A Christian Directory

VOLUME 2

CHRISTIAN ECONOMICS (OR FAMILY DUTIES)

Richard Baxter



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II. Christian Economics, (Or Family Duties.)

by Richard Baxter

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CHAPTER I

Directions about Marriage; for Choice and Contract

As the persons of Christians in their most private capacities are holy, as being dedicated and separated unto God, so also must their families be: HOLINESS TO THE LORD must be as it were written on their doors, and on their relations, their possessions and affairs. To which it is requisite, 1. That there be a holy constitution of their families. 2. And a holy government of them, and discharge of the several duties of the members of the family. To the right constituting of a family, belongeth, (1.) The right contracting of marriage, and (2.) The right choice and contract betwixt masters and their servants. For the first,

Direct. I. 'Take heed that neither lust nor rashness do thrust you into a married condition, before you see such reasons to invite you to it, as may assure you of the call and approbation of God.' For, 1. It is God that you must serve in your married state, and therefore it is meet that you take his counsel before you rush upon it: for he knoweth best himself, what belongeth to his service. 2. And it is God

that you must still depend upon, for the blessing and comforts of your relation: and therefore there is very great reason that you take his advice and consent, as the chief things requisite to the match. If the consent of parents be necessary, much more is the consent of God.

Quest. 'But how shall a man know whether God call him to marriage, or consent unto it? Hath he not here left all men to their liberties, as in a thing indifferent?'

Answ. God hath not made any universal law commanding or forbidding marriage; but in this regard hath left it indifferent to mankind: yet not allowing all to marry (for undoubtedly to some it is unlawful). But he hath by other general laws or rules directed men to know, in what cases it is lawful, and in what cases it is a sin. As every man is bound to choose that condition in which he may serve God with the best advantages, and which tendeth most to his spiritual welfare, and increase in holiness. Now there is nothing in marriage itself which maketh it commonly inconsistent with these benefits, and the fulfilling of these laws: and therefore it is said, that "he that marrieth doth well," that is, he doth that which of itself is not unlawful, and which to some is the most eligible state of life. But there is something in a single life which maketh it, especially to preachers and persecuted Christians, to be more usually the most advantageous state of life, to these ends of Christianity; and therefore it is said, that "he that marrieth not, doth better." And yet to individual persons, it is hard to imagine how it can choose but be either a duty or a sin; at least except in some unusual cases. For it is a thing of so great moment as to the ordering of our hearts and lives, that it is hard to imagine that it should ever be indifferent as a means to our main end, but must either be a very great help or hindrance. But yet if there be any persons whose case may be so equally poised

with accidents on both sides, that to the most judicious man it is not discernible, whether a single or married state of life, is like to conduce more to their personal holiness or public usefulness, or the good of others, to such persons marriage in the individual circumstantiated act is a thing indifferent.

By these conditions following you may know, what persons have a call from God to marry, and who have not his call or approbation. 1. If there be the peremptory will or command of parents to children that are under their power and government, and no greater matter on the contrary to hinder it, the command of parents signifieth the command of God: but if parents do but persuade and not command, though their desires must not be causelessly refused, yet a smaller impediment may preponderate than in case of a peremptory command. 2. They are called to marry who have not the gift of continence, and cannot by the use of lawful means attain it, and have no impediment which maketh it unlawful to them to marry. "But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn." But here the divers degrees of the urgent and the hindering causes must be compared, and the weightiest must prevail. For some that have very strong lusts may yet have stronger impediments: and though they cannot keep that chastity in their thoughts as they desire, yet in such a case they must abstain. And there is no man but may keep his body in chastity if he will do his part: yea, and thoughts themselves may be commonly, and for the most part kept pure, and wanton imaginations quickly checked, if men be godly, and will do what they can. But on the other side there are some that have a more tameable measure of concupiscence, and yet have no considerable hindrance, whose duty it may be to marry, as the most certain and successful means against that small degree, as long as there is nothing to forbid it. 3. Another cause that warranteth marriage is, when upon a wise casting up of all accounts, it is apparently most

probable that in a married state, one may be most serviceable to God and the public good: that there will be in it greater helps and fewer hindrances to the great ends of our lives; the glorifying of God, and the saving of ourselves and others. And whereas it must be expected that every condition should be more helpful to us in one respect, and hinder us more in another respect; and that in one we have most helps for a contemplative life, and in another we are better furnished for an active, serviceable life, the great skill therefore in the discerning of our duties, lieth in the prudent pondering and comparing of the commodities and discommodities, without the seduction of fantasy, lust or passion, and in a true discerning which side it is that hath the greatest weight.

Here it must be carefully observed, 1. That the two first reasons for marriage (concupiscence and the will of parents), or any such like, have their strength but in subordination to the third (the final cause, or interest of God and our salvation). And that this last reason (from the end) is of itself sufficient without any of the other, but none of the other are sufficient without this. If it be clear that in a married state you have better advantages for the service of God, and doing good to others, and saving your own souls, than you can have in a single state of life, then it is undoubtedly your duty to marry: for our obligation to seek our ultimate end is the most constant, indispensable obligation. Though parents command it not, though you have no corporal necessity, yet it is a duty if it certainly make most for your ultimate end. 2. But yet observe also, that no pretence of your ultimate end itself will warrant you to marry, when any other accident hath first made it a thing unlawful, while that accident continueth. For we must not do evil that good may come by it. Our salvation is not furthered by sin: and though we saw a probability that we might do more good to others, if we did but commit such a sin to accomplish it, yet it is not to be done. For our lives and mercies

being all in the hand of God, and the successes and acceptance of all our endeavours depending wholly upon him, it can never be a rational way to attain them, by wilful offending him by our sin! It is a likely means to public good for able and good men to be magistrates and ministers: and yet he that would lie, or be perjured, or commit any known sin that he may be a magistrate, or that he may preach the Gospel, might better expect a curse on himself and his endeavours, than God's acceptance, or his blessing and success: so he that would sin to change his state for the better, would find that he changed it for the worse: or if it do good to others, he may expect no good but ruin to himself, if repentance prevent it not. 3. Observe also that if the question be only which state of life it is (married or single) which best conduceth to this ultimate end, then any one of the subordinate reasons will prove that we have a call, if there be not greater reasons on the contrary side. As in case you have no corporal necessity, the will of parents alone may oblige you, if there be no greater thing against it: or if parents oblige you not, yet corporal necessity alone may do it: or if neither of these invite you, yet a clear probability of the attaining of such an estate or opportunity, as may make you more fit to relieve many others, or be serviceable to the church, or the blessing of children who may be devoted to God, may warrant your marriage, if no greater reasons lie against it: for when the scales are equal, any one of these may turn them.

By this also you may perceive who they be that have no call to marry, and to whom it is a sin. As 1. No man hath a call to marry, who laying all the commodities and discommodities together, may clearly discern that a married state is like to be a greater hindrance of his salvation, or to his serving or honouring God in the world, and so to disadvantage him as to his ultimate end.

Quest. 'But what if parents do command it? or will set against me if I disobey?'

Answ. Parents have no authority to command you any thing against God or your salvation, or your ultimate end. Therefore here you owe them no formal obedience: but yet the will of parents with all the consequents, must be put into the scales with all other considerations, and if they make the discommodities of a single life to become the greater, as to your end, then they may bring you under a duty or obligation to marry: not 'necessitate præcepti,' as obedience to their command; but 'necessitate medii,' as a means to your ultimate end, and in obedience to that general command of God, which requireth you to "seek first" your ultimate end, even "the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."

Quest. 'But what if I have a corporal necessity and yet I can foresee that marriage will greatly disadvantage me as to the service of God and my salvation?'

Answ. 1. You must understand that no corporal necessity is absolute: for there is no man so lustful but may possibly bridle his lust by other lawful means: by diet, labour, sober company, diverting business, solitude, watching the thoughts and senses, or at least by the physician's help; so that the necessity is but 'secundum quid,' or an urgency rather than a simple necessity. And then 2. This measure of necessity must be itself laid in the balance with the other accidents: and if this necessity will turn the scales by making a single life more disadvantageous to your ultimate end, your lust being a greater impediment to you, than all the inconveniences of marriage will be, then the case is resolved, "it is better to marry than to burn." But if the hindrances in a married state are like to be greater, than the hindrances of your concupiscence, then you must set yourself to the

curbing and curing of that concupiscence; and in the use of God's means expect his blessing.

2. Children are not ordinarily, called of God to marry, when their parents do absolutely and peremptorily forbid it. For though parents' commands cannot make it a duty, when we are sure it would hinder the interest of God our ultimate end; yet parents' prohibitions may make it a sin, when there is a clear probability that it would most conduce to our ultimate end, were it not prohibited. Because (1.) Affirmatives bind not 'semper et ad semper' as negatives or prohibitions do. (2.) Because the sin of disobedience to parents will cross the tendency of it unto good, and do more against our ultimate end, than all the advantages of marriage can do for it. A duty is then to us no duty, when it cannot be performed without a chosen, wilful sin. In many cases we are bound to forbear what a governor forbiddeth, when we are not bound to do the contrary if he command it. It is easier to make a duty to be no duty, than to make a sin to be no sin. One bad ingredient may turn a duty into a sin, when one good ingredient will not turn a sin into a duty, or into no sin.

Quest. 'But may not a governor's prohibition be overweighed by some great degrees of incommodity? It is better to marry than to burn. 1. What if parents forbid children to marry absolutely until death, and so deprive them of the lawful remedy against lust? 2. And if they do not so, yet if they forbid it them when it is to them most seasonable and necessary, it seemeth little better. 3. Or if they forbid them to marry where their affections are so engaged, as that they cannot be taken off without their mutual ruin? May not children marry in such cases of necessity as these, without and against the will of their parents?'

Answ. I cannot deny but some cases may be imagined or fall out, in which it is lawful to do what a governor forbiddeth, and to marry against the will of parents: for they have their power to edification, and not unto destruction. As if a son be qualified with eminent gifts for the work of the ministry, in a time and place that needeth much help; if a malignant parent, in hatred of that sacred office, should never so peremptorily forbid him, yet may the son devote himself to the blessed work of saving souls: even as a son may not forbear to relieve the poor (with that which is his own) though his parents should forbid him; nor forbear to put himself into a capacity to relieve them for the future; nor forbear his own necessary food and raiment though he be forbidden. As Daniel would not forbear praying openly in his house, when he was forbidden by the king and law. When any inseparable accident doth make a thing, of itself indifferent, become a duty, a governor's prohibition will not discharge us from that duty, unless the accident be smaller than the accident of the ruler's prohibition, and then it may be overweighed by it; but to determine what accidents are greater or less is a difficult task.

And as to the particular questions, to the first I answer, If parents forbid their children to marry while they live, it is convenient and safe to obey them until death, if no greater obligation to the contrary forbid it: but it is necessary to obey them during the time that the children live under the government of their parents, as in their houses, in their younger years (except in some few extraordinary cases). But when parents are dead (though they leave commands in their wills) or when age or former marriage hath removed children from under their government, a smaller matter will serve to justify their disobedience here, than when the children in minority are less fit to govern themselves. For though we owe parents a limited obedience still, yet at full age the child is more at his own dispose

than he was before. Nature hath given us a hint of her intention in the instinct of brutes, who are all taught to protect, and lead, and provide for their young ones, while the young are insufficient for themselves; but when they are grown to self-sufficiency, they drive them away or neglect them. If a wise son that hath a wife and many children, and great affairs to manage in the world, should be bound to as absolute obedience to his aged parents, as he was in his childhood, it would ruin their affairs, and parents' government would pull down that in their old age, which they built up in their middle age.

And to the second question I answer, that, 1. Children that pretend to unconquerable lust or love, must do all they can to subdue such inordinate affections, and bring their lusts to stoop to reason and their parents' wills. And if they do their best, there are either none, or not one of many hundreds, but may maintain their chastity together with their obedience. 2. And if any say, 'I have done my best, and yet am under a necessity of marriage; and am I not then bound to marry though my parents forbid me?' I answer, it is not to be believed: either you have not done your best, or else you are not under a necessity. And your urgency being your own fault (seeing you should subdue it), Gad still obligeth you both to subdue your vice, and to obey your parents. 3. But if there should be any one that hath such an (incredible) necessity of marriage, he is to procure some others to solicit his parents for their consent, and if he cannot obtain it, some say, it is his duty to marry without it: I should rather say that it is 'minus malum,' 'the lesser evil:' and that having cast himself into some necessity of sinning, it is still his duty to avoid both, and to choose neither; but it is the smaller sin to choose to disobey his parents, rather than to live in the flames of lust and the filth of unchastity. And some divines say, that in such a case a son should appeal to the magistrate, as a superior authority above the father.

But others think, 1. That this leaveth it as difficult to resolve what he shall do, if the magistrate also consent not: and 2. That it doth but resolve one difficulty by a greater: it being very doubtful whether in domestic cases the authority of the parent or the magistrate be the greater.

3. The same answer serveth as to the third Question, when parents forbid you to marry the persons that you are most fond of. For such fondness (whether you call it lust or love) as will not stoop to reason and your parents' wills, is inordinate and sinful. And therefore the thing that God bindeth you to, is by his appointed means to subdue it, and to obey: but if you cannot, the accidents and probable consequents must tell you which is the lesser evil.

Quest. 'But what if the child have promised marriage, and the parents be against it?' Answ. If the child was under the parents' government, and short of years of discretion also, the promise is void for want of capacity. And if the child was at age, yet the promise was a sinful promise, as to the promising act, and also as to the thing promised during the parents' dissent. If the 'actus promittendi' only had been sinful ('the promise making') the promise might nevertheless oblige (unless it were null as well as sinful). But the 'materia promissa' being sinful ('the matter promised') to marry while parents do dissent, such a child is bound to forbear the fulfilling of that promise till the parents do consent or die. And yet he is bound from marrying any other (unless he be disobliged by the person that he made the promise to), because he knoweth not but his parents may consent hereafter; and whenever they consent or die, the promise then is obligatory, and must be performed.

The third Chapter of Numbers enableth parents to disoblige a daughter that is in their house, from a vow made to God, so be it they

disavow it at the first hearing. Hence there are two doubts arise: 1. Whether this power extend not to the disobliging of a promise or contract of matrimony? 2. Whether it extend not to a son as well as a daughter. And most expositors are for the affirmative of both cases. But I have shewed before that it is upon uncertain grounds. 1. It is uncertain whether God, who would thus give up his own right in case of vowing, will also give away the right of others without their consent in case of promises or contracts. And 2. It is uncertain whether this be not an indulgence only of the weaker sex, seeing many words in the text seem plainly to intimate so much. And it is dangerous upon our own presumptions to stretch God's laws to every thing we imagine there is the same reason for: seeing our imaginations may so easily be deceived: and God could have expressed such particulars if he would: and therefore (when there is not clear ground for our inferences in the text) it is but to say, 'Thus and thus God should have said,' when we cannot say, 'Thus he hath said.' We must not make laws under pretence of expounding them: whatsoever God commandeth thee, take heed that thou do it: thou shalt add nothing thereto, nor take aught therefrom.

Quest. If the question therefore be not of the sinfulness, but the nullity of such promises of children, because of the dissent of parents, for my part I am not able to prove any such nullity. It is said, that they are not 'sui juris,' 'their own,' and therefore their promises are null. But if they have attained to years, and use of discretion, they are naturally so far 'sui juris' as to be capable of disposing even of their souls, and therefore of their fidelity. They can oblige themselves to God or man: though they are not so far 'sui juris' as to be ungoverned. For so no child, no subject, no man is 'sui juris;' seeing all are under the government of God. And yet if a man promise to do a thing sinful, it is not a nullity, but a sin: not no promise, but a sinful promise. A nullity is when the 'actus promittendi' is 'reputative

nullus, vel non actus.' And when no promise is made, then none can be broken.

Quest. But if the question be only how far such promises must be kept? I answer, by summing up what I have said: 1. If the child had not the use of reason, the want of natural capacity, proveth the promise null: here 'ignorantis non est consensus.' 2. If he was at age and use of reason, then 1. If the promising act only was sinful (as before I said of vows,) the promise must be both repented of, and kept. It must be repented of because it was a sin: it must be kept because it was a real promise, and the matter lawful. 2. If the promising act was not only a sin, but a nullity (by any other reason) then it is no obligation. 3. If not only the promising act be sin, but also the matter promised (as is marrying without parents' consent), then it must be repented of, and not performed until it become lawful; because an oath or promise cannot bind a man to violate the laws of God.

Quest. 'But what if the parties be actually married without the parents' consent? Must they live together, or be separated?' Answ. 1. If marriage be consummated 'per carnalem concubitum,' 'by the carnal knowledge of each other,' I see no reason to imagine that parents can dissolve it, or prohibit their cohabitation. For the marriage, for aught I ever saw, is not proved a nullity, but only a sin, and their 'concubitus' is not fornication: and parents cannot forbid husband and wife to live together: and in marriage they do (really though sinfully) forsake father and mother and cleave to each other, and so are now from under their government, though not disobliged from all obedience. 2. But if marriage be only by verbal conjunction, divines are disagreed what is to be done: some think that it is no perfect marriage 'ante concubitum,' and also that their conjunction hath but the nature of a promise (to be faithful to each other as

husband and wife): and therefore the matter promised is unlawful till parents consent, and so not to be done. But I rather think, as most do, that it hath all that is essential to marriage 'ante concubitum;' and that this marriage is more than a promise of fidelity 'de futuro,' even an actual delivery of themselves to one another 'de præsenti' also: and that the thing promised in marriage is lawful: for though it be a sin to marry without parents' consent, yet when that is past, it is lawful for married persons to come together though parents consent not: and therefore that such marriage is valid, and to be continued though it was sinfully made.

