into; they shall judge thee.

Fifthly, they shall have no excuse from the times they live in. Alas (saith one) I live in wretched times, all the world is given to sinne. Therefore if I should be so strict and precise in my wayes, if I should run after Sermons, pray, sing Psalmes, &c. all the world would be against me. There are no Professors of religion but are reproached and miscalled, I should lose all my friends, I should be hated and opposed; yea, it may be (the time being such) I should be accused to Councils, and have my life questioned: there is nothing but disgrace and reproach, and persecution; wherefore I was afraid, and did dispense with my conscience. Ah wretch! shall that man that lived in those wicked times in the same town with thee, that had the same hatred and reproach that thou wast afraid of, that hath

endured all the rebukes of Christ that thou wast ashamed of, yet he went on, and continued unto the end; he shall judge thee.

Use 3.

The use is for the just reproof of many of the Saints of God, because they are not so circumspect and watchfull over their wayes, as they ought. *Dost thou judge others (saith the Apostle) and yet dost the same things thy selfe?* Rom. 2. 2. So may I say to all such, Will you give way to sinne? will you suffer your lusts and corruptions to sway you, and not endeavour to root out or kill them rather? How wilt thou then judge the world? How wilt thou then be able to rise up in judgement against the wicked, to judge them for such finnes wherein thou allowest and livest thy selfe? Surely God will never account thee for a Saint, if he cannot judge the world by thee. Oh this should rent the heart and bowels of those that goe for Christians, that goe for Saints, yet live not as the Saints should live. If God cannot take thee, and judge the world by thee; if he cannot take thy life, and judge the life of all Pagans, Infidels all luke-warm, earthly, and secure sinners, he will not account thee for a Saint. This then first condemnes all unholinesse in the lives of them that be Saints. Beloved, if wee did but live like the Saints of God in holinesse and purity in the wayes of God, the Lord would put such splendor and glory upon us, that would even daunt the very face of our enemies, and make them stand amazed at Saints. But it is the contrary with us, the glory of God

is departed from us, Spain, France, and other Nations feare us not: Why? The righteoufnesse and purity of Religion is departed from us. For you shall have a Saint come into the company of a wicked man, and yet the swearer will not be afraid to sweare before him: the drunkard will not be afraid to be drunk before him: the filthy speaker will not be afraid to utter rotten speeches before him: the lier will not be afraid to lie before him: the worldly man will not be afraid to discover his vanities before him by his carnall and filthy conference. Beloved, all this is, because the Saints have lost their glory; if they did live as Saints ought to live, the wicked would tremble to work wickednesse before them. Though a wicked man be a drunkard, and abuse the good creatures of God when no Saint is in his company, yet if a Saint were present, he would tremble, and not dare to doe it. Though he were a swearer, a filthy talker, a vain worldling amongst his companions; yet if hee come in the Saints company, and the Saints stand in Gods counsell, then would the wicked tremble and quake to doe such things: then would they lick in their tongues, and not dare to speake such blasphemous oathes, such vain and unprofitable words, filthy lies and flanders. It is said of those that gladly received the Apostles words, and were added to the Church, that *the feare of them came upon the world*, Acts 2. 41. What, did the Disciples goe with swords and guns, &c. to keep men in aw there-  
by?

by? No, they continued in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and did live according thereto, and this made all the world afraid of them.

Secondly, this condemnes the little difference that is betwixt the wicked of the world, and some Saints in their lives and manners: Beloved, is there so little difference between the Judge and the prisoners, that any one need to come and say, I pray you Sir, shew me which is the Judge, and which is the malefactor? Is there not a plain difference both in the apparell and carriage? The one is in rich apparell, and the other in stinking and filthy cloathes, having his hands maniced, or his legges chained. But it is to be feared, that many of the Saints have neglected holinesse and purity in their carriage and actions which they performe, that one can hardly tell which is a Saint, and which is a reprobate. If a man deale with a Saint, and deale with a wicked man, hee seeth no difference between them. Let a Saint doe any action, either pray, heare, or conferre, let a wicked man do the like, there is such deadnes, such carnality, such worldly-mindednesse, such luke-warmnesse of affection, that one can hardly tell which is the Saint and which is the hypocrite. Beloved, if the Saints did live like Saints, there would bee as plaine a difference between a Saint and a wicked man, in their lives and behaviour, as is betwixt the Judge and the Rogue that is to bee judged by him. *Hast thou not considered my servant Job, (saith God) how that there is none like him in all the earth?*

earth? Job 1. 4. 8. If a man come to be a Saint indeed, there is never a wicked man in the town and countrey, that lives and doth as he doth, and walkes as he walks, nor prayes as he prayes, nor heares the word as he hears it, nor that conferres or meditates as hee doth, that beleeves and repents as hee doth, that strives against his lusts as he doth: there is none like him in all the world.

Thirdly, it condemnes the scandalousnesse of many Professors in their behaviours and actions. Oh how do wicked men insult and exclaim hereupon, to see a Professor led away and overcome by some lust! What (say they) are these they that are led by the Spirit of God? Are these your devout men? why, they can covet and scrape as wel as others; they can cousten and lie as wel as others. I, those that are your great Professors, and hot-spurres, they are as covetous, as worldly, as cruel, as others, though they wil not bee drunk, nor sweare, yet they wil cousten and lie, as wel as others. The consideration whereof made the Prophets heart to bleed in him, and to pray, Oh purge me from my murder and adultery, and all other my secret finnes, lest I cast mire and dirt in the faces of thy children, causing them to beare the reproaches of my finnes. *Oh let not those that seeke thee, bee ashamed for my sake,* Psa. 69. For thy sake that livest scandalously and offensively, for thy sake that livest covetously and scraping after the world, that art so unjust in thy dealings and promises, mire and dirt,

dirt, scandals and reproaches are cast upon the children. For thy loosnesse, yea for thy carnall liberty it is that the true professors of Religion are reproached, suspected, and hardly censured in the world. What did *Jacob* when he was to walk with the people of the land? *Gen. 35. 5. 6.* he purged his house, and (saith the text) *the terror of God was upon all the Cities*, he made them all to tremble at him. I tell you, all the wicked in *Asbford* would tremble at the Professors that live therein, if they did live and carry themselves like Saints indeed. Oh if all those that did professe themselves to be Christians, were Christians indeed; and that professe themselves to be Saints, were Saints indeed, living in the power and sanctification of holinesse; then men would say of themselves, of a truth God is in these men, Christ dwels in them, and the Spirit of God leads and governs them indeed. If thou wouldst judge the world, take heed so as the world judgeth thee, and so thou with the world bee condemned eternally. It is said that *Herod feared John, because he was a just man*, *Mark. 6: 23.* So, if all thy neighbours did know that thou wert a just man, a holy and conscionable man in all thy wayes, & in all thy actions, and that cannot indure swearing, lying, and deceit; but did see that thou wast just, and one that feared God truly, they would all feare thee.

THE  
PUNISHMENT  
OF

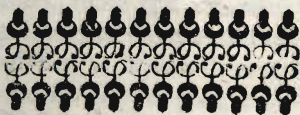
Unworthy Communicants at the  
Table of the **L O R D** :

DELIVERED.

In a **S E R M O N** preached,  
*Decemb. 7. 1628.*

By that vigilant and painfull Minister  
of the Word,

**WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.**  
Sometimes fellow of *Pembroke Hall*  
in *Cambridge*, and late Parson  
of *Rochford* in *Essex*.



London printed by *M. S.* for *I. S.*

THE  
PUNISHMENT  
OF

Two other Communicants at the

Table of the LORD:

DELIVERED

In a SERMON preached,

Decemb. 7. 1653.

By that vigilant and pious Minister  
of the Word,

WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.

Sometimes Fellow of Peterhouse Hall

in Cambridge, and late Parson

of Aylesford in Essex.

Printed by  
W. B. at the  
Printers  
in the Strand  
1654.

London printed by W. B. at the

A SERMON OF

MR. WILLIAM FENNERS,  
upon this following Text.

I COR. II. 30.

*For this cause many are weake and sicke  
among you, and many sleepe.*



THE Apostle in this Chapter taxeth two abuses which were then amongst the *Corinthians*: first, the unseemly habit of women in the Congregation, from the first verse to the 17. Secondly, the prophane usage of the holy Communion, both of men and women, from the 17. verse to the end of the Chapter: And herein, from the 22. verse to the end of the 25. he sets downe the Institution of the Lords Supper; and thence raiseth a point of Doctrine:

That whosoever would come to this holy Communion, they must examine themselves, that

*Doct. I.*

that so they may come worthily ; else it were better that they never came.

So we reade in the 28. verse ; *But let a man examine himselfe, and so let him eat of that Bread and drinke of that Cup* : As if the Apostle had said, **Unlesse a man examine himselfe, and search his own heart, and find out his sinnes, and dive into the secrets of his soule, to bring out his hidden corruptions, confessing them and judging himselfe for them before the Lord, let him never presume to come unto this holy Sacrament.**

And then he proves it by three Reasons.

*Reas. 1.*

The first is taken from the end of the Sacrament ; for it is the remembrance of the death and passion of Christ : so it is in the 26. verse, *So oft as you eat of this Bread and drinke of this Cup, you shew forth the Lords death till he come.* It is a reason that the men of this world are not acquainted withall ; and therefore it was a good will of a reverend Father, that the Sacrament should never be ministred, but there should be a Sermon, to teach men the nature of it, and to instruct them in the mystery thereof. Wee approach unto the Sacrament hand over head, living in our sinnes, not shewing by our coming, that Christ is dead ; we say, and we professe that Christ died for our sinnes, and yet notwithstanding our sinnes live in us, as if Christ had not died for us, or as if we would proclaime, that his death hath had no effect in us. For were we dead with Christ, then sin and the living occasions of sinne, would be dead in us also. My Beloved, we should

should never come to this Sacrament, but we should shew forth the Lords death thereby, that is, that Christ is dead (or, rather died) for sinne, and that sinne is also dead in us.

The second Reason is taken from the damned wrong wee offer unto Christ, if we come in our finnes, for we are *guilty of the body and blood of Christ*, as it is in the 27. verse; nay, thou sinnest against the Lord Iesus Christ, not a jot lesse, then *Pilat* that condemned him, then *Judas* that betrayed him, and the *Jewes* that cryed out, *Crucifie him, crucifie him*; yea, thou art as much guilty, as if thy own hand in thy own person had been imbrued in his blood. Now we know it is a horrible sin to be guilty of the blood and murder of an ordinary man, yea of a very rogue; how much more is it a great and fearful sin to be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord Iesus Christ, the onely and eternall Son of God? yet comest thou to this holy Communion, and thou bringest no lesse then the guilt of the body and blood of Christ upon thy soule?

Reason 2.

The third Reason is taken from the wofull wrong and injury that man brings upon his own soule, that comes unpreparedly without examination of himselfe; in the 20. verse, *he eateth and drinketh his own damnation*; that is, he maketh himselfe guilty of, and liable to the same vengeance that the crucifiers of Christ had inflicted on them, *Good had it been for that man* (saith Christ of *Judas*) *if that he had never been borne*: So may I say, *Good had it been for that man and that wo-*

Reason 3.

man, if they had never been born, who come unworthily unto the Table of the Lord; for when they eate of that bread, they eate their owne bane; and when they drinke of that Cup, they drinke their own damnation.

Use 1.

Then cometh he to make some uses of this point; and first he condemns those that as they come, so they goe away from the Sacrament, no more holy, no more gracious then before; but as they come in their sins, so they goe away in their sins; they came drunkards, and they goe away drunkards; they came worldlings, and they goe away worldlings; they came mockers, and they goe away mockers; they came in their wrath, anger, malice, deadnesse, hypocrisie, and inke-warmnesse, and so they goe away, still never the better, but living in them as they did before: As in the 17. verse, *You come together* (saith the Apostle) *not for the better, but for the worse*: Whereas if they would have come worthily, they should have gone away the better, they should have received more grace and holinesse to walke with God, more power and strength against sin and corruption; yea, the Lord would have ratified and confirmed his Covenant with them; whereas living in contention, and not coming with preparation, they grow the worse by the Sacrament. The *Corinthians* thought, that the Apostle would have praised them for their coming to Church, and receiving the Sacrament: *Shall I praise you & in this* (saith the Apostle) *I praise you not.*

Secondly,

Use 2.

Secondly, He makes an use of terror against all those that dare come in their finnes unto this holy Sacrament of the Lord; for that man that commeth in his finnes unto the Table of the Lord, though he may think he receives the communion, yet he doth not; for this is not the Table of the Lord, but the Table of Devils. It is true, thou receivest the Sacrament of the body and bloud of Christ; but yet coming in thy finnes, thou receivest not his body and bloud, as of a Saviour, to save thee from thy finnes: Indeed thou receivest the body and bloud of Christ sacramentally; but it is as thy Iudge to condemne thee unto the pit of destruction, for thy damned impudency in coming so unworthily unto this holy Sacrament. For that man cannot eate the body of Christ, that is not a member of Christ; therefore thou must be a limbe of Christ, if ever thou wilt receive worthily.

2. If a man come unto the Sacrament, and come in his finnes, he cometh to his own destruction: for though it be a sweet banquet for to refresh an humble and weary soule, and to make it walk more cheerfully in the wayes of God all the dayes of his life: yet he that commeth unto it in his finnes, and receiveth it in his uncleanness, speedeth thereby his own damnation, and receiveth it as his *viaticum* to hell. The Apostle compares Baptisme to the red Sea, 1 Cor. 10. from which place *Chrysoftome* saith, that as the red Sea was a way for the Israelites to passe through to Canaan, so it was as a grave to

swallow up the Egyptians to their destruction: So the Lords Supper is as a grave or open pit, whereby many plunge themselves into eternall destruction, but as a chariot to the godly to carry them to heaven.

Use 3.

Thirdly, by comming in thy finnes, thou makest thy selfe liable to Gods temporary plagues and judgements; as appears in my Text, *For this cause many are sick and weak among you, and many are fallen asleep.* [For this cause] which is not onely a note of conclusion, but of the cause: *For this cause*, namely, because they examine not themselves, but come in their finnes, and receive it unworthily. One man hath a disease in his body, that he liveth not out halfe his dayes; another sick and weak neer unto death; a third is fallen asleep. Wherefore? why (saith the Apostle) for this cause of receiving unworthily the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

Use 4.

Fourthly, for instruction, that because the people of God as well as wicked men, are guilty of unworthy comming to the Lords Table, therefore he exhorts them, that if they would not have the Lord judge them, that they would judge themselves, as in the 31. verse. *For if wee would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord.* If wee would sit downe and search our own hearts, and try our owne spirits, and pry into our bosomes, and out with our old corruptions, and unclean lusts, and enter into a new covenant with God, of holy walking before him for after time, if we would thus judge and  
con-

condemne our selves, and mortifie our finnes, comming with grace unto this holy banquet, then wee might come with comfort unto this blessed Sacrament, assuring our selves that wee shall escape the judgment of the Lord. For those of the Corinthians whom God struck with sicknesse, weaknesse, and death, it was to instruct others that are well and in health, that they venture not to enter upon these holy mysteries with unholy hearts, and unclean hands.