3. A third sort that are not called of God to marry, are they that have absolutely vowed not to marry: such may not marry, unless Providence disoblige them, by making it become an indispensable duty: and I can remember but two ways by which this may be done. 1. In case there be any of so strong lust, as no other lawful means but marriage can suffice to maintain their chastity; to such, marriage is as great a duty as to eat or drink, or cover one's nakedness, or to hinder another from uncleanness, or lying, or stealing, or the like. And if you should make a vow that you will never eat or drink, or that you will go naked, or that you will never hinder any one from uncleanness, lying, or stealing, it is unlawful to fulfil this vow. But all the doubt is, whether there be any such persons that cannot overcome, or restrain their lust by any other lawful means? I suppose it is possible there may be such: but I believe it is not one of an hundred: if they will but practise the directions before given, Part i. Chap. viii. Part v. Tit. 1. and 2. I suppose their lust may be restrained: and if that prevail not, the help of a physician may. And if that prevail not, some think the help of a surgeon may be lawful, to keep a vow, in case it be not an apparent hazard of life. For Christ seemeth to allow of it, in mentioning it without reproof, Matt. 19:12. if that text be to be understood of castration: but most expositors think it is

meant only of a confirmed resolution of chastity. And ordinarily other means may make this needless. And if it be either needless or perilous it is unlawful without doubt.

2. The second way by which God may dispense with a vow of chastity is, by making the marriage of a person become of apparent necessity to the public safety. And I am able to discern but one instance that will reach the case; and that is, if a king have vowed chastity, and in case he marry not, his next heir being a professed enemy of Christianity, the religion, safety and happiness of the whole nation are apparently in danger to be overthrown. I think the case of such a king is like the case of a father that had vowed never to provide food or raiment for his children. Or as if Ahab had vowed that no well should be digged in the land; and when the drought cometh, it is become necessary to the saving of the people's lives. Or as if the ship-master should vow that the ship shall not be pumped; which when it leaketh doth become necessary to save their lives. In these cases God disobligeth you from your vow by a mutation of the matter; and a pastor may dispense with it declaratively. But for the pope or any mortal man to pretend to more, is impiety and deceit.

Quest. 'May the aged marry that are frigid, impotent, and uncapable of procreation?' Answ. Yes, God hath not forbidden them: and there are other lawful ends of marriage, as mutual help and comfort, &c. which may make it lawful.

Direct. II. 'To restrain your inordinate forwardness to marriage, keep the ordinary inconveniencies of it in memory.' Rush not into a state of life, the inconveniencies of which you never thought on. If you have a call to it, the knowledge of the difficulties and duties will be necessary to your preparation, and faithful undergoing them: if you have no call, this knowledge is necessary to keep you off. I shall first

name the inconveniencies common to all, and then some that are proper to the ministers of the Gospel, which have a greater reason to avoid a married life than other men have.

1. Marriage ordinarily plungeth men into excess of worldly cares: it multiplieth their business, and usually their wants. There are many things to mind and do: there are many to provide for. And many persons you will have to do with; who have all of them a selfish disposition and interest, and will judge of you but according as you fit their ends. And among many persons and businesses, some things will frequently fall cross: you must look for many rubs and disappointments. And your natures are not so strong, content and patient, as to bear all these without molestation.

2. Your wants in a married state are hardlier supplied, than in a single life. You will want so many things which before you never wanted, and have so many to provide for and content; that all will seem little enough, if you had never so much. Then you will be often at your wit's end, taking thought for the future, what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and wherewith shall you and yours be clothed.

3. Your wants in a married state are far hardlier borne than in a single state. It is far easier to bear personal wants ourselves, than to see the wants of wife and children: affection will make their sufferings pinch you. And ingenuity will make it a trouble to your mind, to need the help of servants, and to want that which is fit for servants to expect. But especially the discontent and impatience of your family will more discontent you than all their wants. You cannot help your wife, and children, and servants to contented minds. O what a heart-cutting trial is it, to hear them repining, murmuring, and complaining! To hear them call for that which you have not for

them; and grieve at their condition, and exclaim of yon, or of the providence of God, because they have it not! And think not that riches will free you from these discontents: for as the rich are but few, so they that have much have much to do with it. A great foot must have a great shoe. When poor men want some small supplies, rich men may want great sums, or larger provisions, which the poor can do without. And their condition lifting them up to greater pride, doth torment them with greater discontents. How few in all the world that have families, are content with their estates!

4. Hereupon a married life containeth far more temptations to worldliness or covetousness, than a single state doth. For when you think you need more, you will desire more: and when you find all too little to satisfy those that you provide for, you will measure your estate by their desires, and be apt to think that you have never enough. Birds and beasts that have young ones to provide for, are most hungry and rapacious. You have so many now to scrape for, that you will think you are still in want: it is not only till death that you must now lay up; but you must provide for children that survive you. And while you take them to be as yourselves, you have two generations now to make provisions for: and most men are as covetous for their posterity, as if it were for themselves.

5. And hereupon you are hindered from works of charity to others: wife and children are the devouring gulf that swalloweth all. If you had but yourselves to provide for, a little would serve; and you could deny your own desires of unnecessary things; and so might have plentiful provision for good works. But by that time wife and children are provided for, and all their importunate desires satisfied, there is nothing considerable left for pious or charitable uses. Lamentable experience proclaimeth this.

6. And hereby it appeareth how much a married state doth ordinarily hinder men from honouring their profession. It is their vows of single life that hath occasioned the Papists to do so many works of public charity, as is boasted of for the honour of their sect. For when they have no children to bequeath it to, and cannot keep it themselves, it is easy to them to leave it for such uses as will pacify their consciences most, and advance their names. And if it should prove as good a work and as acceptable to God, to educate your own children piously for his service, as to relieve the children of the poor, yet is it not so much regarded in the world, nor bringeth so much honour to religion. One hundred pounds given to the poor shall more advance the reputation of your liberality and virtue, than a thousand pounds given to your own children, though it be with as pious an end, to train them up for the service of the church. And though this is inconsiderable, as your own honour is concerned in it, yet it is considerable, as the honour of religion and the good of souls are concerned in it.

7. And it is no small patience which the natural imbecility of the female sex requireth you to prepare. Except it be very few that are patient and manlike, women are commonly of potent fantasies, and tender, passionate, impatient spirits, easily cast into anger, or jealousy, or discontent; and of weak understandings, and therefore unable to reform themselves. They are betwixt a man and a child: some few have more of the man, and many have more of the child; but most are but in a middle state. Weakness naturally inclineth persons to be froward and hard to please; as we see in children, old people, and sick persons. They are like a sore, distempered body; you can scarce touch them but you hurt them. With too many you can scarce tell how to speak or look but you displease them. If you should be very well versed in the art of pleasing, and set yourselves to it with all your care, as if you made it your very business and had little else

to do, yet it would put you hard to it, to please some weak, impatient persons, if not quite surpass your ability and skill. And the more you love them, the more grievous it will be, to see them still in discontents, weary of their condition, and to hear the clamorous expressions of their disquiet minds. Nay the very multitude of words that very many are addicted to, doth make some men's lives a continual burden to them. Mark what the Scripture saith; "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.—It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.—A continual dropping in a very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike.—One man among a thousand have I found: but a woman among all those have I not found."

8. And there is such a meeting of faults and imperfections on both sides, that maketh it much the harder to bear the infirmities of others aright. If one party only were froward and impatient, the stedfastness of the other might make it the more tolerable: but we are all sick in some measure, of the same disease. And when weakness meeteth with weakness, and pride with pride, and passion with passion, it exasperateth the disease and doubleth the suffering. And our corruption is such, that though our intent be to help one another in our duties, yet we are apter far to stir up one another's distempers.

9. The business, care, and trouble of a married life, is a great temptation to call down your thoughts from God, and to divert them from the "one thing necessary," and to distract the mind, and make it indisposed to holy duty, and to serve God with a divided heart, as if we served him not. How hard is it to pray, or meditate with any serious fervency, when you come out of a crowd of cares and businesses! Hear what St. Paul saith, "For I would that all men were

as I myself—I say to the unmarried and the widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.—I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, that it is good for a man so to be:—such shall have trouble in the flesh. But I would have you be without carefulness: he that is unmarried, careth for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married, careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy, both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your own profit, not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction. He that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart, that he will keep his virgin, doeth well. So then he that marrieth doeth well, but he that marrieth not doeth better." And mark Christ's own words, "His disciples say unto him, if the case of a man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.—He that is able to receive it, let him receive iti."

10. The business of a married state doth commonly devour almost all your time, so that little is left for holy contemplations, or serious thoughts of the life to come. All God's service is contracted and thrust into a corner; and done as it were on the bye: the world will scarce allow you time to meditate, or pray, or read the Scripture: you think yourselves (as Martha) under a greater necessity of dispatching your business, than of sitting at Christ's feet to hear his Word. O that single persons knew (for the most part) the preciousness of their leisure, and how free they are to attend the service of God, and learn his Word, in comparison of the married!

11. There is so great a diversity of temperaments and degrees of understanding, that there are scarce any two persons in the world, but there is some unsuitableness between them. Like stones that have some unevenness, that maketh them lie crooked in the building; some crossness there will be of opinion, or disposition, or interest, or will, by nature, or by custom and education; which will stir sup frequent discontents.

12. There is a great deal of duty which husband and wife do owe to one another; as to instruct, admonish, pray, watch over one another, and to be continual helpers to each other in order to their everlasting happiness; and patiently to bear with the infirmities of each other. And to the weak and backward heart of man, the addition of so much duty doth add to their weariness, how good soever the work be in itself: and men should feel their strength, before they undertake more work.

13. And the more they love each other, the more they participate in each other's griefs: and one or other will be frequently under some sort of suffering. If one be sick, or lame, or pained, or defamed, or wronged, or disquieted in mind, or by temptation fall into any wounding sin, the other beareth part of the distress. Therefore before you undertake to bear all the burdens of another, and suffer in all another's hurts, it concerneth you to observe your strength, how much more you have than your own burdens do require.

14. And if you should marry one that proveth ungodly, how exceeding great would the affliction be! If you loved them, your souls would be in continual danger by them: they would be the most powerful instruments in the world to pervert your judgments, to deaden your hearts, to take you off from a holy life, to kill your prayers, to corrupt your lives, and to damn your souls. And if you

should have the grace to escape the snare, and save yourselves, it would be by so much the greater difficulty and suffering, as the temptation is the greater. And what a heart-breaking would it be to converse so nearly with a child of the devil, that is like to lie for ever in hell! The daily thoughts of it would be a daily death to you.

15. Women especially must expect so much suffering in a married life, that if God had not put into them a natural inclination to it, and so strong a love to their children, as maketh them patient under the most annoying troubles, the world would ere this have been at an end, through their refusal of so calamitous a life. Their sickness in breeding, their pain in bringing forth, with the danger of their lives, the tedious trouble night and day; which they have with their children in their nursing and their childhood; besides their subjection to their husbands, and continual care of family affairs; being forced to consume their lives in a multitude of low and troublesome businesses: all this, and much more would have utterly deterred that sex from marriage, if nature itself had not inclined them to it.

16. And O what abundance of duty is incumbent upon both the parents towards every child for the saving of their souls! What incessant labour is necessary in teaching them the doctrine of salvation! which made God twice over charge them to teach his word diligently (or sharpen them) "unto their children, and to talk of them when they sit in their houses, and when they walk by the way, and when they lie down, and when they rise up." What abundance of obstinate, rooted corruptions are in the hearts of children, which parents must by all possible diligence root up! O how great and hard a work is it; to speak to them of their sins and Saviour, of their God, their souls, and the life to come, with that reverence, gravity, seriousness, and unwearied constancy as the weight of the matter

doth require! and to suit all their actions and carriage to the same ends! Little do most that have children know, what abundance of care and labour God will require of them, for the sanctifying and saving of their children's souls. Consider your fitness for so great a work before you undertake it.

17. It is abundance of affliction that is ordinarily to be expected in the miscarriages of children; when you have done your best, much more if you neglect your duty, as even godly parents too often do. After all your pains, and care, and labour, you must look that the foolishness of some, and the obstinacy of others, and the unthankfulness of those that you have loved best, should even pierce your hearts. You must look that many vices should spring up and trouble you; and be the more grievous by how much your children are the more dear. And O what a grief it is to breed up a child to be a servant of the devil, and an enemy of God and godliness, and a persecutor of the church of God! And to think of lying in hell for ever! And alas! how great is the number of such!

18. And it is not a little care and trouble, that servants will put you to: so difficult is it to get those that are good; much more to make them good; so great is your duty in teaching them, and minding them of the matters of their salvation; so frequent will be the displeasures about your work and worldly business, and every one of those displeasures will hinder them for receiving your instructions; that most families are houses of correction or affliction.

19. And these marriage crosses are not for a year, but during life: they deprive you of all hope of relief while you live together. There is no room for repentance, nor casting about for a way to escape them. Death only must be your relief. And therefore such a change of your

condition should be seriously forethought on, and all the troubles be foreseen and pondered.

20. And if love make you dear to one another, your parting at death will be the more grievous. And when you first come together, you know that such a parting you must have: through all the course of your lives you may foresee it: one of you must see the body of your beloved, turned into a cold, and ghastly clod: you must follow it weeping to the grave, and leave it there in dust and darkness: there it must lie rotting as a loathsome lump, whose sight or smell you cannot endure; till you shortly follow it, and lie down yourself in the same condition. All these are the ordinary concomitants and consequents of marriage; easily and quickly spoken, but long and hard to be endured! No fictions, but realities, and less than most have reason to expect. And should such a life be vainly ventured on in a pang of lust? or such a burden be undertaken without forethought?

But especially the ministers of the Gospel should think what they do, and think again, before they enter upon a married life. Not that it is simply unlawful for them, or that they are to be tied from it by a law, as they are in the kingdom of Rome, for carnal ends and with odious effects. But so great a hindrance ordinarily is this troublesome state of life to the sacred ministration which they undertake, that a very clear call should be expected for their satisfaction. That I be not tedious, consider well but of these four things. 1. How well will a life of so much care and business agree to you, that have time little enough for the greater work which you have undertaken? Do you know what you have to do in public and private? in reading, meditating, praying, preaching, instructing personally, and from house to house? And do you know of how great importance it is? even for the saving of men's souls? And have you time to spare for so

much worldly cares and business? Are you not charged, "Meditate on these things: give thyself wholly to them." "No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him that hath chosen him to be a soldiern." Is not this plain? Soldiers use not to look to farms and servants. If you are faithful ministers, I dare confidently say, you will find all your time so little for your proper work, that many a time you will groan and say, O how short and swift is time! and O, how great and slow is my work and duty! 2. Consider how well a life of so great diversions, avocations and distractions, doth suit with a mind devoted to God, that should be always free and ready for his service. Your studies are on such great and mysterious subjects, that they require the whole mind, and all too little. To resolve the many difficulties that are before you, to prepare those suitable, convincing words, which may pierce and persuade the hearers' hearts, to get within the bosom of an hypocrite, to follow on the Word till it attain its effect, and to deal with poor souls according to their great necessity, and handle God's Word according to its holiness and majesty, these are things that require a whole man, and are not employments for a divided or distracted mind. The talking of women, and the crying of children, and the cares and business of the world, are ill preparations or attendants on these studies. 3. Consider well whether a life of so great disturbance be agreeable to one whose affections should be taken up for God: and whose work must be all done, not formally and affectedly with the lips alone, but seriously with all the heart. If your heart and warm affections be at any time left behind, the life and power, the beauty and glory of your work are lost. How dead will your studies, and praying, and preaching, and conference be! And can you keep those affections warm and vigorous for God, and taken up with heaven and heavenly things, which are disturbed with the cares and the crosses of the world, and taken up with carnal matters? 4. And consider also how well that indigent life will agree to one that by charity and good works should second his

doctrine, and win men's souls to the love of holinessp. If you feed not the bodies of the poor, they will less relish the food of the soul. Nay, if you abound not above others in good works, the blind, malicious world will see nothing that is good in you; but will say, You have good words, but where are your good works? What abundance have I known hardened against the Gospel and religion, by a common fame, that these preachers are as covetous, and worldly, and uncharitable as any others: and it must be something extraordinary that must confute such fame. And what abundance of success have I seen of the labours of those ministers, who give all they have in works of charity! And though a rich and resolved man may do some good in a married state, yet commonly it is next to nothing, as to the ends now mentioned: wife, and children, and family necessities devour all, if you have never so much. And some provision must be made for them, when you are dead: and the maintenance of the ministry is not so great as to suffice well for all this, much less for any eminent works of charity besides! Never reckon upon the doing of much good to the poor, if you have wives and children of your own! Such instances are rarities and wonders. All will be too little for yourselves. Whereas if all that were given to the poor which goeth to the maintenance of your families, you little know how much it would reconcile the minds of the ungodly, and further the success of your ministerial work.

Direct. III. 'If God call you to a married life, expect all these troubles, or most of them; and make a particular preparation for each temptation, cross and duty which you must expect.' Think not that you are entering into a state of mere delight; lest it prove but a fool's paradise to you. See that you be furnished with marriage strength and patience, for the duties and sufferings of a married state, before you venture on it. Especially, 1. Be well provided against temptations to a worldly mind and life: for here you are like to be most violently

and dangerously assaulted. 2. See that you be well provided with conjugal affections: for they are necessary both to the duties and sufferings of a married life. And you should not enter upon the state without the necessary preparations. 3. See that you be well provided with marriage prudence and understanding; that you may be able to instruct and edify your families; and may live with them as men of knowledge, and may manage all your business with discretionr. 4. See that you be provided with resolvedness and constancy; that you vex not yourself and relations by too late repentings; and come not off with 'had I wist,' or 'non putaram.' Levity and mutability is no fit preparative for a state that only death can change. Let the love and resolutions which brought you into that state, continue with you to the last. 5. See that you be provided with a diligence answerable to the greatness of your undertaken duties. A slothful mind is unfit for one that entereth himself voluntarily upon so much business; as a cowardly mind is unfit for him that listeth himself a soldier for the wars. 6. See that you are well provided with marriage patience; to bear with the infirmities of others, and undergo the daily crosses of your life, which your business, and necessities, and your own infirmities will unavoidably infer. To marry without all this preparation, is as foolish as to go to sea without the necessary preparation for your voyage, or to go to war without armour or ammunition, or to go to work without tools or strength, or to go to buy meat in the market when you have no money.

Direct. IV. 'Take special care, that fancy and passion overrule not reason, and friends' advice, in the choice of your condition, or of the person.' I know you must have love to those that you match with: but that love must be rational, and such as you can justify in the severest trial, by the evidences of worth and fitness in the person whom you love. To say you love, but you know not why, is more beseeming children or mad folks, than those that are soberly entering upon a

change of life of so great importance to them. A blind love which maketh you think a person excellent and amiable, who in the eyes of the wisest that are impartial, is nothing so, or maketh you overvalue the person whom you fancy, and be fond of one as some admirable creature, that in the eyes of others is next to contemptible, this is but the index and evidence of your folly. And though you please yourselves in it, and honour it with the name of love, there is none that is acquainted with it, that will give it any better name than lust or fancy. And the marriage that is made by lust or fancy will never tend to solid content or true felicity; but either will feed till death on the fuel that kindled it, and then go out in everlasting shame: or else more ordinarily it proveth but a blaze, and turneth into loathing and weariness of each other. And because this passion of lust (called love) is such a besotting, blinding thing, (like the longing of a woman with child) it is the duty of all that feel any touch of it to kindle upon their hearts, to call it presently to the trial, and to quench it effectually, and till that be done (if they have any relics of wit and reason) to suspect their own apprehensions, and much more to trust the judgment and advice of others.

The means to quench this lust called love, I have largely opened before. I shall now only remember you of these few. 1. Keep asunder, and at a sufficient distance from the person that you dote upon. The nearness of the fire and fuel causeth the combustion. Fancy and lust are inflamed by the senses. Keep out of sight, and in time the fever may abate. 2. Overvalue not vanity. Think not highly of a silken coat, or of the great names of ancestors, or of money, or lands, or of a painted or a spotted face, nor of that natural comeliness called beauty: judge not of things as children, but as men: play not the fools in magnifying trifles, and overlooking inward, real worth. Would you fall in love with a flower or picture at this rate? Bethink you what work the pox, or any other withering sickness will make with that

silly beauty which you so admire: think what a spectacle death will make it. And how many thousands once more beautiful, are turned now to common earth! And how many thousand souls are now in hell, that by a beautiful body were drowned in lust, and tempted to neglect themselves! and how few in the world you can name that were ever much the better for it! what a childish thing it is to dote on a book of tales and lies, because it hath a beautiful, gilded cover! and to undervalue the writings of the wise, because they have a plain and homely outside! 3. Rule your thoughts, and let them not run masterless as fancy shall command them. If reason cannot call off your thoughts from following a lustful desire and imagination, no wonder if one that rideth on such an unbridled colt be cast into the dirt. 4. Live not idly, but let the business of your callings take up your time, and employ your thoughts. An idle, fleshly mind is the carcase where the vermin of lust doth crawl, and the nest where the devil hatcheth both this and many other pernicious sins. 5. Lastly and chiefly, forget not the concernments of your souls: remember how near you are to eternity, and what work you have to do for your salvation: forget not the presence of God, nor the approach of death. Look oft by faith into heaven and hell, and keep conscience tender; and then I warrant you, you will find something else to mind than lust; and greater matters than a silly carcase to take up your thoughts, and you will feel that heavenly love within you, which will extinguish earthly, carnal love.

Direct. V. 'Be not too hasty in your choice or resolution, but deliberate well, and throughly know the person on whom so much of the comfort or sorrow of your life will necessarily depend.' Where repentance hath no place, there is the greater care to be used to prevent it. Reason requireth you to be well acquainted with those that you trust but with an important secret, much more with all your honour or estates: and most of all, with one whom you must trust

with so much of the comfort of your lives, and your advantages for a better life. No care and caution can be too great in a matter of so great importance.

Direct. VI. 'Let no carnal motives persuade you to join yourself to an ungodly person; but let the holy fear of God be preferred in your choice before all worldly excellency whatsoever.' Marry not a swine for a golden trough: nor an ugly soul for a comely body. Consider, 1. You will else give cause of great suspicion that you are yourselves ungodly: for they that know truly the misery of an unrenewed soul, and the excellency of the image of God, can never be indifferent whether they be joined to the godly or the ungodly. To prefer things temporal, before things spiritual habitually, and in the predominant acts of heart and life, is the certain character of a graceless soul! And he that in so near a case doth deliberately prefer riches or comeliness in another, before the image and fear of God, doth give a very dangerous sign, of such a graceless heart and will. If you set more by beauty or riches than by godliness, you have the surest mark that you are ungodly. If you do not set more by them, how come you deliberately to prefer them? How could you do a thing that detecteth your ungodliness, and condemneth you more clearly? And do you not shew that you either believe not the Word of God, or else that you love him not, and regard not his interest? Otherwise you would take his friends as your friends, and his enemies as your enemies. Tell me, would you marry an enemy of your own, before any change and reconciliation? I am confident you would not. And can you so easily marry an enemy of God? If you know not that all the ungodly and unsanctified are his enemies, you know not, or believe not the Word of God: which telleth you that "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be, so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." 2. If you fear God yourselves, your chief end in marriage will be to have one that will be

a helper to your soul, and further you in the way to heaven: but if you marry with a person that is ungodly, either you have no such end, or else you may easily know you have no more wisely chosen the means, than if you had chosen water to kindle the fire, or a bed of snow to keep you warm. Will an ignorant or ungodly person assist you in prayer or holy watchfulness, and stir you up to the love of God, and a heavenly mind? And can you so willingly lose all the spiritual benefit, which you should principally desire and intend? 3. Nay, instead of a helper, you will have a continual hinderer: when you should go to prayer, you will have one to pull you back, or to fill your minds with diversions or disquietments! When you should keep close to God in holy meditations, you will have one to cast in worldly thoughts, or trouble your minds with vanity and vexation. When you should discourse of God and heavenly things, you will have one to stifle such discourse, and fill your ears with idle, impertinent, or worldly talk. And one such a hindrance so near you, in your bosom, will be worse than a thousand further off. As an ungodly heart which is next of all to us, is our greatest hindrance, so an ungodly husband or wife, which is next to that, is worse to us than many ungodly neighbours. And if you think that you can well enough overcome such hindrances, and your heart is so good, that no such clogs can keep it down, you do but shew that you have a proud, unhumbled heart, that is prepared for a fall. If you know yourselves, and the badness of your hearts, you will know that you have no need of hindrances in any holy work, and that all the helps in the world are little enough, and too little to keep your souls in the love of God. 4. And such an ungodly companion will be to you a continual temptation to sin. Instead of stirring you up to good, you will have one to stir you up to evil, to passion or discontent, or covetousness, or pride, or revenge, or sensuality. And can you not sin enough without such a tempter? 5. And what a continual grief will it be to you, if you are believers, to have a child of the devil in your bosom! and to think how far you

must be separated at death! and in what torments those must lie for ever, that are so dear unto you now! 6. Yea such companions will be uncapable of the principal part of your love. You may love them as husbands or wives, but you cannot love them as saints or members of Christ. And how great a want this will be in your love, those know that know what this holy love is.

Quest. 'But how can I tell who are godly, when there is so much hypocrisy in the world?' Answ. At least you may know who is ungodly if it be palpably discovered. I take not a barren knowledge for ungodliness, nor a nimble tongue for godliness: judge of them by their love: such as a man's love is, such is the man: if they love the Word, and servants, and worship of God, and love a holy life, and hate the contrary, you may close with such, though their knowledge be small, and their parts be weak. But if they have no love to these, but had rather live a common, careless, carnal life, you may well avoid them as ungodly.

Quest. 'But if ungodly persons may marry, why may not I marry with one that is ungodly?' Answ. Though dogs and swine may join in generating, it followeth not, men or women may join with them. Pardon the comparison (while Christ calleth the wicked dogs and swine), it doth but shew the badness of your consequence. Unbelievers may marry, and yet we may not marry with unbelievers. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God—wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, &c."

Quest. 'But I make no doubt but they may be converted: God can call them when he will: if there be but love, they will easily be won to be of the mind as those they love are?' Answ. 1. Then it seems because you love an ungodly person, you will be easily turned to be ungodly. If so, you are not much better already. If love will not draw you to their mind to be ungodly, why should you think love will draw them to your mind to be godly? Are you stronger in grace than they are in sin? 2. If you know well what grace is, and what a sinful, unrenewed soul is, you would not think it so easy a matter to convert a soul. Why are there so few converted, if it be so easy a thing? You cannot make yourselves better by adding higher degrees to the grace you have: much less can you make another better, by giving them the grace which they have not. 3. It is true that God is able to convert them when he will: and it is true that for aught I know it may be done. But what of that? Will you in so weighty a case take up with a mere possibility? God can make a beggar rich, and for aught you know to the contrary, he will do it: and yet you will not therefore marry a beggar? nor will you marry a leper, because God can heal him? Why then should you marry an ungodly person, because God can convert him? See it done first, if you love your peace and safety.

Quest. 'But what if my parents command me to marry an ungodly person?' Answ. God having forbidden it, no parent hath authority to command you to do so great a mischief to yourself, no more than to cut your own throats, or to dismember your bodies.

Quest. 'But what if I have a necessity of marrying, and can get none but an ungodly person?' Answ. If that really be your case, that your necessity be real, and you can get no other, I think it is lawful.

Quest. 'But is it not better have a good-natured person that is ungodly, than an ill-natured person that is religious, as many such

are? And may not a bad man be a good husband?' Answ. 1. A bad man may be a good tailor, or shoe-maker, or carpenter, or seaman, because there is no moral virtue necessary to the well-doing of their work. But a bad man cannot be simply a good magistrate, or minister, or husband, or parent, because there is much moral virtue necessary to their duties. 2. A bad nature unmortified and untamed is inconsistent with true godliness: such persons may talk and profess what they please; but "if any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." 3. I did not say that godliness alone is all that you must look after: though this be the first, yet more is necessary.

Direct. VII. 'Next to the fear of God, make choice of a nature, or temperament that is not too, much unsuitable to you.' A crossness of dispositions will be a continual vexation: and you will have a domestic war instead of love, especially make sure of these following qualities. 1. That there be a loving, and not a selfish nature, that hath no regard to another but for their own end. 2. That there be a nature competently quiet and patient, and not intolerably froward, and unpleasable. 3. That there be a competency of wit: for no one can live lovingly and comfortably with a fool. 4. That there be a competent humility: for there is no quietness to be expected with the proud. 5. That there be a power to be silent, as well as to speak: for a babbling tongue is a continual vexation.

Direct. VIII. 'Next to grace and nature, have a due and moderate respect to person, education and estate.' 1. So far have respect to the person as that there be no unhealthfulness to make your condition over-burdensome; nor any such deformity as may hinder your affections. 2. And so far have respect to parentage and education as that there be no great unsuitableness of mind, nor any prejudicate

opinions in religion, which may make you too unequal. Differing opinions in religion are much more tolerable in persons more distant, than in so near relations. And those that are bred too high in idleness and luxury, must have a thorough work of grace to make them fit for a low condition, and cure the pride and sensuality which are taken for the honourable badges of their gentility; and it is scarce considerable how rich such are: for their pride and luxury will make even with all, and be still in greater want, than honest, contented, temperate poverty.

Direct. IX. 'If God call you to marriage, take notice of the helps and comforts of that condition, as well as of the hindrances and troubles; that you may cheerfully serve God in it, in the expectation of his blessing.' Though man's corruption have filled that and every state of life with snares and troubles, yet from the beginning it was not so; God appointed it for mutual help, and as such it may be used. As a married life hath its temptations and afflictions, so it hath its peculiar benefits, which you are thankfully to accept and acknowledge unto God. 1. It is a mercy in order to the propagating of a people on earth to love and honour their Creator, and to serve God in the world and enjoy him for ever. It is no small mercy to be the parents of a godly seed; and this is the end of the institution of marriagez. And this parents may expect, if they be not wanting on their part; however sometimes their children prove ungodly. 2. It is a mercy to have a faithful friend, that loveth you entirely, and is as true to you as yourself, to whom you may open your mind and communicate your affairs, and who would be ready to strengthen you, and divide the cares of your affairs and family with you, and help you to bear your burdens, and comfort you in your sorrows, and be the daily companion of your lives, and partaker of your joys and sorrows. 3. And it is a mercy to have so near a friend to be a helper to your soul; to join with you in prayer and other holy exercises; to

watch over you and tell you of your sins and dangers, and to stir up in you the grace of God, and remember you of the life to come, and cheerfully accompany you in the ways of holiness. "A prudent wife is from the Lord." Thus it is said, "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lordb."

Direct. X. 'Let your marriage covenant be made understandingly, deliberately, heartily, in the fear of God, with a fixed resolution faithfully to perform it.' Understand well all the duties of your relation before you enter into it: and run not upon it as boys to a play, but with the sense of your duty, as those that engage themselves to a great deal of work of great importance towards God and towards each other. Address yourselves therefore beforehand to God for counsel, and earnestly beg his guidance, and his blessing, and run not without him, or before him. Reckon upon the worst, and foresee all temptations which would diminish your affections, or make you unfaithful to each other: and see that you be fortified against them all.

Direct. XI. 'Be sure that God be the ultimate end of your marriage, and that you principally choose that state of life, that in it you may be most serviceable to him; and that you heartily devote yourselves, and your families unto God; that so it may be to you a sanctified condition.' It is nothing but making God our guide and end that can sanctify our state of life. They that unfeignedly follow God's counsel, and aim at his glory, and do it to please him, will find God owning and blessing their relation. But they that do it principally to please the flesh, to satisfy lust, and increase their estates, and to have children surviving them to receive the fruit of their pride and covetousness, can expect to reap no better than they sow; and to have the flesh, the world, and the devil the masters of their family, according to their own desire and choice.

Direct. XII. 'At your first conjunction (and through the rest of your lives) remember the day of your separation.' And think not that you are settling yourselves in a state of rest, or felicity, or continuance, but only assuming a companion in your travels. Whether you live in a married or an unmarried life, remember that you are hasting to the everlasting life, where there is neither "marrying nor giving in marriage." You are going as fast to another world in one state of life as in the other. You are but to help each other in your way, that your journey may be the easier to you, and that you may happily meet again in the heavenly Jerusalem. When worldlings marry, they take it for a settling themselves in the world; and as regenerate persons begin the world anew, by beginning to lay up a treasure in heaven; so worldlings call their marriage, their beginning the world, because then as engaged servants to the world, they set themselves to seek it with greater diligence than ever before. They do but in marriage begin (as seekers) that life of foolery, which when he had found what he sought, that rich man ended with a "This I will do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods: and I will say to my soul, Soul thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry: but God said unto him, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" If you would not die such fools, do not marry and live such worldlings.

Tit. 2. Cases of Marriage

Quest. I. 'What should one follow as a certain rule, about the prohibited degrees of consanguinity or affinity? seeing 1. The law of Moses is not in force to us. 2. And if it were, it is very dark, whether it may by parity of reason be extended to more degrees than are named in the text. 3. And seeing the law of nature is so hardly legible in this case?'

Answ. 1. It is certain that the prohibited degrees are not so statedly and universally unlawful, as that such marriage may not be made lawful by any necessity. For Adam's sons did lawfully marry their own sisters.

2. But now the world is peopled, such necessities as will warrant such marriages must needs be very rare, and such as we are never like to meet with.

3. The law of nature is it which prohibiteth the degrees that are now unlawful; and though this law be dark as to some degrees, it is not so as to others.

4. The law of God to the Jews, doth not prohibit those degrees there named, because of any reason proper to the Jews, but as an exposition of the law of nature, and so on reasons common to all.

5. Therefore, though the Jewish law cease (yea, never bound other nations) formally as that political national law; yet as it was God's exposition of his own law of nature, it is of use, and consequential obligation to all men, even to this day; for if God once had told but one man, 'This is the sense of the law of nature,' it remaineth true, and all must believe it; and then the law of nature itself, so expounded, will still oblige.

6. The world is so wide for choice, and a necessity of doubtful marriage is so rare, and the trouble so great, that prudence telleth every one that it is their sin, without flat necessity, to marry in a doubtful degree; and therefore it is thus safest, to avoid all degrees that seem to be equal to those named Lev. 18 and to have the same reason, though they be not named.

7. But because it is not certain that indeed the unnamed cases have the same reason, (while God doth not acquaint us with all the reasons of his law) therefore when the thing is done, we must not censure others too deeply, nor trouble ourselves too much about those unnamed, doubtful cases. We must avoid them beforehand, because else we shall cast ourselves into doubts and troubles unnecessarily; but when it is past, the case must be considered of as I shall after open.

Quest. II. 'What if the law of the land forbid more or fewer degrees than Lev. 18 doth?'

Answ. If it forbid fewer, the rest are nevertheless to be avoided as forbidden by God. If it forbid more, the forbidden ones must be avoided in obedience to our ruler.

Quest. III. 'Is, the marriage of cousin-germans, that is, of brothers' children, or sisters' children, or brothers' and sisters' children, unlawful?'

Answ. I think not; 1. Because not forbidden by God. 2. Because none of that same rank are forbidden; that is, none that on both sides are two degrees from the root. I refer the reader for my reasons to a Latin Treatise of Charles Butler on this subject, for in those I rest. As all the children of Noah's sons did marry their cousin-germans, (for they could not marry in any remoter degree) so have others since without reproof, and none are forbidden. 3. But it is safest to do otherwise, because there is choice enough beside, and because many divines being of the contrary opinion, may make it matter of scruple and trouble afterwards, to those that venture upon it without need.

Quest. IV. 'What would you have those do that have married cousin-germans, and now doubt whether it be lawful so to do?'

Answ. I would have them cast away such doubts, or at least conclude that it is now their duty to live peaceably in the state in which they are: and a great sin for them to be separated on such scruples. The reason is, because, if it be not certain, that the degree is lawful, at least no man can be certain that it is unlawful. And for husband and wife to break their covenants and part, without a necessary cause, is a great sin: and that which no man can prove to be a sin, is no necessary or lawful cause of a divorce. Marriage duties are certainly commanded to the married, but the marriage of cousin-germans is not certainly forbidden. Therefore if it were a sin to marry so, to them that doubted; or if they are since fallen into doubt whether it was not a sin; yet may they be sure that the continuance of it is a duty, and that all they have to do is to repent of doing a doubtful thing, but not to part, nor to forbear their covenanted duties. No, nor to indulge or suffer those troublesome scruples, which would hinder the cheerful discharge of their duties, and the comfortable serving of God in their relations.