Fifthly, he concludeth with a use of exhortation in the 33. and 34. verses: *Wherefore brethren, when ye come together to partake of the holy Communion, tarry one for another*: As if he should have said, Away with all your disorders, and come not with a temporal, but with a spiritual appetite; provide not thy teeth, but thy heart for these dainties: for this is not a feast for the body, for the soul, therefore away w<sup>th</sup> all your disorders & unseemly coming unto this blessed Sacrament, take heed and repent of this sinne among you, and of all other sins which you know your own consciences to be guilty of, and so come unto this holy communion.

Now the verse that I have read to you, is a part of that use of terror which the Apostle makes against the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament; and it contains Gods severe hand and judgment against those that come unworthily: wherein note three things.

First, the cause of their punishment, which is the unworthy eating of the Communion: For

Vse 5.

*thing* use many are sick and weak among you, and many are fallen asleep.

2. Secondly, the punishment inflicted for this sinne, *weaknesse, sicknesse, and mortality*: For it seeme (saith *Peter Martyr*) that the Lord sent a sore plague and pestilence among them for to revenge himselfe of them for their abuse of the Sacrament, for this cause.

3. Thirdly, there is the delinquents, which are you Corinthians: *Many are sick and weak among you*, and in them all others that come unpreparedly to the Sacrament.

*Chrysostome* notes here, that our Apostle doth not fetch here an Argument or example of judgment from others, as he had done in the former chapter, but he brings it from themselves, who sensibly felt the wrath of God upon them for this very sinne: As if the Apostle should have said, How is it, O Corinthians, that you dare venture to come unto the Communion so unpreparedly, and that you have no more regard of so weighty a businesse as is the receiving of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ? See you not the wrath of God upon your dwellings, and the curse of heaven to take hold of your towne? you see it this very time, that some are weak and very sick amongst you, neer unto death, and others have been stuck with death before your eyes, and the wrath of God is not removed, but lies yet upon you: What will you always goe on, and never cease to provoke the Lord to indignation and wrath against you for your sinnes, until

untill his jealousie hath utterly consumed you, and clean cut you off? And howsoever many of you may think that this sicknesse, weaknesse, and mortality comes upon you by chance, as from the infection of the aire, or other secondary causes, I tell you nay, but it is for this cause onely, even your unworthy comming to the Supper of the Lord. Whence we may observe this point of instruction :

That God doth most severely punish the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

Doct. 2.

He punished the Corinthians here with sicknesse, weaknesse, feavers, pestilence, death temporal, and God knowes how many with death eternal. *Theodoret* observes, that the Apostle told them of a thing that was acted amongst them : for if hee had told them of such judgements as had been hid from them, and not manifest before their eyes, as if they had not felt the sicknesse in their bodies, and heard the bells tolling daily in their ears, they might have thought that the Apostle had but lied unto them. So the people of Israel, as wee may read in 1 Cor. 1. 2. 3. verses, *they were baptized in the Cloud and in the Sea, and they did all eat the same spirituall meat, and drink the same spirituall drinke*; yet as it is in the fifth verse, *with many of them God was not well pleased*. Nay, God was so wroth with them, that within the space of forty yeares, many thousands of them were destroyed by death here, and God knoweth how many thousands of them in

ne 1. For God sp aketh of hell, as well as of death, and their sinne was so great, that it made God confirme it with *an oath*, that they should never enter into his rest. And Saint Cyprian saith, that the Lord hath shewed many miracles, and declared many fearfull judgments upon the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament.

*Judas*, who *Ambrose* thought received the Sacrament ( though *Hilary* and others that he did not, but onely that he did eate the Passover, and was coming to this Sacrament also) but see his doome, *Joh. 13.* as soon as ever hee received the sop, the *Devill* entred into him, and so it is with all such as come to the communion in their sinnes without repentance, and unfained resolution of walking ever after worthy of the Sacrament; I say unto all and every one of them, that as soon as ever thou receivest the bread and wine into thy mouth, thou receivest the *Devill* together with it; as soon as ever it goeth down into thy body, the *Devill* goeth after it, and taketh more full possession of thy heart and soule.

Now the reason why the Lord doth so severely punish both with temporall judgments, and with spirituall curses, the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament, is, in regard of the authour of the Sacrament, who is *Christ*: and that not onely as he was man, (as the *Papists* would make us beleieve) but *Christ* as he was God did institute the same. So saith the Apostle in the 23. verse, *The Lord Jesus Christ in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and brake it, when he had given thanks,*

Reas. I.

thanks, and said, Take yee, and eat yee, for this is my body which is broken for you. Now if the Lord Jesus did institute it, what a cursed thing is it for any to defile it, and so sin against Christ? It is a damnable thing to sinne against God, but to sin against God, as he is God in Christ, is damnablely damnable. The holy Ghost in the second Psalm exhorts to *kiss the Sonne lest he be angry, and so thou perish*: As if he should say, Adore the Sonne, Adore the Lord Jesus Christ, and so come and eat of this bread, and drink of this cup: for if he be angry, thou wilt surely perish; and if thou sin against God, and to goe out of the way, Christ upon thy repentance will set thee in again; but if thou sinnest against God in Christ, who is the Way, the Life, and the Truth, thou shalt surely perish from the right way: for there is no other way for to bring thee in again, *Acts 4.12*. Therefore wofull is thy case, and miserable is thy condition if thou sinnest against Christ, profaning his holy ordinances, which he himselfe hath instituted, and abusest and despisest that blessed Spirit of his, that comes to seale unto thee the redemption that he hath purchased by his blood. Better had it been for thee, that thou hadst never been born: for if he be *wroth*, *blessed onely are all they that put their trust in him*, & come preparedly unto his holy ordinance, and that by faith embrace the Lord Jesus Christ. But woe unto all prophane persons that live in their sinnes: if his wrath bee but a little kindled, then woe to all drunkards, swearers, and uncleane persons; but  
blessed

bleſſed is that man that is come out of his finnes. For if his wrath bee ſo terrible when it is but a *little* kindled, O how much more fearfull will it be when it is deeply incenſed! Therefore if thou commeſt unto this holy Sacrament in thy finnes, without due preparation and examination, what doeſt thou but even ſet the wrath of God burning upon thy ſoule and body from the very bot-tome of hell?

When the Lord delivered the Law upon Mount *Sinai*, he commanded the people to ſanctifie themſelves; yea if a beaſt did but touch the mountain, he muſt dye for the ſame, even be ſtoned to death, or thruſt through with a dart, *Heb. 12*. Much more then now, when the Lord doth deliver the Goſpel, eſpecially the ground-work and maſter-peece thereof, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and that in the moſt bleſſedeſt manner that ever God exhibited himſelfe unto man; how much more doth God require purity and holi-neſſe, that all ſuch as come to receive the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the bleſſed Sacrament, ſhould bee ſanctified, purging their hearts, and cleaning ſouls from all their ſin and uncleanneſſe? Should not a beaſt touch the mountaine where God did appeare, and dareſt thou touch the body of Chriſt, and drink his bleſſed blood in thy finnes? The very Angels of heaven will curſe thee, and the clouds of heaven will poure down ſhowres of vengeance upon thee: for God hath more ſe-vere puniſhments to inflict upon ſinners under the Goſpel, then hee uſed under the Law, though

though then hee struck them with more visible and sensible plagues and judgments then ordinarily he bringeth upon men now: as *Gebezi* for his covetousnesse was stricken with leprosie, *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*, the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up quick for their rebellion against the Lord: *Er* and *Onan* were stricken dead for their wickednesse: *Jeroboam* had his hand withered for stretching of it forth to strike the Lords Prophet. And though the Lord bring not such sensible punishments now as hee did then, yet hee knowes how to punish the world a thousand times more then hee did then, at this time. As a father hath other kinds of punishments for his sonne, when hee is grown up, then hee had when hee was in coats, and but a child; then a twigge or two would serve the turne, but if he comes to mans estate, and then rebell against his father, it may be that he will disinherit him, and cast him out of his family: So in former time God did scourge and whip his people when they sinned against him; but now he hath drawn out his Church to this age, even to the age of the Gospel, hee hath severer strokes of plagues and curses, wherewith to confound all prophane and impenitent sinners, that dare to abuse that blessed Sacrament of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second Reason is, in regard of the matter of the Sacrament, which is Christ also; who as he was the efficient cause, so in regard of Sacramentall relation, he is the matter of the Communion,

Reas. 2.

munion, 1 Cor. 10. 16. *The Cup of blessing which we blesse, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ? and the bread which we breake, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ?* Now the better matter any thing is of, the more heynous is the defilement of it: A master will not be so angry for casting his earthen vessels into the mire, as hee will bee for casting his rich jewels. The bread and wine in the Sacrament, are the blessed communion of the pretious body and blood of Christ, and darest thou to defile them? Knowest thou not that thou dost greatly increase the wrath of the Lord against thy soule thereby? That soule whatever it was from *Dan* to *Beerseba*, that came in his uncleannesse to partake of any of those holy things which the children of *Israel* hallowed to the Lord, whether hee were man or woman, rich or poore, that person was to be cut off from the presence of the Lord, *Levit.* 22. whereto the Lord sets his seale for the confirmation thereof (*I am the Lord:*) And as sure as I am the Lord, so will I see it accomlished: So my beloved, let me say unto you of *England*, from *Dover* to *Newcastle*, or from one end of the town unto the other, that soule who toucheth any of these holy things with an impure heart, and commeth to partake of them with his uncleannesse upon him, living in his sinnes, and wallowing in his lusts, casting off the feare of the Lord, and making no conscience to walk in Gods wayes, that soule shall surely bee cut off that commeth so unworthily unto the Table of the

the Lord; not onely the hand that taketh it, and the mouth that eateth it, but even the very soule of him that so commeth, shall perish from the presence of the Lord. So *Levit. 7. 20.* *That soule that eateth of the flesh of the Sacrifices of peace offerings that pertain unto the Lord, having his uncleannesse upon him, even that soule shall be cut off from his people.* Now you know that all those sacrifices had relation unto Christ; but yet under the Law they were but shadowes and typical relations, and were not so lively and effectual means for the exhibiting of Christ, as the Lords Supper is: And therefore if such as came in their uncleannesse unto them, were punished with no lesse punishment then a cutting off from the fellowship with the Lords people; what wrath and vengeance will the Lord bring upon thee that comest with thy uncleannes upon thee unto this holy communion? *Augustine* saith, that man that receiveth the Sacrament unworthily, receiveth a greater plague to his owne soule, and a greater torment to his own conscience, yea and heapeth up a store of wrath unto himselfe against the day of wrath. Me thinkes thou that livst in thy finnes, and wilt not come out of them, when thou hearest these words [*This is my body*] and seest the bread broken before thy face, it should even make thee tremble and quake for to look upon it, more for to touch it, and most of all for to tast it: for *it is the communion of the body, and blood of Christ*; and how darest thou come in thy finnes for to defile it?

Reas. 3.

A third Reason is, in regard of the forme of the Sacrament, which is Christ too; for as hee is the efficient cause that instituted it, and as hee is also the matter of the Sacrament, so in the third place Christ is the forme of the Sacrament also, wherein the confirming grace of God is sealed up unto thee. Now as it is treason for a man to offer contempt unto the Kings broad Seal, so certainly is it high treason against this King of Kings, to contemne this blessed Sacrament, which is the Seal of the righteousness of faith. If thou shouldst clip the Kings Coine, I will say that thou art a Traytor. Oh what a traitor art thou then, yea, an accursed traitor in the account of God and Christ, if thou clippest his holy communion, if thou clip it of thy examination, and due preparation, and so come hand over head, not regarding so holy an ordinance! Thou sinnest against the Court of heaven. That which Saint *James* speakes in generall of the whole worship of God [*Draw neere unto God*] let mee apply it in particular unto this drawing neere unto God in this holy Communion, *James 4. 8. (Cleanse your hands yee sinners, and purifie your hearts yee double minded: Draw neer unto God in the hearing, reading and meditating on Gods word; draw neere unto God in prayer, and in this holy Sacrament, and receive it for your amendment of life. [Draw neere to God.]* I, that I will, (saith the wicked man) I will come to Church, & draw neer unto the holy communion. Will you so? (saith the Apostle)

Apostle: ) No, first *Cleanse your hands yee sinners, and purge your hearts yee double minded:* As if hee should say, never think of drawing neere unto God, or setting foot on this holy ground, and handling those holy mysteries of Christ, unlesse thou first purge thy heart, and cleanse thy soule from all thy filthy lusts and cursed corruptions, lest otherwise thou comming in thy sinnes with thy uncleannesse on thee, and so receiving unworthily, thou eatest and drinkest thine owne *damnation*, ( as our English translation hath it ) damnation to thy selfe, and not to another. No, God forbid, that thou shouldest by thy unworthy comming, eate and drink condemnation to another: for thou that art a child of God, and comest unto the Table of the Lord with repentance, and a sound measure of preparation, though others that sit in the same pew with thee, for their prophanenesse eate and drink their own damnation, yet thou shalt bee sure to receive the seale and assurance of thy reconciliation and salvation, with free acceptance of God, through the Lord Jesus Christ; for every man shall beare his own burden.

The last Reason is, in regard of the end of the Sacrament, which is Christ also: For as he is the efficient, materiall, and formall cause, so Christ is also the finall cause of the Sacrament: So it is in the 26 verse, *As oft as you eate of this bread, and drink of this cup, you shew forth the Lords death untill he come.* Not that Christ may be eaten with the teeth, or corporally received in the Sacra-

Reas. 4.

Sacrament, or as if he were there productively, or transubstantially, ( as the Papists say ) no, the Apostle shewes, that the end of the celebration of this Sacrament, is for to shew forth the death of Christ untill he come.

*Obj.* I, but ( say the Romists ) unlesse we eate the body, and drink the blood of Christ really, and not the consecrated bread and wine, how can any man by this unworthy communicating, eate and drink his own damnation, and make himself guilty of the body and blood of Christ?

*Ans.* I answer, a man cannot bring this guilt upon himselfe by eating a peece of bread, or drinking a cup of wine; but the Apostle hath an answer so fitted for this, as that all the Papists in the world shall never bee able to gainsay; and therefore I pray you to mark it: for he hath joyned these two verses together; *As oft as you eate of this bread, and drinke of this cup, you shew forth the Lords death till hee come: Wherefore whosoever eateth this bread, or drinketh this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord;* even for this cause, because it is the shewing forth of Christs death till hee come. Therefore if thou eatest and drinkest unworthily, comming in thy sinnes, and resolvest to goe on in them, that as thou wert proud before thou camest to the Sacrament, so thou art still; as thou wert cholerick, angry, and impatient before, so thou art still; as thou wert luke warme and dead-hearted in Gods service before, so thou remainest still; remember I pray thee, that

as oft as thou hast come unto the communion in those thy sinnes, thou hast made thy self guilty of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore I beseech you to look, and in time to repent, and pray with the Prophet *David*, *Psal.* 51. *Deliver me from blood-guiltinesse, O Lord, even from the blood of thy Sonne, lest one day it bee laid unto thy charge, and required straitly at thy hands. For for this cause many are sick among you, and many weak.*

Is it so then, that the Lord doth so severely punish the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament? Take notice (I pray you) then from whence cometh all sicknesse, weaknesse, and mortality, and the reason why the Lord doth send so many kinds of sorrowes, crosses, and miseries upon men, namely, because of the unworthy receiving of the Lords Supper. So saith *Mr. Calvin*, why doe you wonder to see such warres, and rumours of warres, that there is so many bloodsheds, so many Townes and Cities ruined, and so many Countries sacked and depopulated, so many calamities come upon the Churches abroad, and so many plagues and scourges to over-run Christendome at this day, is not the cause plain enough? men come unto the Table of the Lord carelessly and unworthily. And, beloved, we shall never see the Lord take away his judgments here from the earth, untill we betake our selves to a more diligent and holy receiving of the Sacrament. For this very cause there are so many strange diseases amongst us,

O

never

Vse I.

never formerly known or heard of untill these dayes, as the French Pox, the English Sweat, (as they call it) that even the Physitians themselves are blunted at them; and (as *Peter Martyr* well observes) hence are all diseases, as plagues, pestilences, (which were late amongst us) drop-sies, bloody Flux, Agues, Apoplexies, Convulsions, burning Feavers, and impostumes, &c. and all for this cause. One man hath fallen into a Feaver, and we wonder at the cause whence he took it; but in truth the communion hath cast him into his Feaver, and the Lord will avenge himselfe on him for the same. Another is sicke, and he thinkes that a cold hath brought it upon him; but it is the unworthy receiving of the Sacrament that is truly the cause of it. A third man dieth before his time, even in his full strength, before in the course of nature hee hath ended halfe his dayes; but the cause is unworthy comming to the Communion, which hath taken hold of him, and cut off the thread of his life.

Many there be that expound these words in a spirituall sense, *Many are sick and weake, and many are fallen asleep*, that is to say, many have their consciences seared, and their hearts hardened, &c. and this is true also, that because men come unpreparedly, they have their hearts hardened, and their consciences seared, and their soules plagued with many spirituall plagues. But it is as true also in temporall judgements, thou hast had many afflictions, and much sickness  
laid

laid upon thee, but thank thy selfe for it; namely, because thou hast come unworthily unto the communion, thou hast had much weaknesse in thy body, which hath cost thee much mony, and weakned thy estate; but thy unholy comming unto the Sacrament, is that which thou mayest thank for it. Thou hast been reproached and contemned, and endured much shame; but take notice of it, that it proceeds from the fore-going cause, and that is a speciall reason why the Lord hath brought these and many other evils upon thee. Thou canst say the commandements (for the most part) by rote; but thou didst never know the mystery of this one commandement, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*: Beloved, the Communion is one of Gods own names, and how many thousands are there in the world that take this name of God in vain? Is there never a drunkard here in this congregation, that hath been at the Sacrament? Is there never a whoremonger, never a covetous worldling? Where is the man, whosoever hee bee amongst you all, that is such a one? He is in the state of damnation. Is there never a luke-warm, and carnall Christian, that contents himself with a formall worship, and a dead performance of holy duties, that hath no zeal for God, nor courage for his truth, but is carelesse of all Gods commandements? whosoever amongst you are guilty of these sins, or any other, and hath come unto this holy Communion in them, they are the persons, that how oft soever they have received,

so oft they have taken this name of the Lord in  
 vain: And if I should examine this Congrega-  
 tion from the one end of it unto the other, I feare  
 that every pew would yeeld some one, if not  
 many, that have taken a Communion (w<sup>ch</sup> is one  
 of *Gods names*) in vain. Should I but examine thee  
 that comest unto the Communion this day,  
 how by the last Sacrament thou receivedst, and  
 the last Sermon thou hast heard, thy faith is  
 strengthened, thy repentance renewed, and thy  
 obedience is increased, and thy care doubled for  
 to walk with God? whether thou art made by  
 them more zealous for good, more forward in  
 his worship and service, and every day more ho-  
 ly and heavenly minded; if not, then thou hast  
 taken this *Name of the Lord thy God in vain*, and  
 the Lord will not hold thee guiltlesse, that is, the  
 Lord wil not take away the guilt from thy con-  
 science, but he will let thy sinne lie open, and  
 thou shalt not be cleansed from it, nor justified by  
 the very blood of Jesus Christ, but it shall rest  
 upon thee to thy utter ruine and destruction, un-  
 lesse thou forsake thy sinnes, and so come prepa-  
 redly unto this holy Table and banquet. I know  
 here is a covenant of grace, a sweet refreshing  
 for every humbled soul that is hungry & broken  
 for his sinnes, and for every poore distressed  
 conscience: let all such come and lay their sinnes  
 upon Christs crosse, and welcome: But if there  
 be any that come in their sinnes, and will not re-  
 forme their lives, but be as they came sinners, so  
 they mean for to continue, the Lord himselve  
 will

will lay this mans sinnes upon his owne head, and they shall never be taken away from him, but Christ shall at the day of judgement pronounce him a guilty person, to his eternall condemnation.

King *Balsazzar* that abused but the holy vessels of the Temple, and the Cups thereof, what a dismall plague befell him for it? *Dan. 5. 27. 28* *God hath numbred thy Kingdome and finished it, thou art weighed in the ballance, and art found too light, thy Kingdome is departed from thee, and is given to the Medes and Persians.* So (beloved brethren) if any of you shall abuse this Cup of the Lord, comming to it with a filthy unclean heart, and polluted conscience, and earthly affections, there is a hand-writing against every soule that thus commeth this day unto the Table of the Lord: thou art numbred and weighed, and found too light: thou, O man, and woman, whosoever thou art, that prophanest and contemnest these holy things of God, thou shalt be found out, and the Lord will keep thee out by his spirituall plagues, and thy sinne shall never bee done away, but be required at thy hands, and stand in everlasting record against thee; O my brethren, that you would but seriously consider of it, and look about you, it being so weighty a thing, that so neerly concernes every one of you.

But I would not have any poore broken heart and humble soule to mistake me, and so thereby be discouraged: but give me leave (I pray you) for to use the words of the Prophet, though spoken

ken' in another sense, *Psal. 115.* *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the glory:* So let me apply this doctrine unto the comfort of all poore broken hearted sinners, and beat off all carnall prophane wretches that live in their sinnes; not unto you, O drunkards, and swagerers, nor unto you whoremasters and uncleane persons, that wallow in ungodlinesse, I say not unto you, but unto the poor afflicted soul & contrite spirit that lieth bleeding and gasping under the weight of his sin, and that trembles and fears being opprest with the sense of its own unworthinesse, panting and breathing after Christ Jesus, and suing earnestly unto the Throne of grace for mercie and forgivenesse: unto thee only belongs this comfort, and therefore take it home to thee, and know it for thy selfe. Art thou troubled with a hard heart, and an unbelieving soule, and art even wearied and tired out with thy many sinnes and infirmities? Come thou with comfort unto this holy Communion: for thou shalt be sure to finde saving good by it; to thee it shall be a spirituall medicine to heale all thy diseases, and to cure all thy strong and prevailing corruptions; and if thou come unto this holy Table of the Lord, it shall make thee as it is recorded of *St. Laurence*, able to suffer Marrydom, and to get victory over all thy unruly affections; yea at last thou shalt tread Satan thy arch-enemy under thy feet. Therefore bee not dismaied: for the Lord Jesus invites thee to come. What if thy infirmities be many, yet the

the mercies of God, which he tenders to thee in this Communion, are many more. *Samson* who was the strongest Souldier and Champion in his time that was in Israel to overcome the Philistims, hee yet began his strength in weaknesse, being at the first overcome by a woman: So though the Lord intend to make thee a strong Christian, he will make thee to begin in weaknesse to perfect thy power; to begin in sinne and misery, that he may make thee to end in glory. I know Gods children here may receive temporall punishments, and bring temporall scourges upon themselves, as wee may see amongst the *Corinthians* here, but it shall be for their good and amendment, namely, for their correction, and not for their ruine and destruction; that so being chastened by the Lord, they might not bee condemned with the world. Therefore if thou comest carelesly and unprofitably, God will chastise thee with the rods of men, as he did *Peter*, who receiving the Sacrament with his Master over night, yet the next day thrice denied him; but God whipt his soule, and scourged his conscience for it, and beat him black and blew, so that he went out and wept bitterly: Nay, he could scarce wipe off that sinne, and recover himselfe again whilst he lived.

Wherefore let us take heed of unprepared comming to the Sacrament; for God will not hold such guiltlesse: Yea, if his own sonnes or daughters transgresse thereby, hee will make them to feele the smart of it. But now to come

to all such as come month by month, hand over head, without any examination and repentance in their uncleannesse and abomination, making no conscience of their reformation, let me tell them that it shall be one of Christs demands of them in the day of judgement, How oft hast thou been at my Table? How oft hast thou been partakers of that holy Communion which I gave unto thee? Hast thou come preparedly, or received worthily, or no? Hast thou eate bread at my Table with me, and lift up thy heele against me? Did I command, and thou wouldst not obey? Did I send my Ministers to thee to reform, but thou wouldst not be reformed? Did I check and reprove thee for thy pride, blasphemies, drunkennesse, covetousnesse, anger, wrath, malice, fornication, hypocrisie and prophanessee in the matter of my worship? and yet wouldst thou still live in these finnes? Where are all the Sacraments that thou hast received? How hast thou behaved thy selfe? Where are the finnes that thou hast forsaken, and pleasing corruptions that thou hast abhorred? What grace and holinesse hast thou received by the meanes thou hast enjoyed? and how hast thou manifested the same through thy whole conversation. Oh! woe, woe unto thee, yea, & a world of woes unto thee, and unto all such as shall bee silent and speechlesse to these or the like demands of Christ: for they cannot say they have come out of their sins, and have been reformed by the means of grace, and have received spirituall nourishment and refreshing

refreshing from the heavenly banquet of the Communion of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A man will especially regard the last words of a deare friend, who is as a mans soul, when he is to speak upon his death-bed, and will be carefull to remember them: and dost thou not more regard the last Will and Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ? We count it a horrible sinne to alter the last Wil of a man that is dead. Beloved, the Lord Jesus, before he left this world, instituted this blessed Sacrament at his last Will and Testament, and hath given us a charge, that as we would not care and drink our owne damnation by bringing the guilt of his body and blood upon our ioules, so that wee should discerne the Lords body, and not come unpreparedly in our finnes and abominations, without reverence and respect of such holy and high mysteries, as if there were nothing to bee received and looked for after, then the bare & naked element of bread and wine, or as if we did come to communicate with unclean Devils. O my brethren, if you had but faith, you would be able to discerne Christ in the Sacrament; and therefore when thou comest unto it, thou must prepare and sanctifie thy selfe for to communicate with him in those holy ordinances and heavenly mysteries of his most pretious body and blood: For if so bee that thou retainest thy sins, and so come unworthily unto this holy Table of the Lord, thou art a great covenant-breaker with God: For thou never

com

comest unto the communion, but thou makest  
 and renewest thy covenant with God, wherein  
 thou promisest thus much or the like in effect.  
 Lord, I have been formerly a drunkard, but  
 now I promise to give it over, and never to be a  
 drunkard more; I have been a scoffer at religi-  
 on, and a mocker and derider of thy children; but  
 now I faithfully promise (Lord) that I will ne-  
 ver doe to any more. I have been wicked and  
 sinfull, disobeying and rebelling against all thy  
 holy commandements, and respected not thy  
 judgements and thy promises, and have been care-  
 lesse of thy glory: But now (Lord) as I eat this  
 bread, and drink this wine; so I covenant unto  
 thee, & promise to thee, that I will amend all my  
 sinfull wayes, and become a reformed Christian.  
 And as I ever look that the body and blood of the  
 Lord Jesus Christ represented in the elements,  
 should nourish my soule unto eternall life: so I  
 promise to be disobedient to the Devil, but faith-  
 full and obedient unto thee. I will stop my ears  
 against the alluring inchantments of the world,  
 and wicked suggestions of the Devill; but I will  
 open them wide to hearken to thy voyce, that I  
 may obey thy commands. But now as thou hast  
 made it, so if thou hast broken this thy cove-  
 nant with God, returning to thy former courses  
 of sin and disobedience against him, know thou,  
 that this covenant of thine which thou hast bro-  
 ken, shall stand in full force against thee: for  
 God will assuredly require it at thy hands; and  
 all the Sacraments which thou hast received,  
 thou

thou hast received them but as so many seales and pledges of thy just deserved condemnation.

But some man may object and say, Do all that come unworthily unto the Sacrament, eat and drink their own damnation? Then many hundreds, yea thousands are damned: Are all damned that have eat and drunk unworthily?

*Ans.* No, but a man may eat and drinke his owne damnation three wayes: First, in regard of guilt and liablenesse unto Gods wrath: and so he that eateth and drinketh his naturall food, his dinner, supper, or breakfast in his finnes, eateth and drinketh his own damnation: yea, whosoever thou art, that comest unto this holy banquet in thy finnes, in thy pride, choler, malice, wrath or revenge, covetousnesse, hypocrisie, and deadnesse in Gods service, thou never eatest a bit of bread, but thou eatest and drinkest thine own damnation; that is, thou eatest and drinkest that which will witnesse against thee another day, *Deut. 28. 16, 17, 18, 19 verses, &c.* *If thou wilt not hearken to the voyce of the Lord thy God, to observe and doe all his commandements, then all these curses shall come upon thee & overtake thee: Cursed shalt thou be in the City, and cursed in the field, cursed shall be thy basket and thy store.* Now if thy bread be cursed, then thou also art cursed that eatest it.

Secondly, in regard of the seal and obligation in the conscience, so he that eateth and drinketh the Sacrament in his sins, eateth and drinketh his own damnation; that is, hee eates and drinks  
that

that which seals up his damnation against the great day of account. And thus many amongst us, and I feare the most part of this congregation, have eate and drunk their owne damnation. But this seal may bee broken off, and God grant it may.