Quest. V. 'What should those do that are married in those degrees which are not forbidden by name in Lev. 18 and yet are at the same distance from the root with those that are named, and seem to have the same reason of unlawfulness?'

Answ. If there be clearly a parity of degree and also of the reason of the prohibition, then no doubt but they must part as incestuous, and not continue in a forbidden state. But because divines are disagreed whether there be in all instances a parity of the reason of the prohibition, where there is an equal distance as to degrees; and so in those cases some think it a duty to be separated, and others think it enough to repent of their conjunction and not to be separated, because the case is doubtful (as the controversy sheweth), I shall not venture to cast in my judgment in a case, where so many and such

men are disagreed; but shall only advise all to prevent such troublesome doubts beforehand, and not by rashness to run themselves into perplexities, when there is no necessity; unless they will call their carnal ends or sinful passions, a necessity.

Quest. VI. 'But if a man do marry in a degree expressly there forbidden, is it in all cases a sin to continue in that state? If necessity made such marriage a duty to Adam's children, why may not necessity make the continuance lawful to others? As suppose the king or parents command it? suppose the woman will die or be distracted with grief else? suppose one hath made a vow to marry no other, and yet cannot live single, &c.?' Here I shall suppose, that if a lustful person marry a kinswoman that he may have change, as foreknowing that he must be divorced, punishment, and not continuance in the sin must be his sentence: and if one that hath married a kinswoman be glad to be divorced, because he hateth her or loveth change, punishment must rebuke him, but he must not continue in incest.

Answ. 1. Natural necessity justified Adam's children, and such would now justify you. Yea, the benediction "Increase and multiply," did not only allow, but oblige them then to marry, to replenish the earth (when else mankind had ceased); but so it doth not us now when the earth is replenished. Yet I deny not, but if a man and his sister were cast alone upon a foreign wilderness, where they justly despaired of any other company, if God should bid them there "increase and multiply," it would warrant them to marry. But else there is no necessity of it, and therefore no lawfulness. For 2. A vicious necessity justifieth not the sin. If the man or woman that should abstain will be mad or dead with passion, rather than obey God, and deny and mortify their lust, it is not one sin that will justify them in another. The thing that is necessary, is to conform their wills to the law of

God, and if they will not, and then say, 'They cannot,' they must bear what they get by it. 3. And it is no necessity that is imposed by that command of king or parents, which is against the law of God. 4. No, nor by a vow neither: for a vow to break God's law is not an obligation to be kept, but to be repented of; nor is the necessity remediless which such a one bringeth on himself, by vowing never to marry any other; seeing chastity may be kept.

Quest. VII. 'Is it lawful for one to marry, that hath vowed chastity during life, and not to marry, and afterward findeth a necessity of marrying, for the avoiding lust and fornication?'

Answ. I know that many great divines have easily, absolved those, that under Popery vowed chastity. The principal part of the solution of the question, you must fetch from my solution of the Case of Vows, Part iii. Chap. v. Tit. 2. At the present this shall suffice to be added to it. 1. Such vows of chastity that are absolute, without any exceptions of after alterations or difficulties that may arise, are sinfully made, or are unlawful 'quoad actum jurandi..'

2. If parents or others impose such oaths and vows on their children or subjects, or induce them to it, it is sinfully done of them, and the 'actus imperantium' is also unlawful.

3. Yet as long as the 'materia jurata' 'the matter vowed' remaineth lawful, the vow doth bind, and it is perfidiousness to break it. For the sinfulness of the imposer's act proveth no more, but that such a command did not oblige you to vow. And a vow made arbitrarily without any command, doth nevertheless bind. And the sinfulness of the making of the vow, doth only call for repentance; (as if you made it causelessly, rashly, upon ill motives, and to ill ends, or in ill circumstances, &c.) But yet that vow which you repent that ever you made, must be nevertheless kept, if the thing vowed be a lawful

thing, and the act of vowing be not made a nullity (though it was a sin). And when it is a nullity, I have shewed in the forecited place.

4. A vow of celebate or chastity during life, which hath this condition or exception expressed or implied in the true intent of the votary (unless any thing fall out which shall make it a sin to me not to marry), may in some cases be a lawful vow: as to one that foreseeth great inconveniences in marriage, and would by firm resolution fortify himself against temptations and mutability.

5. If there were no such excepting thought in the person vowing, yet when the thing becometh unlawful, the vow is not to be kept; though it oblige us under guilt for sinful making it, yet God commandeth us not to keep it, because we vowed that which he forbad us not only to vow but to do.

6. Either the Papists suppose such exceptions to be always implied by their votaries, or at least that they are contained in the law of God, or else sure they durst never pretend that the pope hath power to dispense with such vows; (as they have oft done for princes, men and women, that they might be taken from a monastery to a crown.) For if they suppose, that the persons before the dispensation are under the obligation of their vow, and bound by God to keep it, then it would be too gross and odious blasphemy for the pope to claim a power of disobliging them, and dissolving God's commands; and not only antichristianity, but antitheistical, or a setting himself above God Almighty, under pretence of his own commission. But if they only pretend to dissolve such vows judicially or decisively; by judging when the person is no longer obliged to keep them by God's law, then they suppose, that the obligation of God's law is ceased, before they judicially declare it to be ceased. And if that were all that the pope

undertook, he had no power to do it out of his own parish, nor more than any lawful bishop hath in his proper charge.

7. The matter of a vow of celibate or chastity is then unlawful, when it cannot be kept without greater sin than that life of chastity escapeth, and which would be escaped if it were forsaken; or without the omission of greater duty, and amission of greater good, than that life of chastity containeth or attaineth. For the further opening of this, let it be noted, that,

8. It is not every degree of sin which marriage would cure, that will warrant the breach of a vow of chastity. As if I had some more lustful thoughts or instigations and irritations in a single life than I should have if I married. The reason is, because, 1. No man liveth without some sin, and it is supposed that there are greater sins of another kind, which by a life of chastity I avoid. And the breach of the vow itself is a greater matter than a lustful thought.

9. So it is not every degree of good which by marriage I may attain or do, that will warrant it against a vow of chastity. Because I may do and get a greater good by chastity, and because the evil of perjury is not to be done that good may be done by it; till I can prove, that it is not only good in itself, but a duty 'hic et nunc' to me.

10. A man should rather break his vow of celebate, than once commit fornication, if there were a necessity that he must do the one. Because fornication is a sin which no vow will warrant any man to commit.

11. A man should rather break his vow of celebate, than live in such constant or ordinary lust, as unfitteth him for prayer, and a holy life, and keepeth him in ordinary danger of fornication, if there were a necessity that he must do the one. The reason is also because now the

matter vowed is become unlawful, and no vow can warrant a man to live in so great sin, (unless there were some greater sin on the other side which could not be avoided in a married life, which is hardly to be supposed, however popish priests think disobedience to the pope, and the incommodity and disgrace of a married life, &c. to be a greater sin than fornication itself.)

12. If a prince vow chastity, when it is like to endanger the kingdom for want of a safe and sure succession, he is bound to break that vow; because he may not lawfully give away the people's right, nor do that which is injurious to so many.

13. Whether the command of a parent or prince may dissolve the obligation of a vow of celibate, I have answered already. I now say but this, 1. When parents or princes may justly command it, we may justly obey them. But this is not one of those accidental evils, which may be lawfully done, though unlawfully commanded. 2. It is parents that God hath committed more of this care and power to, about children's marriage, than to princes. 3. Parents nor princes may not lawfully command the breach of such a vow, (not nullified at first) except in such cases as disoblige us, whether they do it or not; so that the resolving of the main case doth suffice for all.

14. He that by lawful means can overcome his lust, to the measure before mentioned, is under no necessity of violating his vow of single life.

15. I think that it is not one of twenty that have bodies so unavoidably prone to lust, but that by due means it might be so far (though not totally) overcome, without marriage, fornication, wilful self-pollution, or violent, vexatious, lustful thoughts. That is, 1. If they employ themselves constantly and diligently in a lawful calling, and be not guilty of such idleness, as leaveth room in their minds and

imaginations for vain and filthy thoughts. If they follow such a calling as shall lay a necessity upon them to keep their thoughts close employed about it. 2. If they use such abstinence and coarseness in their diet, as is meet to tame inordinate lusts, without destroying health: and not only avoid fullness and gulosity, and vain sports and pleasures, but also use convenient fasting, and tame the body by necessary austerities. 3. If they sufficiently avoid all tempting company and sights, and keep at a meet distance from them. 4. If they set such a restraint upon their thoughts as they may do. 5. If they use such a quality of diet and physic, as is most apt for the altering of those bodily distempers, which are the cause. 6. And lastly, If they are earnest in prayer to God, and live in mortifying meditations, especially in a constant familiarity with a crucified Christ, and with the grave, and with the heavenly society. He that breaketh his vow to save himself the labour and suffering of these ungrateful means, I take to be perfidious, though perhaps he sinfully made that vow. And no greater a number are excusable for continence after such a vow, than these that have bodies so extraordinary lustful, as no such other means can tame, and those forementioned that have extraordinary accidents to make a single life unlawful.

16. It must not be forgotten here, that if men trust to marriage itself alone as the cure of their lust, without other means, such violent lusts as nothing else will cure, may possibly be much uncured afterwards. For adulterers are as violent in their lusts as the unmarried, and ofttimes find it as hard to restrain them. And therefore the married as well as others have need to be careful to overcome their lust. And the rather because it is in them a double sin.

17. But yet when all other means do fail, marriage is God's appointed means, to quench those flames from which men's vows cannot, in cases of true necessity, disoblige them.

CHAPTER II

Directions for the right Choice of Servants and Masters

PART I

Directions for the right Choice of Servants

SERVANTS being integral parts of the family, who contribute much to the holiness or unholiness of it, and to the happiness or misery of it, it much concerneth masters to be careful in their choice. And the harder it is to find such as are indeed desirable, the more careful and diligent in it should you be.

Direct. I. 'To bid you choose such as are fittest for your service, is a direction which nature and interest will give you, without any persuasions of mine.' And indeed it is not mere honesty or piety that will make a good servant, nor do your work. Three things are necessary to make a servant fit for you: 1. Strength. 2. Skill. 3. Willingness. And no two of these will serve without the third. Strength and skill without willingness, will do nothing: skill and willingness without strength, can do nothing: strength and willingness without skill, will do as bad, or worse than nothing. No less than all will make you a good servant. Therefore choose one, 1. That is healthful. 2. That hath been used to such work as you must employ him in: and, 3. One that is not of a fleshpleasing, or lazy,

sluggish disposition. For to exact labour from one that is sickly will seem cruelty: and to expect labour from one that is unskilful and unexercised will seem folly: and heavy, fleshly, slothful persons, will do all with so much unwillingness, and pain, and weariness, that they will think all too much, and their service will be a continual toil and displeasure to them, and they will think you wrong them, or deal hardly with them, if you will not allow them in their fleshliness and idleness. Yea, though they should have grace, a phlegmatic, sluggish, heavy body, will never be fit for diligent service; any more than a tired, horse for travel.

Direct. II. 'If it be possible, choose such as have the fear of God, or at least such as are tractable and willing to be taught, and not such as are ungodly, sensual, and profane.' For, 1. "God hateth all the workers of iniquity." And it tendeth not to the blessing or safety of your family, to have in it such as are enemies to God, and hated by him. You cannot expect an equal blessing on their labours, as you may on the service of those that fear him. The wicked may bring a curse on the families where they are (if you wilfully entertain them): when a Joseph may be a blessing even to the house of an unbeliever. A wicked man will be renewing those crimes, which will be the shame of your family, and a grief to your hearts, if you have any love to God yourselves: when a godly servant will pray for a blessing from God upon his labours, and is himself under a promise, that "whatever he doth shall prosper." 2. Ungodly servants for the most part will be mere eye-servants: they will do little more than they find necessary to escape reproof and blame: some few of them indeed out of love to their masters, or out of a desire of praise, or to make their places the better to themselves, will be diligent and trusty: but ordinarily they are deceitful, and study more to seem good servants, than to be such, and to hide their faults, than to avoid them: for they make no great matter of conscience of it, nor do they regard the eye

of God: whereas a truly godly servant will do all your service in obedience to God, as if God himself had bid him do it, and as one that is always in the presence of that master, whose favour he preferreth before all the world: he is more careful to please God, who commandeth him to be faithful, than to please you by seeming better than he is: he is moved more to his duty by the reward which God hath promised him, than by the wages which he expecteth from you: he hath a tender, purified conscience, which will hold him to his duty, as well when you know it not, as when you stand by. 3. Ordinarily, ungodly servants will be false, if they have but opportunity to enrich themselves by deceiving you: especially those that are intrusted in laying out money, in buying and selling. As long as I name no particular persons, I think it no untrustiness, but my duty, to warn masters whom they trust, by my experience from the confessions of those that have been guilty. Many servants whom God hath converted to his love and fear, have told me how constantly they deceived their masters in buying and selling before their conversion; even of so great sums of money, that some of them were not able to restore it (when I made them know it was their duty so far as they were able): and some of them had so much unquietness of conscience till it was restored, that I have been fain to give them money to restore, when I have convinced them of it: so that I know by such confessions, that such deceit and robbing of their masters is a very ordinary thing among ungodly servants that have opportunity, that yet pass for very trusty servants, and are never discovered. 4. Also an ungodly servant will be a tempter to the rest, and will be drawing them to sin: especially to secret wantonness, and uncivil carriage, if not to actual fornication; and to revellings, and merriments, and fleshly courses: by swearing, and taking God's name in vain, and, cursing, and lying they will teach your children and other servants to do the like; and so to be an infectious pestilence in your families. 5. And they will hinder any good which you would do

on others. If there be any in your family under convictions, and in a hopeful way to a better condition, they will quench all, and discourage them and hinder their conversion; partly by their contradicting cavils, and partly by their scorns, and partly by their diverting, idle talk, and partly by their ill examples, and alluring them to accompany them in their sin. Whereas on the contrary a godly servant will be drawing the rest of your family to godliness, and hindering them from sin, and persuading them to be faithful in their duty both to God and you.

Direct. III. 'Yet measure not the godliness of a servantly his bare knowledge or words, but by his Love and Conscience.' A great deal of self-conceited talkativeness about religion may stand with an unsanctified heart and life: and much weakness in knowledge and utterance, may stand with sincerity. But you may safely judge those to be truly golly, 1. Who love godliness, and love the Word and servants of God, and hate all wickedness. 2. And those that make conscience to do their duty, and to avoid known sin both openly and in secret.

Direct. IV. 'If necessity constrain you to take those that are unfit and bad, remember that there is the greater duty incumbent on you, to carry yourself towards them in a vigilant, convincing manner, so as tendeth most to make them better.' Take them not as you buy a horse or an ox, with a purpose only to use them for your work: but remember they have immortal souls which you take charge of.

PART II

Directions for the right Choice of Masters

SEEING the happiness of a servant, the safety of his soul, and the comfort of his life, depend very much upon the family and place

which he liveth in, it much concerneth every prudent servant to be very careful in what place or family he take up his abode, and to make the wisest choice he can.

Direct. I. 'Above all be sure that you choose not for mere fleshly ease and sensuality, and take not that for the best place for you, where you may have most of your own carnal will and pleasure.' I know that fleshly, graceless servants, will hear this Direction with as ill a will, as a dog when he is forbidden his meat or carrion. I know I speak against their very nature, and therefore against their very hearts, and therefore they will think I speak against their interest and good: and therefore I may persuade them to this course a hundred times, before they will believe me, or obey my counsel. All ungodly, fleshly servants, do make these the only signs of a good place, or desirable service for them: 1. If they may do what work they will, and avoid that which they dislike: if they may do that which is easy, and not that which is hard: and that which is an honour to them, and not that which seemeth inferior and base. 2. If they may work when they will, and give over when they will. 3. If they may rise when they will, and go to bed when they will. 4. If they may eat and drink what they will, and fare well to the pleasing of their appetites. 5. If they may speak when they will, and what they have a mind to speak. 6. If they may have leave when they will to sport, and play, and be wanton and vain, and waste their time, which they call being merry. 7. If they may wear the best apparel and go fine. 8. If their masters will be liberal to them, to maintain all this, and will give them what they would have. 9. If their masters and fellow servants carry it respectfully to them, and praise them, and make somebody of them, and do not dishonour them, nor give them any displeasing words. 10. And if they are not troubled with the precepts of godliness, nor set to learn the Scripture, or catechized, nor called to account about the state of their souls, or the ground of their hope for the life to come, nor troubled

with much praying, or repeating sermons, or religious exercise or discourse, or any thing that tendeth to their salvation: nor be restrained from any sin, which they have a mind to; nor reproved for it when they have done it. These are an ungodly, carnal person's conditions, or signs of a good service. Which is, in a word, to have their own wills and fleshly desires, and not to be crossed by their masters' wills, or the will of God: which in effect is, to have the greatest helps to do the devil's will, and to be damned.

Direct. II. 'See that it be your first and principal care, to live in such a place where you have the greatest helps and smallest hindrances to the pleasing of God, and the saving of your souls: and in such a place where you shall have no liberty to sin, nor have your fleshly will fulfilled, but shall be best instructed to know and do the will of God, and under him the will of your superiors.' It is the mark of those whom God forsaketh, to be given up to their own wills, or "to their own hearts' lusts, to walk in their own counsels." "To live after the flesh," is the certain way to endless miseryc. To be most subject to the will of God, with the greatest mortification and denial of our own wills, is the mark of the most obedient, holy soul. Seeing then that holiness and self-denial, the loving of God, and the mortifying of the flesh, are the life of grace, and the health and rectitude of the soul, and the only way (under Christ) to our salvation; you have great reason to think that place the best for you, in which you have most helps for holiness and self-denial: and not only to bear patiently the strictness of your superiors, and the labour which they put you upon for your souls, but also to desire and seek after such helps, as the greatest mercies upon earth. "First seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness: labour not (first) for the food that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life." Take care first that your souls be provided for, and take that for the best service which helpeth you most in the service of God, to your salvation.