Thirdly, in regard of sigillation in heaven; and so he that eats & drinks unworthily, and will not be reformed; he that receives the Sacrament time after time, but still retains his sins, and will not be humbled for them, nor forsake them, hee setteth a seale in heaven upon his own damnation, that all the whole world can never break off, but such a one most certainly is a damned creature.

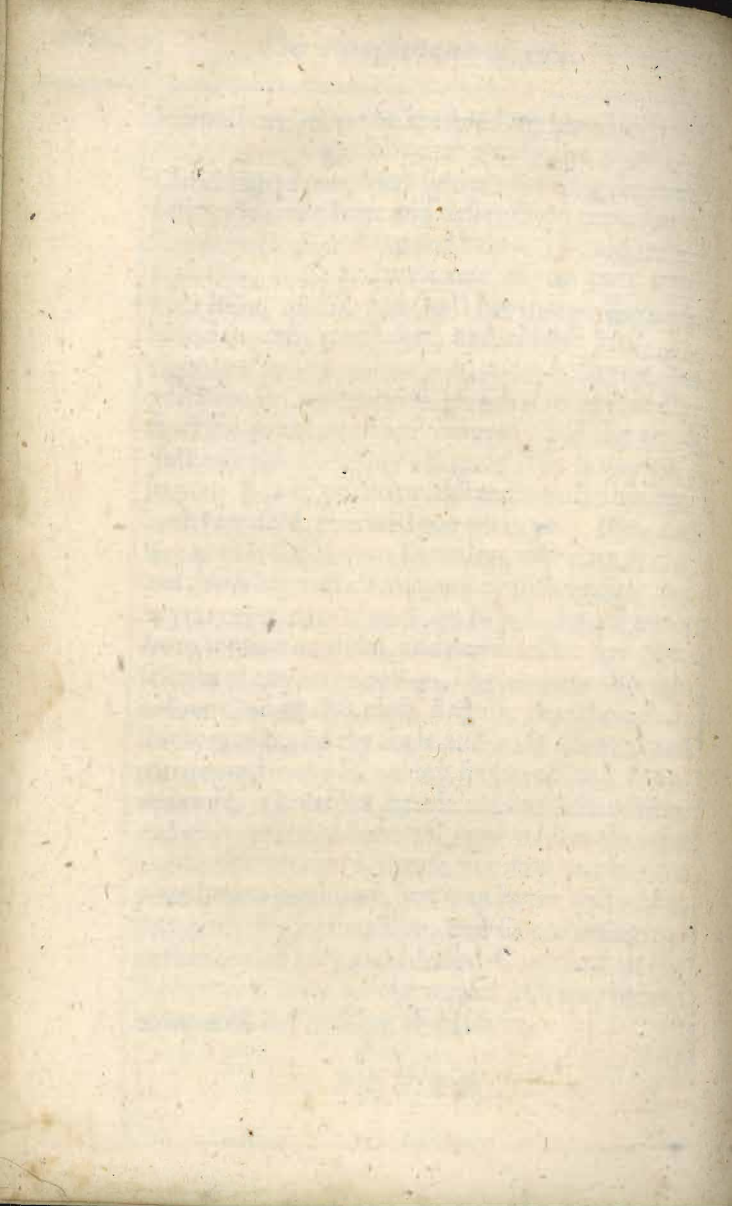
And now (my brethren) God forbid there should be any such here, but that this seale may bee broken off: And O that God would put some strength into this word, that it may be broken off by your godly sorrow for your sin, and forsaking of them all: for if this seale bee set on your damnation, why doe I yet speak unto you, and intreat & beseech you in the name of Christ, to come home and be reconciled to him? and I desire to stand here, as *Jehoiadab* set Porters at the gates of the Citie, and of the house of the Lord, to keep off all those that come in their uncleanness, *2 Chron. 23. 19.* So I stand this day as the Porter of the Lord, to keep the Lords watch, that no prophane wretch, no proud hearted sinner, that meanes not to enter into a new course of life, that no such one come unto this  
holy

holy communion. I charge that as you will answer the guilt of Christs blood before Gods Throne, that you meddle not with it. But now if there should be any that would absent himselfe because he will the more freely goe on in his sins, let him know that such a one excludes himselfe from the benefits and merits of Christ death, and shall never have the benefit of a redeemer at the day of judgment; but shall perish in his sins for his carelesse neglect and fearfull contempt of so effectuall and powerfull means of salvation and purging, as is the blood of Christ truly and really offered in the Sacrament. Wherefore if thou comest or comest not, woe is thee, if so be thou livest and continuest in thy sins, and goest on in thy unholy courses.

And now to conclude; as the Cherubim stood before Paradise with a naked sword to keep *Adam* out, that he might not enter and so eat of the tree of life: so I bring with me the sword of God, to run it up to the hilts in the heart and bowels of every ungodly man, every rebellious and impenitent sinner this day, that dares presume to rush upon this holy ordinance of God, with a polluted and uncleane heart. Therefore let me exhort thee, that as thou tendrest the eternall good of thy soule, so thou be carefull not to eat the body of Christ, nor drink his blood in thy sins, lest thou eat thine own bane, and drink thine owne curse: Nay, so doing, thy misery will bee so great, as a good man well weighing and considering of it, said, I professe I had rather have

have all my veins cut open, and my blood spilt on the ground, then deliver the body and blood of Christ unto a prophane sinner: for why should I deliver his own bane and destruction unto him? But now (my brethren and beloved) come out of your sins, come and welcome, if you part with your lusts, and so you shall bee sure to have his blood to wash your heart, and cleanse you, his righteousnesse to cleare you, and cloath you, his graces to strengthen you, his spirit to heal and to sanctifie your hearts and natures; and the Lord Jesus Christ to supply all good that is wanting in you. But if yet notwithstanding all this that hath been said, you will goe on in your sins, and live as you did in your swearing, whoring, lying, and drinking, and all manner of filthinesse; and as you came unto it unclean, so you depart away from it more unclean, and never make any conscience of any reformation, I pronounce this day before God and his elect Angels, that thou shalt surely perish, and thy soule and body damned and tormented in the scorching flames of hell for evermore. Therefore hearken unto instruction, and give eare unto counsell, now whiles that the Lord offers it to you, that so you may not harden your hearts anymore, but may heare and obey, that your soules may live, and so comming together to this holy and blessed Communion for the better and not for the worse, you may return home with the blessing of children.

EXAMINATION  
OF THE  
COMMISSIONERS  
OF THE  
LAND OFFICE  
IN  
RESPONSE TO A  
RESOLUTION OF THE  
HOUSE OF COMMONS  
PASSED IN  
MAY 1846





**EXAMINATION  
REQUIRED IN EVERY  
COMMUNICANT.**

A Sermon preached by Mr. *William Fenner* Minister of Gods word.

2 COR. II. 28.

*But let a man examine himselfe, and so let him eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup.*

**I**N the latter part of this Chapter the Apostle treats of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper: And first he reproves the Corinthians for their unworthy comming to it, as we see in verse 18. There were errors, and Schismes, contempt of the poore, drunkenesse, excesse, disorder, and unprofitablenesse in the duties of God: they waxed worse and worse

P

by

by the Sacrament. All these, and sundry other abuses were among them; so that they did not eat the Lords Supper aright as they ought.

Secondly, he reduceth them back to the first prime institution of it by Jesus Christ, as we see in verse 23. that hereby they might both see how grievously they had abused the Sacrament; and likewise see how they might sanctifiedly use it.

Thirdly, he shews the danger of unworthy receivers: and this he sets out two ways:

First, by the grievousnesse of the sinne, such a person makes himselfe guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, as we see verse 27.

Secondly, by the dolefull consequence that follows upon it; *He eats and drinks damnation to himselfe*, as we see verse 29.

Now in this verse (that I may not trouble you with speaking of any more matter then what is necessary for the present Theam) he shewes how we may prevent, escape, and avoid this danger; how we may take an order that we doe not fall into this grievous sinne, that we doe not plunge our selves into this grievous misery: *Let a man examine himselfe, and so let him eate of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* A man must examine himselfe; sift his owne soule, and labour to prepare himselfe, before he dare to venture on this sacred businesse. In these words, before we set upon the particular handling of them, we may observe, that

*We must not rashly upon it. Sacrament.*

There must somewhat be done before we can receive

The sum  
of the text

Obser. I.  
We must  
not rush  
upon the  
Sacrament

receive it, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* There are none of the Ordinances of God, that a man may safely rush upon. Wouldst thou offer any sacrifice to God? But thou must stay first, and examine thy selfe, whether there be not something yet undone: it may be thou hast offended God in something or other; it may be thou art out with thy brother, thou must first goe and be reconciled to thy brother, and then offer thy gift, *Matth. 5.* So, wouldst thou reprove thy neighbour? It may be there is somewhat out of order, some indisposednesse in thee, thou art not yet in case to set on this duty; it may be thou art faulty, and guilty thy self; it may be thou hast a beam in thine own eye. *First* (saith the Text) *pull the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou mayst see clearly to pull the mote out of thy brothers eye, Matth. 7. 5.* So wouldst thou reforme thy outward man? But it may be thy inward man is not reformed; there is some lust in thy heart, some pride in thy will, some stubbornnesse in thy spirit, some Idoll in thy bosome; *First, cleanse the inside of the platter, Matth. 23. 26.* There is never an ordinance of God that can be done, but there must be somewhat done first, a man must doe something before. As in the choice of Officers, as Ministers, or Deacons, other Officers in the Church, first, they must be proved before they be chosen: so in all the Ordinances of God. Would wee come to the Sacrament? There is somewhat must be done first, we must

Matth. 5.

Mat. 7. 5.

Mat. 23. 26

examine our selves, and root out all un sanctifiednesse, and indisposition, that cannot stand with the right communicating in the Lords Supper. And so in every other good duty.

The reasons of this are :

Reas. 1.  
Naturally wee are no invited guests.

First, because naturally wee are not invited guests, wee are not such as are invited to the Lords Supper : we are children of wrath, and as long as we are in such a state, we cannot come a-right to the Communion. This is childrens bread, and it cannot be given to dogges. Christ, whensoever he sets his dainties before his people, he tells us for whom they are, *Take, eat, this is my Body that is broken for you.* This is the Supper that is made for you, as it is in this Chapter, verse 24. First we must prove our selves invited guests.

It is true, the Lord Christ invites every man to the Lords Supper ; but he invites him methodically, hee must bee in such an estate : but every man is not so fitted, a man must be a member of Christ that means to partake of Christs death ; he must be one that is in Christ, he must be able to prove that he is ingrafted into Christ, he must bee able to shew the mark of the Lord Christ on him. As it is with some of your great dinners, and feasts in this Citie, you have tickets, and all that are admitted to the feast, must shew their ticket before they are admitted : So thou must be able to shew thy ticket, that thou hast an invitation from Christ, thou must have a mark, and token

Simile.

ken from Christ that thou comest, and comest with his warrant.

A second Reason is, though thou be invited, it may be thou art not disposed. If a man will doe a thing that hee is naturally indisposed to, there must be somewhat done before of necessity: So the Lords Supper, it is a thing that naturally wee are indisposed unto, therefore somewhat must of necessity bee done first. Naturally we are unholy, we are unthankfull, and carnall, we are in our sinnes, strangers from God, and the Covenant of God, and from the seale of the Covenant: all this indisposition must be wrought out before we can comfortably come hither. If Christ would have the very Chamber first trimmed, before he instituted the Passover, and the Sacrament, much more will hee have the soule disposed for him, and the heart cleansed from all filthinesse. If hee that eat of the Peace-offering being indisposed, having his uncleannesse upon him, was to bee cut off from his people, *Levit. 7. 20.* what will God doe to such people as come hither in their uncleannesse, and indisposition, un sanctified, and unqualified?

Thirdly, suppose we were both invited and disposed, yet this is not enough: This is a solemn Ordinance of God, and an ordinary disposition will not serve the turne. Though every child of God bee ordinarily disposed to every good word and work, to pray, and to heare the word of God, he is prepared and furnished to e-

*Reas. 2.*  
We are indisposed

*Levit. 7.*  
20

*Reas. 3.*  
Solemne preparati-  
ons requi-  
red to the  
Sacra-  
ment.

very well-doing ordinarily and habitually; but a man must bee disposed further: There is a solemne preparation required to the Communion, as in *Deut. 16, 15*. there were solemne feasts in the Law: so there is this solemne feast in the Gospel, and there are solemne preparations required thereto. When we come to the Communion, to eate the Lords Supper, it is not eating and drinking in Christs presence; for so may any reprobate doe, and yet Christ may say to him, Depart from me, thou worker of iniquity. It is not to come and sit in your Pewes, and wait till the Bread come, and take it; and till the Cup come, and drink it; so many a reprobate may doe, and the Corinthians did, that did eate and drink their own damnation: But there must be a solemne preparation to it, to be *sealed with the Spirit of Promise*, to be righteous by faith in the body and blood of Christ. For a man to be humble, and empty of his sinne, to bee thirsty after the pretious blood of Christ, to bee fed and built up in the Promises. It is a weighty thing to come to the Communion: a man must bee a *worthy man*, or else he hath nothing to doe here. As *Solomon* said of *Adonijah*, *If he be a worthy man, not a haire shall fall from his head; but if wickednes be found in him, he shall die*, 1 King. 1. 52. So if we be worthy men and women, not a haire of our head shall fall to the ground, none of the curses shall light on us, that light on unprepared persons: but if wickednesse bee found in us, if we be guilty of any sinne, if we live in any lust  
not

Deut. 16.  
15.

King. 52

not mortified; if there be any prophanenesse in our lives, in our families, in our courses and callings, though we catch hold of the hornes of the Altar, though we partake of these holy mysteries, yet we shall be so far from having any mercie, as that we shall hasten our own ruine, we set a seal on our owne judgment, and make our case worse then it was before.

Let us take notice of it, and never dare to rush on any of Gods ordinances. You know what became of the foolish man in the Gospel, that when they were invited to come to the marriage Supper, he thought it was nothing but to come with them that came, to crowd in with them, and sit down among the rest; he considered not what he went about, that he might be prepared accordingly; the event was this, he was cast out into utter darknesse, Matth. 22. 13. It is dangerous rushing on any of Gods ordinances. To rush upon prayer, for a man to fall downe upon his knees, and to utter any thing before the Lord hastily with his mouth, not considering that God is in heaven, and he on the earth. A mans word may damne his own soule, and pull vengeance on his own pate, his prayers may prove a curse, his prayer for mercy may bee turned into vengeance: So the higher the service, the greater the danger. As the servants of *Abigail* said to her, *Consider what you doe*, when evill was determined against them: so consider what you doe when you come to the Sacrament, you come to a weighty thing, to that that will either set you

Use.

To take heed of rash performance of duties.

2 Sam. 15.  
17.

neerer to the Kingdome of God, or to hell and condemnation. But I let this passe, and come to the words themselves.