Direct. III. 'If it be possible, live where there is a faithful, powerful, convincing minister, whose public teaching, and private counsel you may make use of for your souls.' Live not, if you can avoid it, under an ignorant, dead, unprofitable teacher, that will never afford you any considerable help to lift up your hearts to a heavenly conversation. But seeing you must spend the six days in your labour, live where you have the best helps, to spend the Lord's day, for the quickening and comforts of your souls; that in the strength of that holy food, you may cheerfully perform your sanctified labours, on the week days following. Be not like those brutish persons, that live as if there were no life but this; and therefore take care to get a place, where their bodies may be well fed and clothed, and may have ease, and pleasure, and preferment for the world; but care not much what teacher there is, to be their guide to heaven; nor whether ever they be seriously foretold of the world to I come, or not.

Direct. IV. 'Live, if you can obtain so great a mercy, with superiors that fear God, and will have a care of your souls, as well as of your bodies, and will require you to do God's service as well as their own: and not with worldly, ungodly masters, that will use you as they do their beasts, to do their work, and never take care to further your salvation.' For, 1. The curse of God is in the families of the ungodly, and who would willingly live in a house that God hath cursed, any more than in a house that is haunted with evil spirits! But God himself doth dwell with the godly, and by many promises hath assured them of his love and blessing. "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked; but he blesseth the habitation of the just." "The wicked are overthrown, and are not; but the house of the righteous shall standf." "The house of the wicked shall be overthrown; but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish." "The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked: God overthroweth the wicked for their wickednessh." Go not into a falling house. 2. A master that

feareth God, will help to save you from sin and hell, and help your souls to life eternal: he may do more for you, than if he make you kings and rulers of the earth. He will hinder you from sin: he will teach you to know God, and to prepare for your salvation. Whereas ungodly masters will rather discourage you, and by mocks or threatenings, seek to drive you from a holy life, and use their wit, and work, and authority, to hinder your salvation: or at best will take little care of your souls but think if they provide you food and wages, they have done their parts. 3. A master that feareth God will do you no wrong, but will love you as a Christian, and his fellow-servant of Christ, while he commandeth and employeth you as his own servant, which cannot be expected from ignorant, ungodly, worldly men.

Direct. V. 'Yet choose such a service as you are fit to undergo, with the least hindrance of the service of God, and of your souls.' Neither a life of idleness, nor of excess of business should be chosen, if you have your choice. For when the mind is overwhelmed with the cares of your service, and your bodies tired with excessive labour, you will have little time, or heart, or power, to mind the matters of your souls with any seriousness. Yea, the Lord's day will be spent with little comfort, when the toil of the week days hath left the body fit for nothing but to sleep. A service which alloweth you no time at all to pray, or read the Scripture, or mind your everlasting state, is a life more fit for beasts than men.

Direct. VI. 'If you can attain it, live where your fellow-servants fear God, as well as the master of the family.' For fellow-servants usually converse with one another more frequently and familiarly than their masters do with any of them. And therefore if a master give you the most heavenly instructions, the idle, frothy talk of fellow-servants may blot out all from your memories and hearts. And their derision of a holy life, or their bad examples, may do more hurt, than the

precepts of the governors can do good. Whereas when a master's counsels are seconded by the good discourse and practice of fellow-servants, it is a great encouragement to good, and keepeth the heart in a continual warmth and resolution.

Direct. VII. 'If you want any one of these accommodations, be the more diligent in such an improvement of the rest, as may make up your want.' If you have a good teacher and a bad master, improve the helps of your teacher the more diligently. If you have a bad master and good fellow-servants, or a good master and bad fellow-servants, thank God for that which you have, and make the best of it.

Direct. VIII. 'If you would be accommodated yourselves with the best master and usage, labour to be the best servants; and then it is two to one but you may have your choice.' Good servants are so scarce, and so much valued, that the best places would strive for you, if you will strive to be such. Excel others in labour and diligence, and trustiness, and obedience, and gentleness, and patience, and then you may have almost what places you desire. But if you will yourselves be idle, and slothful, and deceitful, and false, and disobedient, and unmannerly, and self-willed, and contentious, and impatient, and yet think that you must be respected, and used as good and faithful servants, it is but a foolish expectation. For what obligation is there upon others, in point of justice, to give you that which you deserve not? Indeed if any be bound to keep you in mere charity, then you may plead charity with them and not desert: but if they take you but as servants, they owe you nothing but what your work and virtues shall deserve.

CHAPTER III

A Disputation, or Arguments to prove the Necesssity of Family Worship and Holiness, or Directions against the Cavils of the Profane, and some Sectaries, who deny it to be a Thing required by God

Whether the solemn Worship of God, in and by Families as such, be of Divine Appointment? Aff.

THAT excellent speech of Mirandula is oft in mind, 'Veritatem philosophia quærit, theologia invenit, religio possidet.' I do therefore with greater alacrity and delight dispute these points that are directly religious, that is, immediately practical, than those that are only remotely such: and though I am loath we should see among us any wider division 'inter philosophum theologum et religiosum' than between the fantasy, the intellect, and the will, which never are found disjunct in any act; or rather than between the habits of practical natural knowledge, and the habits of practical supernatural knowledge, and the practical resolutions, affections and endeavours, into which both the former are devolved; yet may we safely and profitably distinguish, where it would be mortal to divide. If, disputing in our present case, do but tend to, and end in, a religious performance, we shall then be able to say, we disputed not in vain; when by experience of the delight and profit of God's work, we perceive that we do not worship him in vain: otherwise to evince by a dispute, that God should be worshipped; and not to worship him when we have done, is but to draw forth our learning, and sharpen our wits to plead our condemnation; as if the accuser wanted our help, or the Judge of all the world did want evidence and arguments against us, unless he had it from our own mouth. Concerning the sense of the terms, I shall say somewhat, both as to the subject, and the predicate, that we contend not in the dark; and yet but little, lest I trouble myself and you with needless labours.

1. By 'the worship of God' we mean not only, nor principally, obedience as such: or service in common things, called 'Δρλεία:' but we mean a religious performance of some sacred actions, with an intention of honouring God as God; and that more directly than in common works of obedience. This being commonly called 'Λατρεία' is by Austin and since him by all the orthodox, appropriated to God alone, and indeed to give it to any other is contrary to its definition.

This worship is of two sorts, whereof the first is by an excellency called 'worship,' viz. When the honour of God is so directly the end and whole business of the work, that our own advantage falls in but impliedly, and in evident subordination: such are the blessed works of praise and thanksgiving, which we here begin and shall in heaven perpetuate. Yet see a more admirable mystery of true religion; we indeed receive more largely from God, and enjoy more fully our own felicity in him, in these acts of worship, that give all to God, than in the other wherein we more directly seek for somewhat from him. And those are the second sort of worship-actions, viz. When the substance or matter of the work is a seeking, or receiving somewhat from God, or delivering something religiously in his name, and so is more directly for ourselves; though it is God that should be our ultimate end in this too. You may perceive I make this of three sorts. Where of the first consisteth in our religious addresses to God for something that we want; and is called prayer. The second consisteth in our religious addresses to God to receive somewhat from him; viz. 1. Instructions, precepts, promises, threatenings, from his mouth, messengers, &c. 2. The sacramental signs of his grace in baptism and the Lord's supper. The third is, when the officers of Christ do in his name solemnly deliver either his laws or sacraments. His laws either in general by ordinary preaching, or by a more particular application in acts of discipline.

2. The word 'solemn' signifies sometimes any thing usual and so some derive it, 'Solenne est quod fieri solet.' Sometimes that which is done but on one set day in the year; and so some make 'solenne' to be 'quasi solum semel in anno.' But vulgarly it is taken, and so we take it here, for both 'celebre et usitatum,' that is, a thing that is not accidentally and seldom, but statedly and ordinarily to be done, and that with such gravity and honourable seriousness as beseems a business of such weight.

3. By 'family' we mean, not a tribe or stock of kindred, dwelling in many houses as the word is taken oft in Scripture, but I mean a household.

'Domus et familia,' a 'household and family,' are indeed in economics somewhat different notions, but one thing. 'Domus' is to 'familia' as 'civitas' to 'respublica,' the former is made the subject of the latter, the latter the 'finis internus' of the former. And so 'Domus est societas naturæ consentanea, e personis domesticis, vitæ in dies omnes commode sustentandæ causa, collecta. Familia est ordo domus per regimen patris-familias in personas sibi subjectas.'

Where note, that to a complete family must go four integral parts 'Pater familias, mater familias, filius, servus.' 'A father, mother, son, and servant.' But to the essence of a family it sufficeth if there be but the 'pars imperans, et pars subsida', one head or governor, either father, mother, master, or mistress; and one or more governed under this head.

Note therefore that the governor is an essential part of the family, and so are some of the governed (viz. that such there be) but not each member. If therefore twenty children, or servants shall worship God without the father, or master of the family either present himself, or in some representative, it is not a family worship in strict sense. But

if the head of the family in himself (or delegate or representative) be present, with any of his children or servants, though all the rest be absent, it is yet a family duty; though the family be incomplete and maimed (and so is the duty therefore, if culpably so performed).

4. When I say 'in and by' a family, I mean not that each must do the same parts of the work, but that one (either the head or some one deputed by him, and representing him) be the mouth, and the rest performing their parts by receiving instructions, or mentally concurring in the prayers and praise by him put up. Lastly, by 'divine appointment' I mean any signification of God's will, that it is men's duty to perform this. Whether a signification by natural means or supernatural, directly or by consequence, so we may be sure it is God's will. The sum of the question then is, 'Whether any sacred actions religiously and ordinarily to be performed to God's honour by the head of the family, with the rest, be by God's appointment made our duty?' My thoughts of this question I shall reduce to these heads, and propound in this order. 1. I shall speak of family worship in general. 2. Of the sorts of that worship in special. 3. Of the time.

I. Concerning the first, I lay down my thoughts in these Propositions following, for limitation and caution, and then prove the main conclusion.

Prop. 1. It is not all sorts of God's worship which he hath-appointed to be performed by families as such; there being some proper to more public assemblies.

2. More particularly the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, are proper to the ministerial or organized churches, and not common to families: for as they are both of them committed only to ministers of the Gospel, and have been only used by them for many hundred years in the church: (except that some

permitted others to baptize in case of necessity.) So the Lord's supper was appointed for a symbol and means of a more public communion than that of families. And though some conjecture the contrary, from its first institution, and think that as there is a family prayer and church prayer, family teaching and church teaching; so there should be family sacraments and church sacraments, yet it is a mistake. For though Christ administered it to his family, yet it was not as a family, but as a church. For that which is but one family may possibly be a church also. This exposition we have from the doctrine rind practice of the apostles, and constant custom of all the churches which have never thought the Lord's supper to be a family duty, but proper to larger assemblies, and administrable only by ordained ministers. Nor will the reasons drawn from circumcision, and the passover prove the contrary; both because particular churches were not then instituted as now; and therefore families had the more to do: and because there were Some duties proper to families in the very institution of those sacraments. And because God gave them a power in those, which he hath not given to masters of families now in our sacraments.

3. Many thousands do by their own viciousness and negligence disable themselves; so that they cannot perform what God hath made their duty: yet it remains their duty still: some disability may excuse them in part, but not in whole.

I shall now prove, that the solemn worship of God in and by families as such, is of Divine appointment.

Argument I. If families are societies of God's, institution, furnished with special advantages and opportunities for God's solemn worship, having no prohibition so to use them; then the solemn worship of

God in and by families as such, is of Divine appointment. But the antecedent is true; therefore so is the consequent.

For the parts of the antecedent, 1. That families are societies of God's institution, needeth no proof.

2. That they are furnished with special advantages and opportunities may appear by an enumeration of particulars. (1.) There is the advantage of authority in the ruler of the family, whereby he may command all that are under him in God's worship, yea, and may inflict penalties on children and servants that refuse; yea, may cast some out of the family if they be obstinate. (2.) He hath the advantage of a singular interest in wife and children, by which he may bring them to it willingly, that so they may perform a right evangelical worship. (3.) He hath the advantage of a singular dependance of all upon him for daily provisions; and of his children for their portions for livelihood in the world, whereby he may yet further prevail with them for obedience: he having a power to reward, as well as to punish and command. (4.) They have the opportunity of cohabitation, and so are still at hand, and more together, and so in readiness for such employments. (5.) Being nearest in relation, they are more strongly obliged to further each other's salvation, and help each other in serving God. (6.) They have hereby an advantage against all prejudices and jealousies, which strangeness and mistakes may raise and cherish among those that live at a greater distance, and so may close more heartily in God's worship. And their nearness of relation and natural affections do singularly advantage them for a more affectionate conjunction, and so for a more forcible and acceptable worship of God, when they are in it as of one heart and soul. (7.) If any misunderstanding or other impediment arise, they being still at hand, have opportunity to remove move them, and to satisfy each other; and if any distempers

of understanding, heart or life be in the family, the ruler, by familiarity and daily converse, is enabled more particularly to fit his reproofs and exhortations, confessions and petitions accordingly, which even ministers in the congregations cannot so well do. So that I have made it evident in this enumeration, that families have advantages, yea, special and most excellent advantages and opportunities for the solemn worship of God.

3. The last part of the antecedent was, that they have no prohibition to use these advantages and opportunities to God's solemn worship. I add this, lest any should say, though they have such, advantages, yet God may restrain them for the avoiding some greater inconveniencies another way; as he hath restrained women from speaking in the assemblies. But (1.) God hath neither restrained them in the law of nature, nor in the written law; therefore not at all. He that can shew it in either, let him do it. (2.) I never yet read or heard any knowing Christian once affirm that God hath forbidden families solemnly to worship him, and therefore I think it needless to prove a negative, when no man is known to hold the affirmative. Indeed for some kinds of worship, as preaching and expounding Scripture, some have prohibited them; but not reading, catechizing, all instructing, praying, praises, singing psalms, much less all solemn worship wholly. So much for the antecedent.

I now come to prove the consequence. 1. The foresaid advantages and opportunities are talents given by God, which they that receive, are obliged faithfully to improve for God; therefore families having such advantages and opportunities for God's solemn worship, are bound to improve them faithfully for God, in the solemn worshipping of him. For the antecedent, 1. It is unquestionable that these are talents, that is, improvable mercies given by God. For as none dare deny them to be mercies, so none dare (I hope) say that God is not the

giver of them. And then 2. That such talents must be improved faithfully for God, from whom they are received, is plain, (1.) From Matt. 25 throughout, especially from verse 14. to verse 31. And Luke 20:10. he requireth the fruits of his vineyard, and Matt. 10:42. if he intrust us with a cup of cold water, he expecteth it for a prophet when be calleth for it. And if he intrust us with outward riches, he expecteth that "we give to him that asketh." His stewards must give an account of their stewardships. Christ telleth us of all our talents in general, that, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him will they ask the moreb." And of our words in particular Christ tells us, that "of every idle word men shall give an account at the day of judgment." Much more for denying to use both our tongues and hearts in God's worship, when he gives us such opportunities. "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithfuld." "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." &c. Many more of the like Scriptures prove the antecedent of the enthymeme, and the consequent needs no proof.

Arg. II. The solemn worship of God in and by families as such, is required by the very law of nature, therefore it is of Divine institution. The consequence can be denied by no man that renounceth not reason and nature itself; denying the law of nature to be God's law, which is indeed partly presupposed in the law supernatural, and partly rehearsed in it, but never subverted by it. Positives are more mutable than naturals are.

The antecedent is thus manifested. 1. Natural reason (or the law of nature) requireth that all men do faithfully improve all the talents that God hath intrusted them with, to his honour: therefore natural

reason (or the law of nature) doth require, that God be solemnly worshipped in families; he having given them such advantages as aforesaid thereunto. 2. The law of nature requireth, that all societies that have God for their founder and institutor, should, to their utmost capacities, be devoted to him that founded and instituted them: but that God is the founder and institutor of families, is known by the light of nature itself: therefore the law of nature requireth, that families be to the utmost of their capacities devoted to God; and consequently, that they solemnly worship him, they being capable of so doing. I need not prove the major, because I speak only to men that are possessed of the law of nature mentioned in it: and therefore they know it themselves to be true. Yet let me so far stay on the illustration, as to tell you the grounds of it. And 1. God is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the principal efficient and ultimate end of all: and therefore of families. And therefore they should be for him, as well as they are from him: for "of him, and through him, and to him are all things." This argument I draw from nature, which can have no beginning but God, nor any end but God. The 2. I draw from the Divine intention, in the fabrication and ordination of all things. God made all things for himself, and can have no ultimate end below himself. The 3. I draw from his 'jus dominii,' his right of propriety which he hath over all things, and so over families as such: they are all absolutely his own alone. And that which is solely or absolutely a man's own, should be for his use, and employed to his honour and ends: much more that which is God's, seeing man is not capable of such a plenary propriety of any thing in the world, as God hath in all things. 4. I argue a 'jure imperii,' from God's right of government. If he have a full right of government of families, as families, then families as families must honour and worship him according to their utmost capacities. But he hath a full right of absolute government over families, as families; therefore—The consequence of the major is grounded on these two things: 1. That God himself is the end of his

own government: this is proper to his regimen. All human government is said by politicians to be terminated ultimately in the public good of the society. But God's pleasure and glory is the end of his government, and is, as it were, the public or universal good. 2. In that nature teacheth us, that supreme honour is due to all that are supreme governors; therefore they are to have the most honourable titles, of majesty, highness, excellency, &c., and actions answerable to those titles, "If I be a father, where is mine honour? if I be a master, where is my fear?" Fear is oft put for all God's worship. If then there be no family where of God is not the Father or Founder, and the Master, or Owner and Governor, then there is none but should honour and fear him, or worship him, and that not only as single men, but as families: because he is not only the Father and Master, the Lord and Ruler of them as men, but also as families. Honour is as due to the rector, as protection to the subjects, and in our case much more. God is not a mere titular but real Governor. All powers on earth are derived from him, and are indeed his power. All lawful governors are his officers, and hold their places under him, and act by him. As God therefore is the proper Sovereign of every commonwealth, and the Head of the church; so is he the Head of every family. Therefore as every commonwealth should perform such worship or honour to their earthly sovereign, as is due to man; so each society should, according to their capacities perform Divine worship and honour to God. And if any object, That by this rule commonwealths, as such, must meet together to worship God, which is impossible; I answer, They must worship him according to their natural capacities; and so must families according to theirs. The same general precept obligeth to a diverse manner of duty according to the divers capacities of the subject. Commonwealths must in their representatives at least, engage themselves to God as commonwealths, and worship him in the most convenient way that they are capable of. Families may meet together for prayer, though a

nation cannot. As an association of churches called a provincial or national church, is obliged to worship God, as well as particular congregations, yet not in one place; because it is impossible: nature limiteth and maketh the difference.