*Let a man examine himselfe, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.*

In these words observe,

Parts of  
the Text.

First, the matter of the duty commanded, that is, *to eat of that bread, and to drink of that cup.*

Secondly, the manner of doing the dutie; not onely to eate of that bread, but *so* to eate; and not onely to drink of that cup, but *so* to drink.

Thirdly, the rule of direction how to come in a right manner to partake of it, that is, by examining of our selves, *Let a man examine himselfe, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

Fourthly and lastly, the benefit following that direction, and that is in this word *But*, *But let a man examine himselfe.* He had said before, *He that eats and drinks unworthily, is made guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*; and, *hee discerneth not the Lords body*, vers. 27. *But*, saith he, as if he should say, if a man would prevent this; if a man would take order that he be not guilty of the body and blood of Christ, that he doe not come undiscerningly to these heavenly mysteries, but with comfort, and title to the promises, with hope and confidence and speeding there of the benefits of Christ exhibited, then *let him examine himselfe, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

Now

Now I will passe over some of these points, namely, that we are to eat that bread, and drink that cup. *There is a necessity that wee should receive the Lords Supper.* I need not stand on this, you know it is sufficiently proved by the Sacrament of the Law, which was the fore-runner of this Sacrament, that soule that did not partake of that, was to die the death, he was to be cut off from Gods people, *Num. 9. 13.* If the Lord was so carefull of those Sacraments that were inferior to these (and yet they were of the same substance as these) that the man that neglected to come to them, to partake of them, was to be cut off, to be excommunicated from the people of God, and to be rent off from the congregation of the Saints, then how much more for these heavenly, and weighty, and glorious ordinances of the Gospel, which are far more glorious then them of the Law? But I will not stand upon that.

I might here take notice too of the frequencie of the duty: for so it hath dependance on those words formerly, *As oft as yee eat this bread, and drink this cup, yee shew the Lords death,* and so that is, as oft as ye eat, doe it in this manner. This is the command of God, that wee oft receive the Lords Supper. In the primitive times *St. Basil* observes, that they ate it three or foure times in a week, on Wednesdayes, Fridayes, and on the Lords day; but that was a time of persecution, I will not stand upon that. I think it not needfull: But it should bee often, wee should not thrust it only upon Easter, and Whitsonside, and

Necessity  
of recei-  
ving the  
Lords  
Supper.

*Num. 9. 13*

The Lords  
Supper to  
be recei-  
ved often.

*Basil.*

and Christ tide, three or foure times in the year.

Again, I might observe here from this mystry received, in that he calls it *Bread*, I might observe against the Papists Transubstantiation, that the bread received, is not transubstantiated, it is bread. And against that of receiving in one kind. *So let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*; he doth not say, so let him eat of that bread only, but he directs the command in both kinds. But I let this passe, and come to the second thing, that is, the manner how we should doe this duty.

*So let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

It is not, first let him examine himself, and then let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup: But let him examine himselfe, and then *SO* let him eat: implying, that examining a mans selfe helps, or ought to help a man to a right manner: and when he hath gotten a right manner, then to eat that bread, and drink that cup; that hee may doe not onely for matter that which the Lord commands, but for manner as the Lords commands. Beloved, the Lord stands on circumstances as well as duties: we are all racers, wee run, but we must *so run that we may obtain*, 2 Cor. 9. 26. So pray that we may speed, so heare that we may be converted, so reprove that we may be edified; so behave our selves in our places and callings, that we way glorifie God. It is not enough for a man to run, but he must *so run*, if he mean to obtain. Every man will be speaking and doing good things; but *so speake*, and *so doe*, Jam. 1. 12. The Lord calls upon us to have a care of  
the

*Observ.*  
The manner of performance of duties to be regarded.

2 Cor. 9.  
26.

Jam. 1. 12.

the manner of duties, as well as of the matter of duties. It is not enough that a man come to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup, but *so* to eat, and *so* to drink of it; he must partake of the Lords table, and so as the Lord enjoynes.

Now the Reasons of this are:

First, because the same Lord that commands the matter, commands the manner too. The Lord he will have his service well done, as well as done, he will have the work well performed, as well as performed. It is not onely the thing that the Lord stands upon, but the right manner and kind of doing it.

When David perswaded his sonne Salomon to worship the God of his Fathers, he bids him not onely doe the thing, but doe it in a right manner, *And thou my sonne Salomon, know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve him.* Is that all? No, but *with a perfect heart, and a willing mind,* 2 Chron. 28. 9. He commands him to doe it, not onely for the matter of it, but in the right manner of it. A man may serve God, but if it be not with a perfect heart, and a willing minde, and with a cheerfull spirit; if he be not ready to every command, if he doe not open his eares to every rebuke, a man doth not serve God at all. The manner either makes all, or marres all.

Secondly, another Reason is, because circumstances overthrow actions, if they bee not rightly and duly observed. As for example: In Scripture prayer is an action commanded of

God:

Reas. 1.  
The Lord commands the manner as well as matter.

2 Chron.  
28. 9.

Reas. 2.  
Circumstances overthrow actions, as 1. Prayer.

God: the Lord commands us to pray, that we call upon his name duly, every day, in all our needs and necessities, upon all occasions continually. But now if we pray not aright, not in that manner that the Lord hath prescribed; if we pray either with a guilty defiled conscience, with cold affections, with a dead spirit, or without departing from iniquity, or without a pure heart: if a man pray without the right manner of prayer, he marres all his prayer, it is a howling, and not a prayer. *They did not cry to mee (saith God) when they howled on their beds, that is, when they prayed: but because they did not pray in a right manner, the Lord calls it a howling, and not a prayer. We roare as Beares, in Isay 59. 12.* the Prophet nicknames it, speaking in the person of the people, he calls it the *roaring of Beares*. The Lord had as lief heare the barking of a Dog, or the grunting of a Swine, as a man that doth not pray aright, with a bleeding heart, with contrition of soul and spirit, with a *spirit of grace and supplication*. When a man prayes, and prayes not aright, his prayer leaves that name, it is no more a prayer in Gods account.

Isai. 59. 12.

2. Preaching.

And so preaching, it is an admirable action, but if a man doe not preach aright, if it be *flattering with the enticing words of mans wisdom*, or *beating the aire*, and to shew his owne learning, this overthrowes the action of preaching, hee preacheth not *Christ*, but *himselfe; himselfe*, not the *Gospel*, though the Gospell bee in his Sermon all over, yet himselfe hee preacheth, the

the action is marred, the circumstance marreth it.

So in the Lords Supper, if a man come not prepared, that he have not the *Wedding Garment*, that he be not aright qualified according to the requisites of the Gospel, this is not to eat the Lords Supper. Saith the Apostle, *When yee come together, this is not to eat the Lords Supper: you think you eat the Lords Supper, you take the bread and the cup, and can say, Blessed bee God, and I pray God blesse it to me: you may come and doe these actions, but the action is altered, the action is diversified when it is not done in a right manner.*

So if a man come to reprove his brother, if himselfe be faulty, doe you think this a sufficient reproof? No, it is hypocrisie. *Thou hypocrite, Matth. 7. 5.* his reproof of his brother is hypocrisie.

So for men to tell one another of their faults, and to tell them with a spirit of bitterness; this is not Christian dehortation, but *biting one another, Gal. 5. 15.*

And so for eating and drinking, beloved, eating is lawfull, and drinking is lawfull, and *marrying and giving in marriage*, all these are lawfull, yet if a man eat not aright, and drink not aright, and *marry in the Lord*, and eat and drinke *with title to the Lords creatures*, that hee have interest in the covenant of God, if Christ bee not in it, how shall he have comfort? Nay, the very nature of his eating is altered, his eating and drink-

3. Receiving the sacrament

4. Brotherly reproof.  
Mat. 7. 5.

Gal. 5. 15.

5. Eating and drinking.

drinking, and marrying is a sinne. As our Lord Christ shewes of the old world, *They did eat and drinke, and were marrying and giving in marriage, till Noah entred into the Ark, and the flood came and swept them away,* *Matth. 24. 37.* He reckons their eating and drinking among their sinnes, among the reasons and causes why the flood came upon them, they did eate and drink, and marry and give in marriage.

Mat. 24.  
37.

Object.

You will say, Was that the reason the flood came? And was that an argument of their security? Did not *Noah* eat and drinke and marry? And were not his sons married that were in the Ark, and he a grand-father?

Answer.

But he did it aright; therefore his eating and drinking is not brought in as a signe of security, but of the old world, that were carnall and wretched people, it was; because they did not eat and drink aright.

There be Rules in eating and drinking, in talking and discoursing, in doing the duties of our callings: There be Rules how you ought to buy and sell, and to doe every good word and worke. If these Rules be not observed, the Rules of Gods blessed word, the actions themselves are altered; though the things bee commanded of God, yet they are cursed and abominable things, when the true form and fashion of them is not regarded, though they be never so godly.

Simile.

A garment, though it be never so good, if the Taylor handle it not well, it is marred in the making, if he bring it not to a right forme,  
and

and make it in a right manner, the man that is to have the garment, is disappointed. So Timber, though it be never so excellent, though it bee all Oke, or Elm, or whatsoever tree, though it bee never so fit for building, if the Artificer deale not well in handling it, the inhabitant that comes there, may curse the day that ever he came there: If it be not well built, it may fall on his head and kill him, and all that belongs to him. So it is in all the Ordinances of God, and the matters of religion, wee must not onely doe them for matter, but for manner too: for that either makes or marres them.

Thirdly, another Reason is, because onely the right manner of doing duties gets the blessing. A man may pray a thousand times, and never be heard, hee may heare a million of Sermons, and never be converted, a man may come to all the Sacraments in the yeare, all his life long, and never be sealed against the day of Redemption. A man may doe the things, and never get the blessing; all the blessing lies in the right manner of doing. *Blessed is that servant, who when his master comes, shall find so doing, Matth. 24.48.* He saith not, *Who when his master commeth, shall find doing.* Christ when he comes to judgement, shall finde many doing; it may be he will come in prayer time, it may be hee will come in the morning, when many thousands shall be at their prayers in their families: it may be he will come at night, when all are at praier in their houses; it may be he will come on the Sabbath, when all the Countrey

*Reason 3.*  
The right manner of doing duties gets the blessing.

Mar. 24.  
48.

is at Church, hearing of Sermons, hee shall finde many thousands doing, and praying. But blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when hee comes, shall find *so* praying, *so* hearing, *so* receiving the Sacrament: He shall find many believing, but *so* believing gets the blessing: many professing, but it is *so* professing that gets the comfort. I say, all the blessings of God are promised to the right manner of doing. Now, what is it, when we doe duties, what doe we look for? Is it not for a blessing? Why doe we doe the duties, if we doe not doe them *so* as we may get the blessing? Now except we observe the right manner of doing them, all is to no purpose.

Reason 4  
Christ's  
example.

Fourthly, another Reason is, the example of Jesus Christ, Christ hath given us an example that we should doe as he did: Now hee did not onely doe that which his Father bid him doe, for matter, but for manner, both in all the words hee spake, and in all the deeds that hee performed. For the words he spake, *As the Father hath said unto me, even so speak I*, Joh. 12. And in Joh. 14. 31. *As the Father hath given mee commandment even so doe I*. Mark, he did not onely obey his Father in the matter of his command, but in the manner of it. And as Christ hath done thus, so all that are Christs, all the servants of God in all ages, they have been very carefull, especially of the right manner of obeying God. As it is said of Noah, Gen. 6. 22. *As the Lord commanded Noah, even so did he*, just as the Lord commanded him; he did not onely make an Arke, but *so* hee made

Joh. 12.  
Joh. 14. 31

Gen. 6. 22.

made all the roomes: *so* hee made it in the same forme and figure, and in the same similitude, just as the Lord set him downe the patterne, *even so did he*. So the Lord sets down the patterne of every good word and work, of all our prayers, and Sermons, and hearing, and conference, and keeping the Sabbath, and speaking holily: all our actions have their patterne set downe in the word of God. Now as wee are to doe the things, *so* wee are to doe them in the same manner, as the Lord commands, *even so* must wee doe.

Fifthly and lastly, except wee doe it in a right manner, except as wee come to the dutie, *so* wee come to the right manner, we can never glorifie God; The glory of God lies in the manner of doing of things. *So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good workes, and glorifie your Father which is in heaven, Matth. 5. 16.* Mark, the light must not shine onely in our lives and conversations; but *so* that the duty must be a means to the glorifying of God. Now the means must have its proportion, and likenesse, and nature, and mold, and frame, from the nature of the end. Look how the end is that the dutie lookes unto, *so* must the frame and fashion of the dutie be: Now if the end of all our actions be, that God may be glorified, that must put a forme and fashion upon every dutie, that it may be *so*, that he may have glory. Suppose a man pray every day in his family, and call all his household, his servants, and wife and children, and all under

Reason 5  
From  
Gods glorie.

Matth. 5.  
16.

der his roof about him, every morning and evening; he may dishonour God by praying every day on this fashion: if a man pray coldly, and carelessly, for forme and fashion, without faith, and life: he makes all the ordinance of God vile, and all the worke of God contemptible: his household sleeps, one snorts it may be; another is infinitely prophane, it may bee; and though there be divers that would faine be quickned, and wakened, yet his prayer is so cold, there is no life, nor heat, nor warmth in it, that God is exceedingly dishonoured, and all are thereby rather worse then better. So for a mans preaching, though it be never so good a duty, yet hee must labour to preach so, as the Apostle speakes of his preaching, and labour in the work of the Ministry, how he may edifie others, and save his own soule. *So fight I, not as one that beats the aire; but so as I may get the mastery: We must so preach, that we may attain the conversion of the people; or else we may rather doe as Hophni and Phineas, the sonnes of Eli, that made the Table of the Lord contemptible, and the Sacrifice of the Lord loathsome in the eyes of the people: So may we do with the ordinance of God.*

Take any duty of religion, if it be not done aright, God hath no glory by it: Suppose thou wouldest reprove thy brother, and tell him of his fault, and check him for his backwardnesse, or omission of some duty, and for the commission of some sinne; if thou doe not doe it with a spirit of compassion, and bowels of Jesus Christ,

with

with an humble heart, with a feeling and a pure conscience; I say, thou gettest a blot to thy own selfe, and caulest God to be ill spoken of, and the very way of his name to bee dishonored: This will be the effect of it; and so in every other dutie. And so I come to the use.