And that the obligation of families to honour and worship God, may yet appear more eminently, consider that God's right of propriety and rule is twofold, yet each title plenary alone. 1. He is our Owner and Ruler upon his title of creation. 2. So he is by his right of redemption. By both these he is not only Lord and Ruler of persons, but families; all societies being his. And the regimen of persons being chiefly exercised over them in societies. "All power in heaven and earth is given unto Christ:" "and all judgment committed unto himh:" "and all things delivered into his hands:" "and therefore to him shall every knee bow, both of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth:" (either with a bowing of worship, or of forced acknowledgment:) and "every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Bowing to and confessing Christ voluntarily to God's glory, is true worship: all must do this according to their several capacities: and therefore families according to theirs.

A third consideration which I thought to have added but for illustration, may well stand as an argument itself; and it is this:

Arg. III. If besides all the forementioned opportunities and obligations, families do live in the presence of God, and ought by faith to apprehend that presence, then is it God's will that families as such should solemnly worship him. But the former is true, therefore the latter.

The consequence of the major, which alone requires proof, I prove by an argument 'a fortiori,' from the honour due to all earthly

governors. Though when a king, a father, a master are absent, such actual honour, to be presented to them is not due, because they are not capable of receiving it (further than 'mediante aliqua persona, vel re,' which beareth some representation of the superior, or relation to him); yet when they stand by, it is a contemptuous subject, a disobedient child, that will not perform actual honour, or human worship to them. Now God is ever present not only with each person as such, but also with every family as such. As he is said to walk among the golden candlesticks in his churches, so doth he in the families of all by his common presence, and of his servants by his gracious presence. This they easily find by his directing them, and blessing the affairs of their families. If any say, 'We see not God, else we would daily worship him in our families.' Answ. Faith seeth him who to sense is invisible. If one of you had a son that were blind and could not see his own father, would you think him therefore excusable, if he would not honour his father, when he knew him to be present? We know God to be present, though flesh be blind and cannot see him.

Arg. IV. If Christian families (besides all the forementioned advantages and obligations) are also societies sanctified to God, then is it God's will that families, as such, should solemnly worship him; but Christian families are societies sanctified to God: Therefore, &c.

The reason of the consequence is, because things sanctified must in the most eminent sort, that they are capable, be used for God. To sanctify a person or thing, is to set it apart, and separate it from a common or unclean use, and to devote it to God, to be employed in his service. To alienate this from God, or not to use it for God, when it is dedicated to him, or sanctified by his own election and separation of it from common use, is sacrilege. God hath a double right (of creation and redemption) to all persons. But a treble right to

the sanctified. Ananias his fearful judgment was a sad example of God's wrath, on those that withhold from him what was devoted to him. If Christian families as such, be sanctified to God, they must as such worship him in their best capacity.

That Christian families are sanctified to God, I prove thus; 1. A society of holy persons must needs be a holy society. But a family of Christians is a society of holy persons; therefore, 2. We find in Scripture not only single persons, but the societies of such sanctified to God. "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, he hath chosen thee to be a special people to himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth." So the body of that commonwealth did all jointly enter into covenant with God, and God to, them. "Thou hast vouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways; and the Lord hath vouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, that thou mayst be an holy people to the Lordm." Joshua (chap. 24) devoteth himself and his house to the Lord; "I and my house will serve the Lord." And Abraham by circumcision (the covenant, or seal of the covenant of God) consecrated his whole household to God; and so were all families after him to do (as to the males in whom the whole was consecrated). And whether besides the typifying intent, there were not something more in the sanctifying of all the first-born to God, who if they lived, were to be the heads of families, may be questioned.

The passover was a family duty, by which they were yet further sanctified to God. Yea, it is especially to be observed how in the New Testament the Holy Ghost doth imitate the language of the Old, and speak of God's people, as of holy societies, as the Jews were. As in many prophecies it was foretold that nations and kingdoms should serve him (of which I have spoken more in my Book of Baptism); and among those who should "mourn over him whom they have pierced"

in gospel times, when the spirit of grace and supplication is poured forth, are "the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart, the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; every family, even all the families that remained apart, and their wives apart." So Christ sendeth his disciples to "baptize nations," having discipled them; and "the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Christ." And as God saith of the Jews, "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me above all people; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nationo;" so doth Peter say of all Christians; "Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should shew forth the praises of him that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Mark how fully this text doth prove all that we are about. It speaks of Christians collectively, as in societies, and in societies of all the most eminent sorts; "a generation;" which seems especially to refer to tribes and families: "a priesthood, nation, people;" which comprehendeth all the orders in the nation ofttimes. And in all these respects they are holy, and peculiar, and chosen, to shew, that God's people are sanctified in these relations and societies. And then mark the end of this sanctification, "to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christq; to shew forth the praises of him that hath called your," &c.

Yea, it seems that there was a special dedication of families to God. And therefore we read so frequently of households converted and baptized; though none at age were baptized, but such as seemed believers; yet when they professed faith, they were all together initiated as a household. And it seems, the master's interest and duty were taken to be so great for the conversion of the rest, that as he was not to content himself with his own conversion, but to labour

presently even before his baptism, that his household should join with him, that so the whole family at once might be devoted to God: so God did bless this his own order and ordinance to that end: and where he imposed duty on masters, he usually gave success, so that commonly the whole family was converted and baptized with the ruler of of the family. So Acts 18:8. "Crispus believed on the Lord with all his house, and they were baptized:" and Acts 16:32. Paul promiseth the gaoler, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house; and he and all his were baptized straightway: for he believed in God with all his house," ver. 33, 34. And Lydia is described a "worshipper of God:" "She was baptized and her household." And the angel told Cornelius, that Peter should tell him "words whereby he and all his household should be saved:" who were baptized accordinglyt. And 1 Cor. 1:16. Paul baptized the household of Stephanus. And Christ told Zaccheus, salvation was come that day unto his house, "and he and all his household believed." So that nobleman, John 4:53. Therefore when Christ sent forth his disciples, he saith, "If the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you." So that as it is apparently the duty of every Christian sovereign, to do what he is able to make all his people God's people; and so to dedicate them to God as a holy nation, in a national covenant, as the Israelites were: so is it the unquestionable duty of every Christian ruler of a family, to improve his interest, power, and parts to the uttermost, to bring all his family to be the people of Christ in the baptismal covenant, and so to dedicate all his family to Christ. Yet farther I prove this, in that believers themselves being all sanctified to God, it must needs follow, that all their lawful relations, and especially all commanded states of relation are also sanctified to God; for when themselves are dedicated to God, it is absolutely without reserve, to serve him with all that they have, and in every relation and capacity that he shall set them. It were a madness to

think, that a Christian totally devoted unto God when he is a private man, if he were after made a soldier, a minister, a magistrate, a king, were not bound by his dedication, now to serve God as a soldier, a minister, a magistrate, a king. So he that is devoted to God in a single state, is bound to serve him as a husband, a father, a master, when he comes into that state; we do devote all that we have to God, when we devote ourselves to him.

Moreover the Scripture tells us, that to "the pure all things are pure." And "all things are sanctified to them by the word and prayert;" which is in that they are made the goods, and enjoyments, actions and relations of a sanctified people; who are themselves devoted or sanctified to God: so that all sanctification referreth ultimately and principally to God: 'Quod sanctum Deo sanctum est;' though it may be said subordinately to be sanctified to us. Seeing then it is past all doubt, that every Christian is a man sanctified and devoted to God, and that when every man is so devoted to God, he is devoted to serve him to the utmost capacity in every state, relation or condition that he is in, and with all the faculties he possesseth, it followeth, that those relations are sanctified to God, and in them he ought to worship him and honour him.

Yet further we find in Scripture, that the particular family relations are expressly sanctified; the family complete consisteth of three pairs of relations: husband and wife, parents and children, masters and servants. Husbands must love their wives with an holy love in the Lord, even as "the Lord loved the church, who gave himself for it, to sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church." "Wives must submit themselves to their husbands as unto the Lord; and be subject to them, as the church is to Christx." "Children must obey their parents in the Lord." "Parents must bring up their children in the nurture

and admonition of the Lord." "Servants must be obedient unto their masters as unto Christ, and as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from their hearts with good will, doing service as to the Lord, and not to man; knowing that what good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free; and masters must do the same to them, knowing that their master is in heavena." So that it is evident that every distinct family relation is dedicated or holy to God, and to be used to the utmost for God. I shall have occasion to make further use anon of these texts for the particular sorts of worship, though I now make use of them us for worship in general.

Arg. V. The several sorts of solemn worship in and by Christian families, are found, appointed, used, and commanded in the Scripture, therefore it may well be concluded of worship in the general: seeing the genus is in each species. But this argument brings me to the second part of my undertaking: viz. to prove the point as to some special kinds of worship; which I the more hasten to, because in so doing, I prove the general also.

II. Concerning God's worship in Special, I shall speak to two or three of the chief parts of it, which belong to families.

And 1. of Teachings, under which I comprise,

1. Teaching the letter of the Scripture, (1.) By reading it. (2.) By teaching others to read it. (3.) Causing them to learn it by memory, which is a kind of catechising.

2. Teaching the sense of it.

3. Applying what is so taught by familiar reproofs, admonitions and exhortations.

Prop. II. 'It is the will of God that the rulers of families should teach those that are under them the doctrine of salvation:' i.e. the doctrine of God concerning salvation, and the terms on which it is to be had, and the means to be used for attaining it, and all the duties requisite on our parts in order thereunto.

Before I come to the proof, take these cautions: 1. Where I say men must thus teach, I imply they must be able to teach, and not teach before they are able: and if they be not able it is their own sin, God having vouchsafed them means for enablement. 2. Men must measure their teaching according to their abilities, and not pretend to more than they have, nor attempt that which they cannot perform, thereby incurring the guilt of proud self-conceitedness, profanation, or other abuse of holy things. For example, men that are not able judiciously to do it, must not presume to interpret the original, or to give the sense of dark prophecies, and other obscure texts of Scripture, nor to determine controversies beyond their reach. 3. Yet may such Conveniently study what more learned, able men say to such cases; and tell their families, this is the judgment of Fathers, or Councils, or such and such learned divines. 4. But ordinarily it is the safest, humblest, wisest, and most orderly way for the master of the family to let controversies and obscure Scriptures alone, and to teach the plain, few necessary doctrines commonly contained in catechisms, and to direct in matters of necessary practice. 5. Family teaching must stand in a subordination to ministerial teaching, as families are subordinate to churches: and therefore (1.) Family teaching must give way to ministerial teaching, and never be set against it; you must not be hearing the master of a family, when you should be in a church hearing the pastor: and if the pastor send for servants, or children to be catechised in any fit place or at any fit time, the master is not then to be doing it himself, or to hinder them, but they must go first to the pastor to be taught; also if a pastor come

into a family, the master is to give place, and the family to I hear him first. (2.) And therefore when any hard text, or controversies fall in, the master should consult with the pastor for their exposition, unless it fall out that the master of the family be better learned in the Scripture than the pastor is, which is rare, and rarer should be, seeing unworthy ministers should be removed, and private men that are worthy should be made ministers. And the pastors should be the ablest men in the congregation. Now to the proof, (remembering still that whatsoever proves it the ruler's duty to teach, must needs prove it the families' duty to learn, and to hearken to his teaching that they may learn.

Arg. I. From Deut. 11:18–21. "Therefore shall you lay up these my words in your hearts, and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes, and you shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, and thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon your gates, that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children." The like words are in Deut. 6:6–8. where it is said, "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children." So Deut. 4:9 "Teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons."

Here there is one part of family duty, viz. Teaching children the laws of God, as plainly commanded as words can express it.

Arg. II. From these texts which commend this. Gen. 18:18, 19. "All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him, for I know him that he will command his children and his household after him: and they shall keep the way of the Lord:" and it was not only a command at his death what they should do when he was dead, for 1. It cannot be

imagined that so holy a man should neglect a duty all his lifetime, and perform it but at death and be commended for that. 2. He might then have great cause to question the efficacy. 3. As God commandeth a diligent inculcating precepts on children; so no doubt it is a practice answerable to such precepts, that is here commended, and it is not bare teaching, but commanding that is here mentioned, to shew that it must be an improvement of authority, as well as of knowledge and elocution.

So 2 Tim. 3:15. From a child Timothy knew the Scripture by the teaching of his parents, as appeareth, 2 Tim. 1:5.

Arg. III. Eph. 6:4. "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" 'παιδὲια' translated 'nurture,' signifieth both instruction and correction, shewing that parents must use both doctrine and authority, or force, with their children for the matters of the Lord; and 'νρθεσια' translated 'admonition,' signifieth such instruction as putteth doctrine into the mind, and chargeth it on them, and fully storeth their minds therewith: and it also signifieth chiding, and sometimes correction. And it is to be noted that children must be brought up in this: the word 'εκτρὲφετε' signifying 'carefully to nourish,' importeth that as you feed them with milk and bodily food, so you must as carefully and constantly feed and nourish them with the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is called the nurture and admonition 'of the Lord,' because the Lord commandeth it, and because it is the doctrine concerning the Lord, and the doctrine of his teaching, and the doctrine that leadeth to him.

Arg. IV. Prov. 22:6. "Train up a child in the way where he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.".

Arg. V. From all those places that charge children to "hearken to the instructions of their parents," Prov. 1:8. "My son hear the instruction

of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother." Prov. 6:20. is the like; and 3:22. with many the like. Yea, the son that is stubborn and rebellious against the instruction and correction of a father or mother in gluttony, drunkenness, &c. was to be brought forth to the magistrate, and stoned to death, Deut. 21:18–20. Now all the Scriptures that require children to hear their parents, do imply that the parents must teach their children; for there is no hearing and learning without teaching.

But lest you say that parents and children are not the whole family, (though they may be, and in Abraham's case before mentioned, the whole household is mentioned,) the next shall speak to other relations.

Arg. VI. 1 Pet. 3:7. "Likewise ye husbands dwell with them (your wives) according to knowledge;" and Eph. 5:25, 26. "Love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it." And this plainly implies that this knowledge must be used for the instruction and sanctification of the wife, 1 Cor. 14:34, 35. Women must "keep silence in the church, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are to be under obedience, as also saith the law. If they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home." Which shews that at home their husbands must teach them.

Arg. VII. Col. 3:22–25. Eph. 6:5–8. "Servants must be obedient unto their masters as unto Christ and serve them as serving the Lord Christ," and therefore ministers must command in Christ.

Arg. VIII. 'A fortiori,' fellow Christians must "exhort one another daily while it is called to-day, lest any be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin," much more must the rulers of families do so to wives, children and servants. "If any speak, it must be as the oracles

of God," much more to our own families. "Let the Word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one anotherc;" and much more must a man do this to wife, children and servants, than to those more remote.

Arg. IX. Those that are to be chosen deacons or bishops, must be such as rule their own children and their own household well. Now mark, 1. That this is one of those Christian virtues which they were to have before they were made officers, therefore other Christians must have and perform it as well as they. 2. It is a religious, holy governing, such as a minister is to exercise over his flock that is here mentioned, which is in the things of God and salvation, or else the comparison or argument would not suit, ver. 5. "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he rule the church of God?" But of this more before. I would say more on this point, but that I think it is so clear in Scripture as to make it needless; I pass therefore to the next.

Prop. III. 'Family discipline is part of God's solemn worship or service appointed in his Word;' this is not called worship in so near a sense as some of the rest, but more remotely; yet so it may well be called, in that 1. It is an authoritative act done by commission from God; 2. Upon such as disobey him, and as such. 3. And to his glory, yea, and it should be done with as great solemnity and reverence, as other parts of worship.

The acts of this discipline are first denying the ungodly entrance into the family. 2. Correcting; 3. Or casting out those that are in. I shall be but brief on these.

1. The first you have 2 John 10. "If there come any to you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him

God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

2. The duty of correcting either by corporal, sensible punishment, or by withdrawing some benefit, is so commonly required in Scripture, especially towards children, that I will not stand on it lest I speak in vain what you all know already; and how Eli suffered for neglecting it, you know.

3. The discipline of casting the wicked out of the family (servants I mean who are separable members), you may find Psal. 101:2, 3. 7, 8. "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart, I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house, he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight."

Prop. IV. 'Solemn prayer and praises of God in and by Christian families is of divine appointment.'

1. For proof of this, I must desire you to look back to all the arguments which proved the dueness of worship in general, for they will yet more especially prove this Sort of worship, seeing prayer and praise, are most immediately and eminently called God's worship of any; (under praises I comprehend psalms of praise, and under prayer, psalms of prayer); yet let us add some more.

Arg. I. 'It is God's will that Christians who have' fit occasions and opportunities for prayer arid praises should improve them, but Christian families have fit occasions and opportunities for prayer and praise, therefore it is God's will they should improve them.

The major is evident in many Scripture precepts. "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." "Pray without ceasing: in every thing give thanks, for this

is the will of God concerning youf." "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord, and whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus; giving thanks unto God and the Father by himh." "Continuing instant in prayer." "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints: and for me that utterance may be given me." Many the like texts might be named, every one of which afford an argument for family praises most effectual.