Is it so, that we must not onely come to the Sacrament, but come aright, or doe any dutie, but we must do it in a right manner? This serves to condemne that naturall Popery that is in mens hearts, that is, of *opus operatum*, of the deed done; this is the religion of the Church of Rome, that so a man doe the duty (indeed it is better if it bee done in a right manner, but) if it be done, there is somewhat a man may look for by that. If a man come to the Sacrament, the very eating of the Host, the very partaking of the body of Christ, they make it meritorious: so the very hearing of so many Sermons, the very saying of so many prayers, the very performance of so many duties, the very thing it selfe, nakedly considered, it is of some validity. This is rooted in the hearts of men, we see it up and downe, people doe the duty, and think all is well enough, when they consider not how it is done. People pray, but not with zeale; they heare, but not with reverence: People come to the Sacrament, not for the better, but for the worse, they come not in a right manner; and yet every one hopes to speed, and builds himselfe on this, that God accepts of him. But this is the folly of mens hearts; it is an evident argument

Use 1.  
To re-  
prove  
those that  
barely doe  
duties,  
without  
looking  
to the  
manner.

that men goe foolishly to work in the wayes of God. It is the brand of a foole not to be able to observe circumstances. *Aristotle* the heathen, he saith, it is the part of a wise man to think of, and understand the manner of actions; as a wise man saith, he observes circumstances. It is a part of wisdom to observe the right circumstances of every action, as it is *Ephes. 5. 15.* *Walk circumspectly*, that is, accurately, as it is in the originall, *not as fooles, but as wise.* Marke, hee periwades them to a right manner of walking; not onely to walk in a good course, in praying, and hearing, in obedience and sobrietie, in temperance, saith, and diligence in our callings; but doe it accurately, in a right manner; doe it as wise men, and not as fooles, they doe it in a wrong manner. It is the part of a foole, I say, to doe a thing, and to leave the right manner of doing it. Now this is nothing with God, the Lord doth not esteeme any action, though it bee never so frequently done, except it bee done with his owne stamp, except it have his owne character upon it.

I remember a story in *2 Kings 17. 26.* The Assyrians there observed, that God sent Lions among them, because they did not observe the right manner of the God of Israel: they worshipped the God of Israel; but because they observed not the right *Manner* of his word, hee sent Lyons among them, to teare and devoure them in pieces. So, though we pray, and heare, and read, and professe, and have a name that we live; and though we be taken for good people, &  
heap

Arist.

Ephes. 5.  
15.2 Kings  
17. 26.

heap up duties from day to day, and vie performances; and though we doe them as many times as the children of God; nay, though we could do them ten thousand times oftner then they, yet if we doe them not in a right manner, if wee know not the manner of the God of heaven, and earth, with humble hearts, and selfe-denying spirits, with holinesse of affection, and with puritie of heart: if a man doe them not in a right manner, the Lord will teare him in pieces, and hee shall have no deliverance for all that.

Another use shall be, what may be the reasons why people are so willing generally, to doe duties for the matter, and care not to doe them in a right manner. It will not bee amisse a little to shew the mystery of this thing: for we see every man is willing to doe duties, every man will be praying, and comming to Church, many reprobates, and God knows how many carnall hearts are in this congregation, some drunkards it may be, some adulterers, some it may be, that committed whoredome the last night, some that have been swearing even now, and deceiving in their shops, there are many carnall hearts: yet every man is willing to do duties, to hear, and to pray. Now what may be the reason that people are willing to doe good duties, and yet are loath to come off with their carnall harts? There are four reasons.

The first is this, Because the matter of the dutie is easie, but the manner is difficult. It is an easie matter to pray, to say, *Lord, I have sin-*

*Use 2.*  
The reason why men regard the matter and not the manner of duties.

*Reas. 1.*  
The matter of duties easie.

ned against heaven, and against thee. Lord, I have sworne, I have been a drunkard, I have dishal- lowed the Sabbath, I have done this and that, I pray thee pardon and forgive me, and give mee thy grace; it is an easie matter to doe this. It is easie for a man to come to Church, and marke what the Minister saith, and follow him from point to point, and it may be goe over it to his family. This is good, there are few that come thus far. And so it is easie to come to the Sacra- ment, to take the Bread and the Cup, and to pray for a blessing, this is easie; but when a man comes to a duty in a right manner, here is difficulty, when a man doth it with a *How, Take heed HOW you heare*. He doth not call upon people to hear, that is not the matter; there needs no great di- ligence for that: but if you will consider *How* you heare, take heed to that. Here must be a great deal of circumspection; the soul must be marvel- lous painfull, a man must offer violence to his own soul; a man must fight against his own wil, a man must beat down his own spirit, he must cruci- fy his own thoughts, must mortify his own mind, & beat down his own soul. It is a hard thing to do it in a right manner, as the Lord commands, if we e consider now how to doe it. This is certaine, flesh and blood cannot abide to take pains, if it can serve God with ease, and pray with ease, that it will doe; but for a man to weep before God, for a man to indict his heart to the throne of grace, to rend his bowels before his maker, to teare the caule of his heart upon his knees; for a man

man to vow to God, and pay them; for a man to rid his hands of all the wages of iniquity, for a man to purifie himselfe as Christ is pure, for a man to wraffle with God, and to take grace from the covenant of grace, with life and power to doe it in a right manner: here is religion, and this men cannot abide.

And so for the Sacrament, for a man to come in a right manner, Oh it is difficult to flesh and blood, for a man to goe and examine all his life, to reckon up all his conversation, to anatomize himselfe from his cradle to this moment; to consider how he hath sinned in his calling, in his family, in his shop, in his company, in his speech, and in his life; to goe and judge himselfe for these, and condemne himselfe, and to *accept of his owne punishment*, to goe and wrack his owne thoughts, and crucifie his owne soule: Oh! this is hard, men cannot abide this: therefore they go and take the matter, they observe that, and leave out the manner.

Secondly, another reason is this, because the matter of duties may be done with a proud heart, there is no duty but a man may do it with a proud heart, and never bee humble. A man may pray, and use good words, and make good petitions, and have marvellous good language, and Scripture phrases, and termes, and passages, and an admirable sweet tone, and yet have a proud heart. A man may come, and preach a Sermon, he may preach so, as that he may strangely affect the hearts of the people, and may make all

*Reas. 2.*  
The matter of duties may be done with a proud heart.

the people wonder and *admire at the gracious words that come from his mouth*, and yet have a proud heart.

A man may heare, and hear oft, and hear the best Preachers in the Citie, and delight in hearing, and yet have a proud heart. A man may come to the Sacrament, and sit, o ones thinking, as devoutly as any in the Church, and pray when the people pray, and give thanks when others give thanks, and have a kind of morall faith in the covenant, and a morall application of the promises, and yet have a proud heart. It is the manner of doing duties that humbles the soule. as St. Paul saith, *Acts 20. You know in what manner I have been with you.* Why, what was the manner? *In all humility of mind*, saith hee, being among the Ephesians, preaching to them in a right manner, leaving them the example of his own patterne, doing all this in a right manner, he did it in all humility of heart. It is the right manner of prayer that pulls down the heart before God. It is the right manner of hearing the word, that makes a man melt at it. It is the right manner of comming to the Sacrament, that makes a man feele the comfort of God, and the promises of the Gospell, and to seek and find the admirable things contained in it. It is the right manner that makes a man walke lowly with his God.

Thirdly, another Reason is; Because the matter may stand with an unholy life. A man may doe a dutie for the matter of it, and yet bee unholy.

Acts 20.

Reason 3  
The mat-  
ter of du-  
ties may  
be done, &  
yet a man  
be unholy.

holy. This is plain; how many thousands are there that pray, and yet are vain, and covetous, and carnall? How many thousands heare Sermons, and yet are unprofitable? *Ever bearing, and never come to the knowledge of the truth.* If they were injurious before, they are injurious still; if they were coufeners before, they are so still; if they were drunkards before, they are so still. A man may receive the Sacrament every month, and yet may have his lusts, and roll them as a sweet morsell under his tongue, he may delight in his secret lusts, and goe on in the deadnesse of his heart. It is the right manner of worshipping of God, that purgeth the conscience, and purifieth the soule, and makes a man that there is no room for his corruptions, as you may see, 1 Theff. 2. 10. *You your selves know (saith the Apostle) how holily and unblameably we walked among you.* Hee speakes there of his manner of walking, and he saith to them, because it was in a right manner, it was in a holy manner; such walking as excluded all unholinesse and prophanesesse. Flesh and blood cannot abide this. Men they love to pray and be proud; they love to hear Sermons, and to have their profit, they love to professe religion, and still to carry their secret lusts in their bosomes. People love this a life, to goe up to Gilgall and transgresse, to offer sacrifice every new Moon, and every morning, and to find the labour of their hands, this is right; but for a man to part with his iniquity, that is the thing that goes against the haire.

Reason 4.  
The mat-  
ter of du-  
ties brings  
not the  
crosse.

2 Tim. 2.  
10.

The last reason is, because the matter of duties brings not the crosse upon a man. A man may doe all the duties of religion, and never bee persecuted for it: a man may be as devout as the devoutest man under heaven, and yet no body hate him for it, except he be devout in a right manner, and worship God in a right manner. One man may reprove another that is wicked. A drunkard may suffer a drunkards reproof, and be never the worse: A whoormaster may serve his quean so, he may call her so, and yet not bee spighted, because it is not right. It is the right doing of it that brings the crosse; as in 2 Tim. 2. 10. *Thou knowest my manner of life.* It was that that brought afflictions and persecutions.

Act. 13. 5.

We may see to this very day many thousands that seem devout men in the Church, they will pray, and wil hardly misse any time of prayer morning or evening; and yet they are farre from being persecuted: nay, many of them are maine persecuters of the Gospel of God, enemies to the crosse of Christ, adversaries to the Saints of God. We see it plain in *Acts 13. 5.* we read there of devout women that raised persecution against *Paul*. Mark, they were devout, and because it was not in a right manner, they persecuted the Apostles, and set themselves against them that were truly faithful. Though wicked men do not love to pray aright, yet many of them are much for praying, they care not how much praying they have; and when they are at prayers, they will pray over from the beginning of the booke

to

to the end, they love it alive. But if they come to a prayer that moves the heart, that rifies the conscience, that dogges a man into his boosome, that layes a man flat on his face before God, they gnash their teeth at such a prayer. So they love preaching too; I, it is true, if it bee preaching that is flaunting, and glosing, *with the enticing words of mans wisdom*: but if a man preach to the conscience, if he preach the pure naked word of God: and carry it home to mens soules, this makes them gnash their very teeth: and they could eat the Minister of God for his labour. It is the right manner of duty that is accompanied with the crosse.

Thirdly, if wee ought to bee carefull to perform duties in a right manner, let us be exhorted in the feare of God, to goe and quicken all our duties, to bring a soule into so many bodies; we have bodies of praying, and bodies of hearing, and bodies of receiving the Sacrament, and of good duties, let us get a soule into them, labour to doe them in a right manner. The very soule is like a carkasse. It is a proverb of the Jewes, *Prayer without preparation, it is as a carkasse without a soule*, that is, a loathsome thing; so is prayer without life, and without a right manner of pouring it forth. Let us labour therefore in the feare of God, to pray, and pray aright, to heare, and to heare aright; to seeke God, and to seeke him with all our hearts, aright, and to doe every thing in the right way.

Use 3.

To labour to doe duties aright.

Let

Motives  
to perform  
duties in  
the right  
manner.

1.

Numb. 11,  
14.

Let us consider, First, we doe not partake of any ordinance at all, except we doe it in a right manner. I remember a fit place for this in *Numb. 11. 14.* It is said there, *The stranger shall eat the passover, and partake of it according to the ordinance, and the manner of it.* Where the Text puts in the *Ordinance of the Passover, and the Manner of it.* For it is all one, they are *Synonyma's.* So the *Ordinance* in every duty. Gods ordinance in praying, in hearing the Word, in the Sacrament, in reproof, and in every good dutie, it is all one as the selfe-same thing. So that if we pray, and doe not pray in a right manner, we have not praied, we doe not partake of the ordinance. So when we come to the Sacrament, the ordinance of the manner of it is all one; it is one compleat concrete action, we doe not partake of it, except we partake of both.

2.

Luk. 18. 11

Secondly consider, it is nothing but hypocrisie, when a man prayes, and doth not pray in a right manner; when a man doth any dutie to God, and not in the right wise, it is nothing but hypocrisie. Mark how our Saviour Christ sets forth the hypocrisie of the Pharisee, *Luke 18. 11.* *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himselfe,* he marks his manner of prayer; he doth not say, *He stood and prayed This,* these words, but *Thus* he prayed, he did not pray in a right manner: there was his hypocrisie, and that was the reason he went home not justified.

3.

Mat. 15. 6.

Thirdly consider, it makes the Ordinance of God of no effect. *Thus they make the Commandments*

ments of God of none effect, *Matth. 15. 6.* Hee speaks there of their duties that they did in a wrong manner, and their expounding the Scripture, that they did in a wrong wise; and their sacrifice, their offerings, and tithings, their precepts, and many things that were all done after another fashion then God had commanded; therefore saith Christ, *Thus, they make the Commandements of God of none effect.* So we make all the duties of Gods worship of none effect. We know there is never an ordinance of God, but it hath great effect if it bee rightly performed. Prayer is of great effect, it is able to rend heaven, it is able to pull down God to the soule, it is able to wrestle out a blessing, to quicken the heart, to obtain of God every thing wee want: but if a man pray not aright, a man may pray, and goe away never a whit the more holy, nor more quickned, nor neerer to heaven, nor comfort. So preaching and hearing, they are admirable Ordinances, what powerfull effects have they wrought when they have been done in a right kind? People have cried out, and been converted at them; and many a man hath been pulled out of the power of Satan to the Kingdome of Jesus Christ. They had royall glorious effects upon many thousand soules. But what is the reason that our hearing is so ineffectuall? Because we heare not in a right manner, this makes the Ordinance of God of none effect, it makes Prayer of no effect, the Word of no effect, the Sacraments, and Sabbath of no effect;

you

you see people partake of these things, and are never the wiser.

Lastly, it cannot please God, it is onely the right manner of doing duties that pleaseth God, as in 1 Thess. 4. 1. *As yee have received of us How yee ought to walke, and to please God.* Mark, there is the manner, *That yee may know HOW to walk,* and by that to please God. It is not enough for a man to walk in good duties; that a man may doe, and not please God: but (saith he) *yee have received the manner HOW to walk and to please God.* It is the manner *How* that pleaseth God. A man may walke to hell upon heavens ground, hee may goe to hell in the ways of God, it is possible. Suppose a man should go and take (if it were possible) all the surface of ground between this place and York, and lay it between this place and Dover, a man might go to Dover upon York ground. So many a man lays the Ordinances of God in hell way: hee walkes in the way to hell, and there hee layes his prayers, and there his hearing, and his good duties: hee prayes every day, and heares every day, and doth good duties every day, and yet walks to hell; hee goes to hell on heavens ground. The reason is, because hee doth the dutie, and doth not observe the manner how he doth it.

The third thing is, the rule of direction, how we may come to the right manner of receiving the Sacrament, that is, by preparing of a mans selfe: and the preparation is here set downe

*Simile.*

downe by the specification of it, namely, in examining himselfe. *Let a man examine himselfe, and so let him eate of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.*

The generall scope of these words, and the Apostles meaning in them, is this, That

*Every man must prepare himselfe before he come to the Lords Table.*

I cannot stand on this, I will onely name it.

As in the Sacrament of the Passover, there was preparation to the Passover. In Joh. 19. 14. it is said of the Disciples of Christ, that *they made ready the Passover.* In Matth. 26, they made the Lamb ready, and the room ready, and themselves ready, and the Table ready, and every thing ready. So in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, wherein Christ is the true Paschall Lamb, when we come to eate of him, wee must make every thing ready, faith ready, and repentance ready, and interest in the promises ready, and hunger and thirst after these spirituall dainties ready, every thing must be ready: or else, like a man that comes into the field to battell, that hath not gotten his sword, or his weapons ready, that is the way for himselfe to bee killed: so it is when wee come to the Communion, and have not all things ready, it is the way to be damned.

The reasons of this are,

First, because the Sacrament is and Ordinance of God: Now all the Ordinances of God require preparation, they are all spirituall, and naturally a man is carnall, and therefore cannot be prepa-

**Observ. 3**

Every man must prepare himselfe, before he come to the Lords Table.

**Reason.**

It is Gods ordinance.

prepa-

*Simile.*

Prov. 24.  
27.

prepared. As it is with wood, there is never a tree in the wood, but it is unprepared for building. Is there any tree in the wood of the fashion of a Chimney, or of a Lintell, or a Doore? It must first be prepared, as it is *Prov. 24. 27.* *First prepare thy work without, and then build thine house.* So every ordinance is to build a man up in the feare of God, in the grace of God, and in Religion: Now man is naturally unprepared for it; First, a man must fell his wood, and then cut it, and hew it even, and carve it, and plane it fit, and prepare it before he build: So a man must hew downe his own heart, he must humble his owne soule, and qualifie all within him, and so be sanctified before hee be fit.

Pfal. 10.  
17.

Ezra 7. 10

As for example: In prayer, a man must be prepared to prayer before he pray; he must prepare his heart, and then Gods eares will hearken to it. In *Pfal. 10. 17.* The Lord will have the heart prepared before he heare the prayer. So it is with the word of God, a man must be prepared before he heare it: As a man that preacheth must be prepared before he preach, as *Ezra* is said to *prepare his heart; Ezra 7. 10.* *Hee prepared his heart so doe the Law, and to teach it.* So a Minister cannot preach, except he be prepared beforehand, with a commission from God, with preserving knowledge, with a coale from Gods Altar, with a spirit of wisdome and understanding, with a law of kindnesse in his lips, with meditation, and with a Theam fitted in his mouth for the people, hee must be pre-

prepared with a burning and a shining light; or else hee shall not edifie the congregation: So it is with all other ordinances. For humbling of a mans soule, a man cannot humble his heart, except he be prepared to it, *Amos 4. 12.* Prepare to meet thy God, he speaks of humiliati- on. If a man would humble himself before God, if he be not prepared, if his heart be not prepa- red to let goe the world, his worldly profits, and vaine pleasures, and carnall acquaintance, his wonted lusts, and former delights. If hee bee not prepared to let these goe, when he comes to keep a Fast, or to afflict his soule, and goes a- long to doe the dutie, to lay himselfe down be- fore Almighty God, some lust or other will stick in his teeth, and intercept his heart, hee shall never be able to doe it: as *Samuel* said to the people; *If you will turn to the Lord, prepare your hearts to doe it, 1. Sam. 7.* So it must bee in all the ordinances of God, and much more in the Sacrament.

Secondly, another Reason is, because the Lord Christ hath made great preparations to provide the Lords Supper; therefore wee must be prepared to eat it. You know what a great deale of adoe there was before this Supper was made. Christ must be incarnate, and fulfill all righteousnesse, hee must conclude it upon his suffering; he must tread the Wine- presse alone, and suffer himselfe to be beaten and rejected of God and men, and suffer death, the cursed death of the Crosse: all these things were concluded upon,

R

before

Amos 4.  
12.

1 Sam. 7.

Reason 2  
Christ  
hath made  
preparati-  
on for us  
in the L.  
Supper.

before this holy and blessed Supper was provided. *Come* (saith hee) *I have prepared my dinner*, Matth. 22. Mark, Christ is said to prepare his dinner, he makes a great Feast: there was great preparation for it; so there must be great preparation of our soules before we can come to this holy banquet. It is true among men, there may be great preparation for a feast, and little or nothing for the eating of it. Sometimes there are two or three dayes preparation for a Feast, and it is eaten presently. The reason is, because man naturally hungers after meat and drink, and he alwayes provides twice or thrice in twenty four houres, for eating and drinking: But the Lords Supper is a spirituall banquet, a man is every day, and houre, and moment, naturally unfit for it; and there is much adoe to put an edge upon mens appetites, and a keenneffe upon mens desires, that they may bee fitted and prepared for it.

Reas. 3.  
Christ  
lookes for  
good entertain-  
ment.

Thirdly, another reason is, because the Lord Christ, when he administers himselfe in this heavenly mystery, he offers to come into the soule, and he looks for good entertainment; and therefore of necessity there must bee preparation for it. You see when a mortall man, an earthly Prince, or a Noble man comes to another mans house, what a deale of preparation there is to provide for him: there is meat made ready, and purging the house, and sweeping the yard, and trimming up the very pales, and every thing, and making clean all the Chambers, and ridding  
out

out whatsoever fills it, and every thing that is out of order is set in tune, And what will my Lord think? and what will his Majesty think? he will think he is slighted and contemned: And when he comes in, it may be, his owne children shall serve, and his owne wife wait at the Table; and there is running up and down of errands, and a great deale of adoe to give such a one entertainment. There is preparation to entertain a man, as Saint Paul said to Philemon, *I will that thou prepare me a lodging*: how much more when the eternall God shall come under a mans roofe, and dine with him?

Lastly, because the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, it is a part of Christs last Will and Testament. Now it is a terrible thing when we know our Lords will, and prepare not for the doing of it. Look in Luke 12. 48. he that knew it not, did things worthy of stripes; but in vers. 47. *That servant that knew his Lords will, and prepared not himselfe, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes*, that man shall be damned with much damnation: he shall be damned deeper then any body. Dost thou know that the Lords Table, that this blessed Sacrament, it is part of Christs last Testament? and wilt thou not prepare thy selfe for it, to get an humble heart, and labour for a holy life, and seek for a thirsty soule, and vow upon new obedience, and enter into covenant with the Lord Jesus Christ, for a better kind of conversation for the time to come? Wilt thou not goe and examine thine

*Reas. 4.*  
It is part  
of Christs  
last Testa-  
ment.  
Luk. 12.  
48.  
vers. 47.

own soul, and goe and reform whatloever is amisse in thy family, in thy place and calling? Wilt thou not doe these things to prepare for this holy will of Jesus Christ? thou shalt bee damned deeper then any body else, because this is a part of Gods last Will and Testament, and thou knowest it, and therefore woe unto thee if thou prepare not for it.

THE  
DUTIE

OF THE  
REPROVER,  
AND

The Persons reprov'd,

SET FORTH

In a Sermon preached by that re-  
verend and faithfull Minister of

GODS WORD,

*WILLIAM FENNER,*

Sometimes Fellow of *Pembroke Hall*  
in *Cambridge*, and late Parson of  
*Rochford in Essex.*



London printed by *M. S.* for *I. S.*

THE  
DUTY  
OF THE  
REPROVER  
AND

The Persons reproved

SET FORTH

In a Sermon preached by the  
venerable and faithful Minister of  
God's Word,

WILLIAM BRUNNEN

Sermoner Fellow of Pembroke Hall  
in Cambridge, and late Pastor of  
Kilford in Essex.



London printed by M. S. for J. S.

THE DUTIE OF  
REPROVERS.

And Persons reprov'd,

A Sermon preached by Mr. *William  
Fenner* Minister of Gods word.

PROV. 29. 1.

*He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth  
his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and  
that without remedy.*



Hese words, by reason of the ambiguity in the Hebrew tongue, they beare two expositions, and our English can suffer but one.

The first Exposition is this,  
*Hee that reproveth another, and hardeneth his owne  
necke, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without*

*remedy. The other is, as we have it here translated, He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his necke, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*

I desire to speake of both these expositions, for feare I should misse the true sense of this Text.

For the first, it is a truth of God every where confirmed in the Scriptures, that hee that reproveth another, and yet hardeneth his own heart, hee doth but make a rod for his owne backe, hee pulls sudden destruction upon his owne selfe.

Then secondly, there is no hinderance from the context, but that this may bee the meaning of the text: you know the Proverbs have little or no coherence, except two or three chapters. Indeed there is a coherence in them, but generally through the Proverbs there is none: so that if the text it selfe will beare one exposition as well as another indifferently, the meaning none can tell, onely as it is hit.

Thirdly and lastly, the Text it selfe favours this exposition: for so the word in the Hebrew is, *A man of reproofes, that hardens his owne neck, shall suddenly bee destroyed, and that without remedie.*

Now the Question is, Whether the wise mans meaning here be of the actuall reproofe, the reprov'ing of another; or of passive reproof, this is undetermined which of these is meant.

A man can have no light from the coherence,  
none

none in the world; and from the text it selfe, there is as much reason why we should expound it one way (even almost) as the other. So that I say, for feare I should let goe the true meaning of the wise man. I desire to speak a little of the active sense, *He that often reproveth another, and yet hardeneth his own neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.* From hence I may observe, that

*A reprovor (whether a Master or a Minister, or a Magistrate, or a Father, or a private Christian, be he what he will be) that reproveth another, and yet is guilty himselve (either in the same kinde, or else in another, or in any kind) and hardeneth his own heart in it, that man shall suddenly bee destroyed without remedy.*

Take a Preacher that preacheth strict doctrine to the people, that is very zealous against their finnes, he is up with hell and damnation against their filthy courses: he preacheth for quickning, but himselve is not quickned; hee threatueth judgments against hardnesse of heart, and yet he hath a hard heart himselve; this man pulls destruction upon his owne pate. Hee is like the Pharisees, that imposed upon others grievous burdens and heavie to be borne, but would not touch them with one of their fingers themselves, Matth. 23.4.

The reason of this is, because

First such a reprovor of sinne, it is against his office: the office of a reprovor binds him to be blamelesse, as the Apostle speakes, *A Bishop must be blamelesse, 1 Tim. 3. 2.* Every Christian should

*Observ. I*  
A guilty hardned reprovor, shall be destroyed.

Matth. 23.

*Reason. I*  
It is against his office.  
1 Tim. 3. 2

should be blamelesse, how much more Ministers, that beare the office of reprovers, they should be blamelesse? Nay, if a man, though hee take not the office of a reprovor, yet if hee beare the person of a reprovor (as every private Christian must when God calls him to it: for every man may be called to reprove) though he have no authority over another, though hee bee a private man, he may beare the person though not the office of a reprovor. Now a man must be unculpable, and unblameable himselfe, or else he sinnes against his person. If a man reprove another for being carnall, himselfe must be spirituall, *Gal. 6. 1.* *If any man be overtaken with a fault, yee that are spirituall, restore him.* The reprovor, the exhorter, and admonisher, must be spirituall, if hee would draw another to be spirituall.

Secondly, such a reprovor as is guilty himself in that kind, or in any other kind, hee can never reprove to a right end, *Why seeest thou a mote in thy brothers eye, and considerest not the beam in thine own eye? Matth 7. vers. 3.* Why (saith he) to what end? what is that thou lookest at, thou art severe to espye faults in thy brothers eye? To what end doest thou reprove him? What is the reason? What is the thing thou wouldst have, that thou findest fault with him? *Why seeest thou a mote in thy brothers eye?* As if hee should say, thy end can never be good, it cannot be to doe thy brother good: for then thou wouldest doe thy selfe good first: It is not because thou hatest sin; for

Gal. 6. 1.

Reas. 2.

He cannot  
reprove to  
a right  
end.

Matth. 7. 3

for then thou wouldest detest thy owne sinne. It cannot be out of a good principle, or to a good end. It is either because thou art a busie body in other mens matters, or thou art censorious, thou lovest to be meddling; or because thou hatest thy brother, and wouldest wreak thy malice on him; thou wouldest faine shame and disgrace him, and by beating him downe, get thy selfe up; or thou wouldest get a cover to thy owne conscience; it must be some such end, it cannot be a good end. Christ puts it to a mans conscience, why hee reproves his brother, when hee is faulty himselfe.

Thirdly, another Reason is, such a reprovver can never doe it in a right manner, as Christ saith, *Matth. 7. 4. How wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull the moat out of thine eye, when behold a beam is in thine own eye?* How wilt thou doe it? In what fashion, or sort? How wilt thou be able to bring this about? A man that is a reprovver, had need to have a very cleare sight of his own, that sees another mans faults, and will set another to rights, he had need to have a good judgment, to see all the the circumstances of reproof, and rebuke, that deals with another. As long as a man hath a beam in his owne eye, as long as he hath lusts in his own heart, that will blind his judgment, and darken & cover his eyes, and make him that he shall not be able to see to goe about it. How canst thou possibly say to thy brother, let me pull the moat out of thine eye, when there is a beam in thine own eye?

*Reas. 3.*  
Nor in a  
right man-  
ner.  
*Matth. 7. 4*

A man that is to reprove another, a Master that will reprove his servant, or a Father his children, or a Minister that will reprove his people, or a Magistrate that will reprove those that are committed to his charge, or any brother that will reprove another, hee must doe it with a spirit of compassion, with bowels of pitie, with a sense and feeling: there is a great deale of wisdome and discretion to bee observed in this act. Now when a man hath a beam in his owne eye, how shall he be able to doe it? That man that is faulty and guilty himselve, either he must reprove too harshly, and rigorously, or too sparingly, or too insultingly, hee must doe it in a wrong manner, it can never bee sincerely and truly done, as long as a man hath a lust in his owne heart, and hee himself is guilty and faulty, that is a reprovor of his brother. Nay, the party reprov'd, is holpen to retort on him, How dost thou tell me of pride, and worldlinesse, and covetousnesse? Who so proud and covetous as thou? Thus a man shall be ready to be hit in the teeth.

*Reas. 4.*  
It is hypocrisie.