1. If men must pray every where (that is convenient) then sure in their families. But, &c. Erg. 2. If men must pray without ceasing, then sure in their families. 3. If men must in every thing give thanks, then sure in family mercies, and then, according to the nature of them, together. 4. If men must continue in prayer and watch in it (for fit advantages and against impediments), and in thanksgiving, then doubtless they must not omit the singular advantages which are administered in families. 5. If we must continue instant in prayer and supplication, &c. then doubtless in family prayer, in our families, unless that be no place and no prayer. Object. But this binds us no more to prayer in our families than any where else. Answ. Yes, it binds us to take all fit opportunities; and we have more fit opportunities in our own families than in other men's, or than in occasional meetings, or than in any ordinary societies, except the church.

And here let me tell you, that it is ignorance to call for particular express Scripture, to require praying in families, as if we thought the general commands did not comprehend this particular, and were not sufficient. God doth in much wisdom leave out of his written law the

express determination of some of those circumstantials, or the application of general precepts to some of those subjects to which common reason and the light of nature sufficeth to determine and apply them. The Scripture giveth us the general "Pray alway with all manner of prayer in all places," that is, omit no fit advantages and opportunities for prayer: What if God had said no more than this about prayer in Scripture? It seems some men would have said God hath not required us to pray at all (when he requireth us to pray always), because he tells us not when and where, and how oft, and with whom, and in what words, &c. And so they would have concluded God no where bids us pray in secret, nor pray in families, nor pray in assemblies, nor pray with the godly, nor with the wicked, nor pray every day, nor once a week: nor with a book, nor without a book, and therefore not at all. As if the general 'Pray on all fit occasions' were nothing.

But these men must know that nature also and reason are God's light, and Providence oft determineth of such subjects and adjuncts: and the general law, and these together, do put all out of doubt. What if God telleth you, 'He that provideth not for his own, especially those of his household, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel,' and do not tell you either who are your families, and who not, nor what provision you shall make for them, what food, what clothes, or how oft they must feed, &c. Will you say God hath not bid you feed or clothe this child, or that servant? It is enough that God chargeth you to provide for your families, in the Scripture; and that in nature he tell you which are your families, and what provision to make for them, and how oft, and in what quantity, &c. And so if God bid you pray in all places, and at all times, on all occasions (that are fit for prayer), and experience and common reason tell you that families afford most fit times, place, and occasions for prayer, is not this enough, that there are such seasons, and opportunities, and

occasions for family prayer? I refer you to the particular discoveries of them in the beginning where I proved the dueness of worship in general to be there performed. And I refer you also to common reason itself, not fearing the contradiction of any man whose impiety hath not made him unreasonable, and prevailed against the common light of nature. This first general argument were enough, if men were not so averse to their duty that they cannot know, because they will not: but let us therefore add some more.

Arg. II. 'If there be many blessings which the family needeth, and which they do actually receive from God, then it is the will of God that the family pray for these blessings when they need them, and give thanks for them when they have received them: but there are many blessings which the family (as conjunct) needeth and receiveth of God. Therefore the family conjunct, and not only particular members secretly, should pray for them and give thanks for them.

The antecedent is past question; 1. The continuance of the family as such in being. 2. In well being. 3. And so the preservation and direction of the essential members.

4. And the prospering of all family affairs are evident instances: and to descend to more particulars would be needless tediousness. The consequence is proved from many Scriptures, which require those that want mercies to ask them, and those that have received them, to be thankful for them. Object. So they may do singly. Answ. It is not only as single persons but as a society that they receive the mercy: therefore not only as single persons, but as a society should they pray and give thanks: therefore should they do it in that manner, as may be most fit for a society to do it in, and that is, together conjunctly, that it may be indeed a family sacrifice, and that each part may see that the rest join with them. And especially that the ruler may be

satisfied in this, to whom the oversight of the rest is committed: to see that they all join in prayer, which in secret he cannot see, it being not fit that secret prayer should have spectators or witness; that is, should not be secret. But this I intended to make another argument by itself; which because we are fallen on it, I will add next.

Arg. III. If God hath given charge to the ruler of a family to see that the rest do worship him in that family, then ought the ruler to cause them solemnly or openly to join in that worship. But God hath given charge to the ruler of a family, to see that the rest do worship him in that family: therefore, &c.

The reason of the consequence is, because otherwise he can with no convenience see that they do it. For, 1. It is not fit that he should stand by while they pray secretly. 2. Nor are they able vocally to do it, in most families, but have need of a leader; it being not a thing to be expected of every woman, and child and servant (that had wanted good education), that they should be able to pray without a guide, so as is fit for others to hear. 3. It would take up almost all the time of the ruler of many families, to go to them one after another, and stand by them while they pray till all have done; what man in his wits can think this to be so fit a course, as for the family to join together, the ruler being the mouth?

The antecedent I prove thus, 1. The fourth commandment requireth the ruler of the family not only to see that himself sanctifieth the sabbath day, but also that his son and daughter, and man-servant, and maid-servant, his cattle (that is so far as they are capable), yea, and the stranger that is within his gates should do it. 2. It was committed to Abraham's charge to see that all in his family were circumcised: so was it afterwards to every ruler of a family; insomuch as the angel threatened Moses, when his son was uncircumcised. 3.

The ruler of the family was to see that the "Passover" was kept by every one in his family, and so the "feast of weeksm." All that is said before tendeth to prove this, and much more might be said, if I thought it would be denied.

Arg. IV. If God prefer, and would have us prefer, the prayers and praises of many conjunct, before the prayers and praises of those persons dividedly, then is it his will that the particular persons of Christian families should prefer conjunct prayer and praises before disjunct: but the antecedent is true, therefore so is the consequent. Or thus take it for the same argument or another. If it be the duty of neighbours, when they have occasion and opportunity, rather to join together, in praises of common concernment, than to do it dividedly, then much more is this the duty of families: but it is the duty of neighbours: therefore, &c.

In the former argument the reason of the consequence is, because that way is to be taken that God is best pleased with. The reason of the consequence in the latter is, because family members are more nearly related than neighbours, and have much more advantage and opportunity for conjunctions and more ordinary reasons to urge them to it, from the conjunction of their interest and affairs.

There is nothing needs proof but the antecedent, which I shall put past all doubt by these Arguments. 1. Col. 3:16. "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord." Here is one duty of praise required to be done together and not apart only. I shall yet make further use of this text anon. 2. Acts 12:12. "Many were gathered together praying in Mary's house, when Peter came to the door." This was not an assembly of the whole church but a small part: they judged it better to pray together than alone. 3. Acts 20:36.

Paul prayed together with all the elders of the church of Ephesus, when he had them with him; and did not choose rather to let them pray each man alone. 4. James 5:15, 16. James commands the sick to "send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, and the prayer of the faithful shall save the sick, &c." He doth not bid send to them to pray for you; but he would have them join together in doing it. 5. Church prayers are preferred before private on this ground, and we commanded not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, Heb. 10:25. 6. Striving together in prayer is desired, Rom. 15:30. 7. Matt. 18:20. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." 8. Therefore Christ came among the disciples when they were gathered together, after his resurrection. And sent down the Holy Ghost when they were gathered together, Acts 2. "And they continued with one accord in prayer and supplication," Acts 1:14. 24. 2:42. "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they had assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, &c." Acts 4:31. 9. Is not this implied, in Christ's directing his disciples to pray in the plural number "Our Father, &c. Give us this day, &c." 10. The very necessity of the persons proves it, in that few societies are such but that most are unable to express their own wants so largely as to affect their hearts, so much as when others do it that are better stored with affection and expression. And this is one of God's ways for communion and communication of grace: that those that have much may help to warm and kindle those that have less. Experience telleth us the benefit of this. As all the body is not an eye or hand, so not a tongue, and therefore the tongue of the church, and of the family must speak for the whole body: not but that each one ought to pray in secret too: but, (1.) There the heart without the tongue may better serve turn. (2.) They still ought to prefer conjunct prayer. And (3.) The communion of saints is an article of our creed, which binds us to acknowledge it fit to do as much of God's work as we can in

communion with the saints, not going beyond our callings, nor into confusion.

Arg. V. It is a duty to receive all the mercies that God offereth us: but for a family to have access to God in joint prayers and praises, is a mercy that God offereth them: therefore it is their duty to accept it. The major is clear in nature and Scripture, 'Because I have offered and ye refused,' is God's great aggravation of the sin of the rebellious. "How oft would I have gathered you together, and ye would not? All the day long have I stretched out my hand, &c." To refuse an offered kindness, is contempt and ingratitude. The minor is undeniable by any Christian, that ever knew what family prayers and praises were. Who dare say that it is no mercy to have such a joint access to God? Who feels not conjunction somewhat help his own affections, who makes conscience of watching his heart?

Arg. VI. Part of the duties of families are such that they apparently lose their chiefest life and excellency if they be not performed jointly: therefore they are so to be performed.

I mean, singing of psalms which I before proved an ordinary duty of conjunct Christians, therefore of families. The melody and harmony are lost by our separation, and consequently the alacrity and quickening which our affections should get by it. And if part of God's praises must be performed together, it is easy to see that the rest must be so too. (Not to speak of teaching which cannot be done alone.)

Arg. VII. 'Family prayer and praises are a duty owned by the teaching and sanctifying work of the Spirit: therefore they are of God.

I would not argue backwards from the Spirit's teaching to the words commanding, but on these two suppositions, 1. That the experiment

is very general, and undeniable. 2. That many texts of Scripture are brought already for family prayer; and that this argument is but to second them and prove them truly interpreted. The Spirit and the Word do always agree: if therefore I can prove that the Spirit of God doth commonly work men's hearts to a love and favour of these duties, doubtless they are of God. Sanctification is a transcript of the precepts of the word on the heart, written out by the Spirit of God. So much for the consequence.

The antecedent consisteth of two parts, 1. That the sanctified have in them inclinations to these duties. 2. That these inclinations are from the Spirit of God. The first needs no proof being a matter of experience. I appeal to the heart of every sound and stable Christian, whether he feel not a conviction of this duty and an inclination to the performance of it. I never met with one such to my knowledge that was otherwise minded. Object. Many in our times are quite against family prayer, who are good Christians. Answ. I know none of them. I confess I once thought some very good Christians that now are against them, but now they appear otherwise, not only by this but by other things. I know none that cast off these duties, but they took up vile sins in their stead, and cast off other duties as well as these: let others observe and judge as they find. 1. The power of delusion may for a time make a Christian forbear as unlawful, that which his very new nature is inclined to. As some think it unlawful to pray in our assemblies, and some to join in sacraments: and yet they have a spirit within them that inclineth their hearts to it still, and therefore they love it, and wish it were lawful, even when they forbear it upon a conceit that it is unlawful. And so it is possible for a time some may do by family duties: but as I expect that these ere long recover, so for my part I take all the rest to be graceless: prejudice and error as a temptation may prohibit the exercise of a duty, when yet the Spirit of God doth work in the heart an inclination to that duty in sanctifying

it. 2. And that these inclinations are indeed from the Spirit is evident. 1. In that they come in with all other grace. 2. And by the same means. 3. And are preserved by the same means, standing or falling, increasing or decreasing with the rest. 4. And are to the same end. 5. And are so generally in all the saints. 6. And so resisted by flesh and blood. 7. And so agreeable to the Word, that a Christian sins against his new nature, when he neglects family duties. And God doth by his Spirit create a desire after them, and an estimation of them in every gracious soul.

Arg. VIII. Family prayer and praises are a duty, ordinarily crowned with admirable, divine and special blessings: therefore it is of God; the consequence is evident. For though common, outward prosperity may be given to the wicked, who have their portion in this life, yet so is not prosperity of soul.

For the antecedent I willingly appeal to the experience of all the holy families in the world. Who ever used these duties seriously, and found not the benefits? What families be they, in which grace and heavenly-mindedness prosper, but those that use these duties? Compare in all your towns, cities, and villages, the families that read Scriptures, pray, and praise God, with those that do not, and see the difference: which of them abound more with impiety, with oaths, and cursings, and railings, and drunkenness, and whoredoms, and worldliness, &c.: and which abound most with faith, and patience, and temperance, and charity, and repentance, and hope, &c. The controversy is not hard to decide. Look to the nobility and gentry of England; see you no difference between those that have been bred in praying families and the rest? I mean, taking them (as we say) one with another proportionably. Look to the ministers of England; is it praying families or prayerless families that have done most to the well furnishing of the universities.

Arg. IX. All churches ought solemnly to pray to God and praise him: a Christian family is a church: therefore &c.

The major is past doubt, the minor I prove from the nature of a church in general, which is a society of Christians combined for the better worshipping and serving of God. I say not that a family, formally as a family, is a church; but every family of Christians ought moreover, by such a combination to be a church: yea, as Christians they are so combined, seeing Christianity tieth them to serve God conjunctly together in their relations. 2. Scripture expresseth it, 1 Cor. 16:19. "Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house." He saith not which meeteth in their house, but which is in it. So Philemon 2. "And to the church in thy house." Rom. 16:5. "Likewise greet the church that is in their house." Col. 4:15. "Salute the brethren that are at Laodicea and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house." Though some learned men take these to be meant of part of the churches, assembling in these houses, yet Beza, Grotius, and many others acknowledge it to be meant of a family or domestic church, according to that of Tertullian, 'ubi tres licet laici ibi Ecclesia,' yet I say not that such a family-church is of the same species with a particular organized church of many families. But it could not (so much as analogically) be called a church if they might not and must not pray together; and praise God together for these therefore it fully concludeth.

Arg. X. If rulers must teach their families the Word of God, then must they pray with them, but they must teach them: therefore, &c. The antecedent is fully proved by express Scripture already; see also Psal. 78:4–6. Ministers must teach from house to house: therefore rulers themselves must do it. Acts 5:42. 20:20.

The consequence is proved good, 1. The apostles prayed when they preached or instructed Christians in private assemblies, Acts 20:36. and other places. 2. We have special need of God's assistance in reading the Scriptures to know his mind in them, and to make them profitable to us; therefore we must seek it. 3. The reverence due to so holy a business requireth it. 4. We are commanded "in all things to make our requests known to God with prayers, supplications, and thanksgiving, and that with all manner of prayer, in all places, without ceasing;" therefore especially on such occasions as the reading of Scriptures and instructing others: and I think that few men that are convinced of the duty of reading Scripture and solemn instructing their families, will question the duty of praying for God's blessing on it, when they set upon the work. Yea, a Christian's own conscience will provoke him reverently to begin all, with God in the imploring of his acceptance, and aid, and blessing.

Arg. XI. If rulers of families are bound to teach their families to pray, then are they bound to pray with them: but they are bound to teach them to pray: therefore, &c.

In the foregoing argument I speak of teaching in general: here I speak of teaching to pray in special. The antecedent of the major I prove thus. 1. They are bound to bring "them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord:" therefore to teach them to pray and praise God: for "the nurture and admonition of the Lord" containeth that. 2. They are bound to "teach them the fear of the Lord," and "train them up in the way that they should go," and that is doubtless in the way of prayer and praising God.

The consequence appeareth here to be sound, in that men cannot be well and effectually taught to pray, without praying with them, or in their hearing; therefore they that must teach them to pray, must pray

with them. It is like music, which you cannot well teach any man, without playing or singing to him; seeing teaching must be by practising: and in most practical doctrines it is so in some degree.

If any question this, I appeal to experience. I never knew any man that was well taught by man to pray, without practising it before them. They that ever knew any such, may have the more colour to object; but I did not: or if they did, yet so rare a thing is not to be made the ordinary way of our endeavours, any more than we should forbear teaching men the most curious artifices by ocular demonstration, because some wits have learnt them by few words, or of their own invention: they are cruel to children and servants that teach them not to pray by practice and example.

Arg. XII. From 1 Tim. 4:3–5. "Meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving—for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer."

Here mark, 1. That all our meat is to be received with thanksgiving; not only with a disposition of thankfulness. 2. That this is twice repeated here together expressly, yea, thrice in sense. 3. That God created them so to be received. 4. That it is made a condition of the goodness, that is, the blessing of the creature to our use. 5. That the creature is said to be sanctified by God's Word and prayer; and so to be unsanctified to us before. 6. That the same thing which is called thanksgiving in the two former verses, is called prayer in the last; else the consequence of the apostle could not hold, when he thus argues, It is good if it be received with thanksgiving, because it is sanctified by prayer.

Hence I will draw these two arguments: 1. If families must with thanksgiving receive their meat as from God, then, is the thanksgiving of families a duty of God's appointment: but the former

is true, therefore so is the latter. The antecedent is plain: all must receive their meat with thanksgiving: therefore families must. They eat together: therefore they must give thanks together: and that prayer is included in thanksgiving in this text, I manifested before.

2. It is the duty of families to use means that all God's creatures may be sanctified to them: prayer is the means to be used that all God's creatures may be sanctified to them: therefore it is the duty of families to use prayer.

Arg. XIII. From 1 Pet. 3:7. "Likewise ye husbands dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour to the wife as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered." That prayer which is especially hindered by ignorant and unkind converse it is, that is especially meant here in this text. But it is conjunct prayer that is especially so hindered: therefore, &c. I know that secret, personal prayer, is also hindered by the same causes; but not so directly and notably as conjunct prayer is. With what hearts can husband and wife join together as one soul in prayer to God, when they abuse and exasperate each other, and come hot from chidings and dissentions? This seemeth the true meaning of the text. And so, the conjunct prayer of husband and wife being proved a duty, (who sometimes constitute a family,) the same reasons will include the rest of the family also.

Arg. XIV. From Col. 3:16, 17. to 4:4. "Let the Word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord: and whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus; giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives submit yourselves, &c. 4:2. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."