Fourthly, such a reprovor is an hypocrite. It is no Christian reproofe for a man to do so. Wilt thou goe and finde fault with thy servant for his lazinesse in thy service, when thou art lazie in Gods service? Wilt thou find fault with thy brother for his pride, and thou art full of fashions? Wilt thou condemne the finnes of the times, and thou livest in some lust? This is nothing but hypocrisie. Thou makest as if thou didst

didst stand so much for obedience to God; and oh! there is this and that sin against God, when thy selfe is a sinner in that, or in another kind, this is hypocrisie, as Christ saith here, *Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine owne eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brothers eye.* *Thou hypocrite*: Mark, it is an act of hypocrisie when a man goes to finde fault with another, before he has gone to redresse his owne soule; to purge his owne conscience, and have shook hands with *the wages of iniquity* his owne selfe, before a man have done this, it is hypocrisie to deale with another. For when a man reproves another, he takes a forme upon himselfe of one that is zealous against sinne, and an enemy to all finfull practises: Now what is this but hypocrisie, when a man hath not this in him that he pretends? when a man finds fault with anothers pride, as if he were humble forsooth, with anothers worldlinesse, as if hee were liberall; when a man doth so, he incurreth the guilt of hypocrisie in reproving another.

Fifthly, another Reason is, because such a reprover is inexcusable, his reproving of another mans sinne, makes him inexcusable for his owne, as the Apostle speakes, *Rom. 2.1. Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy selfe, for thou doest the same thing.* Marke, thy owne mouth shall condemne thee; thou findest fault with another mans pride: it seemes he is to be condemned for it, then God con-

Reas. 5.  
It makes  
inexcusa-  
ble.

condemnes thee for thy pride. Thy pride is a faire mark for Gods iustice, because thou condemnest another. Dost thou find fault with anothers hardnesse of heart, and ill will and backwardnesse to any thing that is good, and yet thou art backward? Thou exposest thine owne soule to the judgement of God; thou hast taught (as it were) Almighty God how to condemne thee for thy own lusts and corruptions.

Reason 6

It is absurd.

Rom. 2. 21

Again sixthly, another Reason is this, because such a reprove is an absurd person, it is absurd to reprove another, and be faultie ones selfe, as it is *Rom. 2. 21*. *Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thy selfe? Thou that preachest another should not steale, dost thou steale?* This is a strange absurd thing, this reproofe doth not sound well in thy mouth: thou stealest, and forbiddest stealing; thou preachest against adultery, and committest it; thou speakest against such and such finnes, thou findest fault with them in the children of God, and art guilty thy selfe, or in thy children or servants, or neighbours, and art obnoxious to them in thine owne practice: this is an absurd thing: these rebukes and reproofes sound not well out of thy mouth.

Reas. 7.

It is impudencie.

Lastly, it is a signe of impudencie, *Psal. 50*. *What hast thou to doe to take my covenant into thy mouth, when thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my covenant behind thy back?* And to the wicked God saith, *What hast thou to doe to take my statutes, or covenant, into thy mouth, since thou hatest instruction? What hast thou to doe to*

reprove thy brother? If hee bee proud, what is that to thee, as long as thou art proud thy selfe? thou goest and flingest stones at him, fling them at thine owne heart first. It is a signe of impudencie.

But it may be objected, Shall not a wicked magistrate punish sinne, and a wicked Minister preach against the corruptions of the times, and a wicked master rebuke his servants, and a wicked father correct his children? Because he is wicked himselfe, shall hee make himselfe more wicked, and contract more guilt upon his soule?

I answer, That such a man is in a dilemma; for the man is bound to reprove, in regard of his office, and yet he is bound in conscience to goe and amend himselfe first. I say, he is bound to reprove all those that God calls him to reprove, in regard of his office: but in regard of conscience hee is bound to goe and amend his own fault first. Therefore if it be a Magistrate, such as sit upon life or death, or *Nisi prius*, or any action between man and man, if he condemne a malefactor, and there remember himselfe guilty, hee is bound in conscience to rise from the Bench, and goe and amend his own sinne. And wee that are Ministers, when we preach to the people, and remember our selves guilty, let us lay our hands upon our mouthes, at least *in votis*, before ever we have the face to go and find fault with the people, it is necessary it should bee so. Therefore, I say, a man is in a dilemma, if he doe

not

Object.

Answer.

not reprove sinne, it is against his office, and the person he beares, when God calls him to it; and if he doe reprove, then hee sinnes against the command of God, that bindes him to bee blamelesse that is to beare the place of a re-prover.

Use 1.

The use of this is, first, to let us see, that a man that reproveth (I speake not of Ministers onely, or of Magistrates, or Fathers, but of every man that reproveth, either by tongue, in word, or in thought, if hee finde fault in his thought with another man for his sinnes, and his strange doings) let him take heed, hee doth but pull a judgement upon his owne head; he makes himselfe inexcusable, as in *Rom. 2. 3.* the Apostle there speaking of this very point, *Thinkest thou, O man, that judgest him that doth these things, and doest them, that thou shalt escape the judgement of God? A man that judgeth another, and doth the same things, that man certainly shall not escape the judgement of God, as his brother doth not escape his judgement.*

Rom. 2. 3.

Use 2.

To be unblameable ere we reprove.

Secondly, another use shall be for counsell to every man and woman (for it is every ones case, God hath called every one of us to reprove one another, Ministers to reprove the people, and Magistrates to judge between man and man, and every neighbour is to reprove when he is called thereto. Now) let us marke and observe this rule. let every one of us labour with all care and conscience, to be unblameable, unoffensive, to goe humble our own soules, to cleanse our own

con-

consciencs, that we may be able to perform this duty. Belov'd, we wrong our own soules, if we find fault with others, and suffer our selves to bee faulty.

When *Paul* was to preach to the people, knowing that his office of preaching required reprov'g, you see lest he should wrong his own soul, how he laboured to be unblameable, saith he, *I beat my body downe, when I preach to others, lest I become a cast-away.*

Again, as a man wrongs his owne soule, so he dishonours God. It cannot be unknown what an unthankfull office the office of a reprov'g is; the world cannot abide reproof. *The wicked hate the reprov'g in the gate,* Isa. 29. 21. The world is full of scorn'rs, that hate reprov'g, *Prov. 15. 12.* Though some men be not so wicked as to hate reproofe, yet at least they think hardly of them that reprov'g; they think they usurp authority over them, and crow over them, or they undertake to bee their betters; as a reprov'g undertakes in that thing to bee a mans better. Now when a man is reprov'd, he is apt to think, that his neighbour crows over him, and exerciseth authority upon him, as if he would grow on him, and be his Iudge. You see *Lot* when he reprov'd the Sodomites, though as gently as ever he could, *My brethren, doe not so wickedly,* presently for all that they thought hardly of him. *What, will this fellow be a judge that came but the other day, to sojourn?* Gen. 19. Presently they thought hardly of him. So we see the Prophet, hee doth but finde fault

Isai. 29. 21  
Prov. 15.  
12.

Gen. 19.

2 Chron.  
25.15.

with *Amaziah* for his fault, and presently the Kings eyes are blinded, and his heart hardened, *Who made you of the Kings counsell?* 2 Chron. 25. 15. hee thought him a medler, that pried into State-affaires, and into the Court and Kingdom. A man cannot reprove his brother for his sinne, but it is a thousand to one, if his brother bee not ready presently to pry into him, and to look narrowly into his wayes, to espy a hole in his coat if he can, or to make one if he cannot: all mens eyes are upon him, and they looke strictly and straitly; and if any thing in the world be amisse, they will be sure to mark it, and to make more of it, to make mountaines of mole-hills. When the blind man did but find fault with the Phari-sees, and reprove them a little for persecuting of Christ, what say they? *Art thou altogether conceived and born in sinne, and wilt thou teach us?* Joh. 9. 34. Presently they looked on his blindnesse, and birth, Certainly he is a viler sinner then other men, and shall he goe find fault with them? If we mean to reprove another, let us labour to be unblameable, to be godly and holy, to reform our own wayes, let us be sure to purge our owne families, to cleanse our own soules, to rid our owne hands of all the wayes of sinne and iniquity, lest God be dishonoured. The word of God will be flung in his own face back againe, and the reproofe, if it be never so sweet, and never so wise, it will be retorted in a mans own teeth, if hee be not unblameable himselfe. And a man had need to be humble, and lowly, and gentle, and

Joh. 9. 34.

and meek, and to put on all bowels and gentleness of heart, if he will reprove.

All finnes are not to be reprov'd alike, some with sharpnesse, some with lenity. Hee that is a Mountebank that will open a veine for every wheale and pimple. The reprov'er is like them in *Isaiah*, when they deale with the Cummin and Fetches, a little rod will beat them out, but when they come to the Corne, Wheat and Rie, they beat them out with the Cart-wheele: So when wee meet with a hard-hearted spirit, wee must use stronger corrosives to them, and gentler admonitions and rebukes towards others that sinne with a lesser & weaker hand. But this is a thing that a man must bee marvellous carefull that reprov'es. Nay, let a man bee unblameable for the present, if he have been faulty before, if it were seven, or ten, or twenty yeares before, if it be knowne, it is a thousand to one, but he shall be hit in the teeth with it when he reprov'es: you committed adultery, and you did steale at such a time, if it were never so long agoe. Therefore *St. Paul* would not content to take *Mark* with him in the ministry, *Acts 15.* because hee had bene offensive to the Church before. We had need be marvellous carefull and wary if wee will reprove.

I had thought to have named other Uses, but I leave this Exposition, and take it as it is passively interpreted.

*Simile.*

*Acts 15.*

*He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his necke, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedie.*

The second exposition.

**T**HOUGH it may be expounded the other way, yet I rather incline to this. The reason is, Because this is the constant current of all Interpreters generally. I meet but with one or two that expound it the other way; but all passively, *He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his necke, &c.*

Secondly, because the word in the originall is, *A man of reproofs that hardeneth his own necke.* Now, though it be indifferent whether it bee active or passive, yet look in the Scripture, and you shall finde it more often passive then active. *A man of reproofes*, that is, a man often reprov'd, in the passive. As in *Isay 53.3.* Christ is *a man of sorrows*, not making others sorry, but made sorrie passively. And so in *Dan. 9.23.* It is said *Daniel was a man of desires*, that is, not a man desiring other men, or other things, not actively, desiring; but passively, desired, beloved of God exceedingly. So it is said of *Jeremiah, Jerem. 15.10.* hee was *a man of strife*, not a man striving with others, but a man striven with. So in *1 King. 2.26.* *A man of death*, that is, not killing others, but to be killed himselfe. It is taken more frequently in the passive sense; so we may more boldly take it so. *A man of Reproofes*, that is, reprov'd againe and againe, that hath received divers reproofes, and yet *hardeneth his own necke, shall suddenly bee destroyed,*

*Isai. 53.3.*

*Dan. 9.23.*

*Jer. 15.10.*

*2 King. 2.26.*

destroyed, and that without remedy. Here I might observe by the way, this point of Doctrine, That,

*The Lord doth not destroy man willingly.*

He saith not, A man shall be destroyed without remedy; but a man when hee hath sinned against God, when he hath committed sinne, and not onely so, but when hee is reprov'd for his sinne, and goeth on. The Lord doth not destroy a man nakedly, but upon consideration of sinne.

*Willingly the Lord doth not afflict any,* Lament. 3. Mercy and punishment they flow from God, as the hony and the sting from the Bee, the Bee yeeldeth hony of her own nature, but shee doth not sting but when she is provok'd: so the Lord is gracious, and good, and favourable, and kind, and bleffeth his people from his own nature, but he doth not punish, and plague, and destroy, but being provok'd by sinne and iniquity. I will not stand to follow this point, I let it go.

The text it selfe contains the great mercie of God in lending a man a reproof.

And what a great sinne it is, what a great ill it is for a man to sinne against his reproof. The greatnesse of the ill is set down two wayes:

First, by the great sinfulness of the thing, it is called *the hardening of a mans own neck.*

Secondly, by the greatnesse of the punishment that God inflicteth upon this sinne, and that is, he will destroy him, and without remedy.

For the first, namely, what a great mercie it is for God to let a man be reprov'd of his sinnes.

*Doctrine.*

The Lord doth not destroy men willingly.

God destroys not but for sin.

Lam. 3.  
*Simile.*

*Observ.*

A great mercie to be reprov'd.

Hosea 5. 2.

It may bee proved by many places of Scripture, onely I find in Scripture it is brought as an aggravation of sinne when they sinned against reproof, *Hosea 5. 2.* saith hee, *they are profound to commit sinne, though I have been a rebuker of them all.* As if he should say, though I have been so mercifull as to shew them the danger of sinne, to tell them what would come of their wretched courses: though I have called them to repentance, and have given them warning what would be the issue of these things; yet for all this, for all my mercie, they have gone on in their sinnes though I have reprovved them. This *Though* is a word of aggravation, as we see in the speech of *Daniel to Belshazzar*; *Thou, O King, hast not humbled thy selfe though thou knewest this*: as if he had said, though the Lord let thee know the punishment upon thy father, and the plagues of *Nebuchadnezzar* thy grandfather, though the Lord have let thee understand what it is for thee to exalt thy selfe against him; yet thou art not humbled: he aggravates his sinne. So, this aggravates a mans sinne when he goes on, notwithstanding he is reprovved. The reasons are,

Reas. 1.  
Reproofes  
come from  
love.

Rev. 3. 19.

First, because when God reprovves a man of sinne, the reproofe primarily comes out of love; therefore when he reprovved *Laodicea*, and told her she was *luke-warme*, and said, *I would thou wert either hot or cold*: And since she was neither, he would spue her out of his mouth; he tells her whence the reproof flowed; because *I love I reprove*: *As many as I love, I rebuke*, Rev. 3. 19. It is not

not out of ill will that I tell thee of thy lukewarmnesse, and threaten to spue thee out of my mouth; I tell thee these things that thou mayst avoid that ill. I say, Gods reproofes flow primarily from love to men, whereby hee would have them lay aside their wretched courses, and avoid the judgements. Nay, it is an argument of hatred when a man doth not reprove his brother of sinne. If God let a man goe on in sinne, and never tell him of his drunkennesse, nor never find fault with his pride and security, never convince him, or wound, or touch him, nor deal with him about his unsorted estate, and his rotten condition, it is a signe God hates the man: but when God reproveth a man from day to day, Man, thou art a proud creature, thou shalt to hell for thy pride, and hypocrisie, and securitie, and hardnesse of heart: When the Lord reproveth a man from day to day, this is an argument of love; the other is an effect of hatred, not to reprove. *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, saith Moses, but shalt in any wise reprove him, and not suffer sinne to be upon him, Levit. 19. 17.* Thou hatest thy brother when thou seest him sinne, and doest not warn him, and knowest he is guilty of sinfull courses, and doest not reprove him; and when thou hast time, and place, and opportunity, and fit circumstances to reprove, and yet thou wilt not doe it, it is a signe thou hatest thy brother; it is the greatest degree of hatred one of them. If a man deny food for the body, and let a man rather die of hunger, then hee will give him

Levit. 19.  
17.