Hence I may fetch many arguments for family-prayers. 1. It appeareth to be family prayers principally that the apostle here speaketh of: for it is families that he speaks to: for in verse 16, 17, he speaketh of prayer and thanksgiving, and in the next words he speaketh to each family relation, wives, husbands, children, parents, servants, masters: and in the next words, continuing his speech to the same persons, he bids them, "continue in prayer, and watch in the same, &c." 2. If neighbours are bound to speak together in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, with grace in their hearts to the Lord, and to continue in prayer and thanksgiving; then families much more, who are more nearly related, and have more necessities and opportunities, as is said before. 3. If whatever we do in word or deed, we must do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks; then families must needs join in giving thanks. For they have much daily business in word and deed to be done together and asunder.

Arg. XV. From Dan. 6:10. "When Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, and his window being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God." Here note, 1. The nature of the duty. 2. The necessity of it. 1. If it had not been open, family-prayer which Daniel here performed, how could they have known what he said? It is not probable that he would speak so loud in secret; nor is it like they would have found him at it. So great a prince would have had some servants in his outward rooms, to have stayed them before they had come so near. 2. And the necessity of this prayer is such, that Daniel would not omit it for a few days to save his life.

Arg. XVI. From Josh. 24:15. "But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord." Here note, 1. That it is a household that is here

engaged: for if any would prove that it extendeth further, to all Joshua's tribe, or inferior kindred, yet his household would be most eminently included. 2. That it is the same thing which Joshua promiseth for his house, which he would have all Israel do for their's: for he maketh himself an example to move them to it.

If households must serve the Lord, then households must pray to him and praise him: but households must serve him: therefore, &c. The consequence is proved, in that prayer and praise are so necessary parts of God's service, that no family or person can be said in general to be devoted to serve God, that are not devoted to them. Calling upon God, is oft put in Scripture for all God's worship, as being a most eminent part: and atheists are described to be such as "call not upon the Lord."

Arg. XVII. The story of Cornelius Acts 10. proveth that he performed family worship: for observe, 1. That ver. 2. he is said to be "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always:" and ver. 30. he saith "at the ninth hour I prayed in my house:" and ver. 24, "he called together his kindred and near friends:" so ver. 11, 14. "thou and all thy house shall be saved:" so that in ver. 2, fearing God comprehendeth prayer, and is usually put for all God's worship: therefore when he is said to fear God with all his house, it is included that he worshipped God with all his house: and that he used to do it conjunctly with them is implied, in his gathering together his kindred and friends when Peter came, not mentioning the calling together his household, as being usual and supposed. And when it is said that he prayed 'ἐν τῷ ὄικω' in his house, it may signify his household, as in Scripture the word is often taken. However the circumstances shew that he did it.

Arg. XVIII. From 1 Tim. 3:4, 5. 12. "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection, with all gravity: for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God: let the deacons be the husbands of one wife: ruling their children and their own houses well." Here mark, that it is such a ruling of their houses, as is of the same nature as the ruling of the church, 'mutatis mutandis,' and that is, a training them up in the worship of God, and guiding them therein: for the apostle maketh the defect of the one, to be a sure discovery of their unfitness for the other. Now to rule the church, is to teach and guide them as their mouth in prayer and praises unto God, as well as to oversee their lives: therefore it is such a ruling of their houses as is prerequisite to prove them fit.

They that must so rule well their own houses, as may partly prove them not unfit to rule the church, must rule them by holy instructions, and guiding them as their mouth in the worship of God. But those mentioned 1 Tim. 3. must so rule their houses: therefore, &c.

The pastors ruling of the church doth most consist in going before them, and guiding them in God's worship; therefore so doth the ruling of their own houses, which is made a trying qualification of their fitness hereunto. Though yet it reach not so high, nor to so many things, and the conclusion be not affirmative 'He that ruleth his own house well is fit to rule the church of God;' but negative, 'He that ruleth not his own house well, is not fit to rule the church of God;' but that is, because, 1. This is a lower degree of ruling, which will not prove him fit for a higher. 2. And it is but one qualification of many that are requisite. Yet it is apparent that some degree of aptitude is proved hence, and that from a similitude of the things. When Paul compareth ruling the house to ruling the church, he

cannot be thought to take them to be wholly heterogeneous: he would never have said, 'He that cannot rule an army, or regiment, or a city, how shall he rule the church of God?' I conclude therefore that this text doth shew that it is the duty of masters of families, to rule well their own families in the right worshipping of God, 'mutatis mutandis,' as ministers must rule the church.

Arg. XIX. If families have special necessity of familyprayer conjunctly, which cannot be supplied otherwise; then it is God's will that family prayer should be in use: but families have such necessities; therefore, &c. The consequent needs no proof; the antecedent is proved by instance. Families have family necessities, which are larger than to be confined to a closet, and yet more private than to be brought still into the assemblies of the church. 1. There are many worldly occasions about their callings and relations, which it is fit for them to mention among themselves, but unfit to mention before all the congregation. 2. There are many distempers in the hearts and lives of the members of the families, and many miscarriages, and disagreements which must be taken up at home, and which prayer must do much to cure, and yet are not fit to be brought to the ears of the church-assemblies. 3. And if it were fit to mention them all in public, yet the number of such cases would be so great, as would overwhelm the minister, and confound the public worship; nay, one half of them in most churches could not be mentioned. 4. And such cases are of ordinary occurrence, and therefore would ordinarily have all these inconveniences.

And yet there are many such cases that are not fit to be confined to our secret prayers each one by himself; because, 1. They often so sin together, as maketh it fit that they confess and lament it together. 2. And some mercies which they receive together, it is fit they seek and give thanks for together. 3. And many works which they do together,

it is fit they seek a blessing on together. 4. And the presence of one another in confession, petition, and thanksgiving doth tend to the increase of their fervour, and warming of their hearts, and engaging them the more to duty, and against sin; and is needful on the grounds laid down before. Nay, it is a kind of family schism, in such cases to separate from one another, and to pray in secret only; as it is church schism to separate from the church-assemblies, and to pray in families only. Nature and grace delight in unity, and abhor division. And the light of nature and grace engageth us to do as much of the work of God in unity, and concord, and communion as we can.

Arg. XX. 'If before the giving of the law to Moses, God was worshipped in families by his own appointment, and this appointment be not yet reversed, then God is to be worshipped in families still. But the antecedent is certain: therefore so is the consequent.

I think no man denieth the first part of the antecedent; that before the flood in the families of the righteous, and after till the establishment of a priesthood, God was worshipped in families or households: it is a greater doubt whether then he had any other public worship. When there were few or no church-assemblies that were larger than families, no doubt God was ordinarily worshipped in families. Every ruler of a family then was as a priest to his own family. Cain and Abel offered their own sacrifices; so did Noah, Abraham, and Jacob.

If it be objected, that all this ceased, when the office of the priest was instituted, and so deny the latter part of my antecedent, I reply, 1. Though some make a doubt of it, whether the office of the priesthood was instituted before Aaron's time, I think there is no great doubt to be made of it; seeing we find a priesthood then among other nations,

who had it either by the light of nature, or by tradition from the church; and Melchizedec's priesthood (who was a type of Christ,) is expressly mentioned. So that though family-worship was then the most usual, yet some more public worship there was. 2. After the institution of Aaron's priesthood family-worship continued, as I have proved before; yea, the two sacraments of circumcision and the passover, were celebrated in families by the master of the house; therefore prayer was certainly continued in families. 3. If that part of worship that was afterward performed in synagogues and public assemblies was appropriated to them, that no whit proveth, that the part which agreed to families as such, was transferred to those assemblies. Nay, it is a certain proof that part was left to families still, because we find that the public assemblies never undertook it. We find among them no prayer but church-prayer; and not that which was fitted to families as such at all. Nor is there a word of Scripture that speaketh of God's reversing of his command or order for family prayer, or other proper family worship. Therefore it is proved to continue obligatory still.

Had I not been too long already, I should have urged to this end the example of Job, in sacrificing daily for his sons; and of Esther's keeping a fast with her maids, Est. 4:16. And Jer. 10:25. "Pour out thy fury on the heathen that know thee not, and on the families that call not on thy name." It is true that by "families" here is meant tribes of people, and by "calling on his name," is meant their worshipping the true God. But yet this is spoken of all tribes without exception, great and small: and tribes in the beginning, (as Abraham's, Isaac's, Jacob's, &c.) were confined to families. And the argument holdeth from parity of reason, to a proper family: and that calling on God's name, is put for his worship, doth more confirm us, because it proveth it to be the most eminent part of worship, or else the whole

would not be signified by it; at least no reason can imagine it excluded. So much for the proof of the fourth proposition.

Objections Answered

Object. I. 'Had it been a duty under the Gospel to pray in families, we should certainly have found it more expressly required in the Scripture.'

Answ. 1. I have already shewed you, that it is plainly required in the Scripture: but men must not teach God how to speak, nor oblige him to make all plain to blind, perverted minds. 2. Those things which were plainly revealed in the Old Testament, and the church then held without any contradiction, even from the persecutors of Christ themselves, might well be past over in the Gospel, and taken as supposed, acknowledged things. 3. The general precepts (to "pray alway,—with all prayer,—in all places," &c.) being expressed in the Gospel, and the light of nature making particular application of them to families, what need there any more? 4. This reason is apparent why Scripture speaketh of it no more expressly. Before Christ's time the worship of God was less spiritual, and more ceremonial than afterward it was: and therefore you find ofter mention of circumcision and sacrificing, than of prayer; and yet prayer was still supposed to concur. And after Christ's time on earth, most Christian families were disturbed by persecution, and Christians sold up all and lived in community: and also the Scripture history was to describe to us the state of the churches, rather than of particular families.

Object. II. 'Christ himself did not use to pray with his family; as appeareth by the disciples asking him to teach them to pray, and by the silence of the Scripture in this point: therefore it is no duty to us.'

Answ. 1. Scripture silence is no proof that Christ did not use it. All things are not written which he did. 2. His teaching them the Lord's prayer, and their desire of a common rule of prayer, might consist with his usual praying with them: at least with his using to pray with them after that, though at first he did not use it. 3. But it is the consequence that I principally deny. (1.) Because Christ did afterwards call his servants to many duties, which he put them not on at first, as sacraments, discipline, preaching, frequenter praying, &c., especially after the coming down of the Holy Ghost. As they understood not many articles of the faith till then, so no wonder if they understood not many duties till then: for Christ would have them thus suddenly instructed and more fully sanctified by a miracle, that their ministry might be more credible, their mission being evidently divine, and they being past the suspicion of forgery and deceit. (2.) And though it is evident that Christ did use to bless the meat, and sing hymns to God with his disciples, and therefore it is very probable, prayed with them often, as John 17. Yet it could not be expected, that he should ordinarily be their mouth in such prayers as they daily needed. His case and ours are exceedingly different. His disciples must daily confess their sins, and be humbled for them, and ask forgiveness: but Christ had none of this to do. They must pray for mortifying grace, and help against sin; but he had no sin to mortify or pray against. They must pray for the Spirit, and the increase of their imperfect graces; but Christ had fulness and perfection. They must pray for many means to these ends, and for help in using them, and a blessing on them which he had no use for. They must give thanks for pardon and conversion, &c. which Christ had no occasion to give thanks for. So that having a High-priest so much separate from sinners, they had one that prayed for them; but not one fit to join with them as their mouth to God, in ordinary family prayers, such as they needed; as masters must do with their families.

Object. III. 'God doth not require either vain and abominable prayers: but family prayers are ordinarily vain and abominable: therefore, &c. The minor is proved thus:—The prayers of the wicked are abominable: most families are wicked, or have wicked persons: therefore, &c.'

Answ. 1. This is confessedly nothing against the prayers of godly families. 2. The prayers of a godly master are not abominable nor vain, because of the presence of others that are ungodly. Else Christ's prayers and blessings before-mentioned should have been vain or abominable, because Judas was there, who was a thief and hypocrite. And the apostles and all ministers' prayers should be so in all such churches, as those of Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus are described to have been. 3. I refer you to my "Method for Peace of Conscience," how far the prayers of the wicked are, or are not abominable. The prayers of the wicked as wicked are abominable; but not as they express their return to God, and repenting of their wickedness. It is not the abominable prayer that God commandeth, but the faithful, penitent prayer. You mistake it, as if the wicked man were not the person commanded to pray; whereas you should rather say, It is not the abominable prayer that is commanded him. He is commanded to pray such prayers as are not abominable; even as Simon Magus, to "repent" and "pray," and "to seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near, and to forsake his wayr." &c. Let the wicked pray thus, and his prayer will not be abominable. The command of praying implieth the command of repenting and departing from his wickedness; for what is it to pray for grace, but to express to God their desires of grace? (It is not to tell God a lie, by saying they desire that which they hate.) Therefore when we exhort them to pray, we exhort them to such desires.

Object. IV. 'Many masters of families cannot pray in their families without a book, and that is unlawful.'

Answ. 1. If their disability be natural, as in idiots, they are not fit to rule families; if it be moral and culpable, they are bound to use the means to overcome it; and in the mean time to use a book or form, rather than not to pray in their families at all.

Of the Frequency and Seasons of Family Worship

The last part of my work is to speak of the fit times of family worship. 1. Whether it should be every day? 2. Whether twice a day? 3. Whether morning and evening? Answ. 1. Ordinarily it should be every day and twice a day: and the morning and evening are ordinarily the fittest seasons. 2. But extraordinarily some greater duty may intervene, which may for that time disoblige us. And the occasions of some families may make that hour fit to one, which is unfit to another. For brevity I will join all together in the proof.

Arg. I. We are bound to take all fit occasions and opportunities to worship God. Families have daily (morning and evening) such occasions and opportunities; therefore they are bound to take them.

Both major and minor are proved before. Experience proveth that family sins are daily committed, and family mercies daily received, and family necessities daily do occur. And reason tells us, 1. That it is seasonable every morning to give God thanks for the rest of the night past. 2. And to beg direction, protection, and provisions, and blessing for the following day. 3. And that then our minds are freest from weariness and worldly care. And so reason telleth us that the evening is a fit season to give God thanks for the mercies of the day, and to confess the sins of the day, and ask forgiveness, and to pray for rest and protection in the night. As nature and reason tell us how oft a

man should eat and drink, and how long he should sleep, and what cloathing he should wear; and Scripture need not tell you the particulars: so if Scripture command you prayer in general, God may by providence tell you when and how oft you must pray.

Arg. II. The Lord's prayer directeth us daily to put up such prayers as belong to families; therefore, &c. "Give us this day our daily bread." It runs all in the plural number. And the reason of it will oblige families as well as individual persons.

Arg. III. From 1 Thes. 5:17. "Pray without ceasing; in all things give thanks." Col. 4:1, 2. "Masters give to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." Col. 3:17. "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus; giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Phil. 4:6. "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." It is easy for a man that is willing to see, that less than twice a day, doth not answer the command of praying "without ceasing,—continually, —in every thing,—whatsoever ye do," &c. The phrases seeming to go much higher.

Arg. IV. Daniel prayed in his house thrice a day; therefore less than twice under the Gospel is to us unreasonable.

Arg. V. 1 Tim. 4:5. "She that is a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayer night and day." Night and day can be no less than morning and evening. And if you say, this is not family prayer, I answer, 1. It is all kind of prayer belonging to her. 2. And if it commend the less, much more the greater.

Arg. VI. From Luke 6:14. 2:37. 18:17. Acts 26:7. 1 Thes. 3:10. 2 Tim. 1:3. Rev. 7:15. Neh. 1:6. Psal. 88:1. Josh. 1:8. Psal. 1:2. which shew that night and day Christ himself prayed, and his servants prayed, and meditated, and read the Scripture.

Arg. VII. Deut. 6:7. 9:19. It is expressly commanded that parents teach their children the Word of God, when they "lie down, and when they rise up;" and the parity of reason, and conjunction of the Word and prayer will prove, that they should also pray with them lying down and rising up.

Arg. VIII. For brevity sake I offer you together, Psal. 119:164. David praised God seven times a day; and 145:2. "Every day will I bless thee." Psal. 5:3. "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer to thee and will look up." 59:16. "I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the mornings." 88:13. "In the morning shall my prayer prevent thee." 92:12. "It is good to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises to thy name, O Most High: to shew forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night." 119:147, 148. "I prevented the dawning of the morning and cried, I hoped in thy word: mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate on thy word." 130:6. "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning, I say more than they that watch for the morning." The priests were to offer "sacrifices" and "thanks to God every morning:" 1 Chron. 23:30. Exod. 30:7. 36:3. Lev. 6:12. 2 Chron. 13:11. Ezek. 46:13–15. Amos 4:4. And Christians are a "holy priesthood, to offer up sacrifices to God, acceptable through Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. 2:5, 9. Expressly saith David, Psal. 55:17. "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice." So morning and evening were sacrifices and burnt offerings offered to the Lord; and there is at least equal reason that Gospel worship should be as frequent: 1

Chron. 16:40. 2 Chron. 2:4. 13:11. 31:3. Ezra 3:3. 2 Kings 16:15. 1 Kings 18:29. 36. Ezra 9:5. And no doubt but they prayed with the sacrifices. Which David intimateth in comparing them, Psal. 141:2. "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." And God calleth for prayer and praise as better than sacrifice, Psal. 50:14, 15. 23.

All these I heap together for dispatch, which fully shew, how frequently God's servants have been wont to worship him, and how often God expecteth it. And you will all confess that it is reason that in Gospel times of greater light and holiness, we should not come behind them in the times of the law: especially when Christ himself doth pray all night, that had so little need in comparison of us. And you may observe that these Scriptures speak of prayer in general, and limit it not to secresy: and therefore they extend to all prayer, according to opportunity. No reason can limit all these examples to the most secret, and least noble sort of prayer. If but two or three are gathered together in his name, Christ is especially among them.

If you say, that by this rule we must as frequently pray in the church assemblies; I answer, the church cannot ordinarily so oft assemble: but when it can be without a greater inconvenience, I doubt not but it would be a good work, for many to meet the minister daily for prayer, as in some rich and populous cities they may do.

I have been more tedious on this subject than a holy, hungry Christian possibly may think necessary, who needeth not so many arguments to persuade him to feast his soul with God, and to delight himself in the frequent exercises of faith and love; and if I have said less than the other sort of readers shall think necessary, let them know that if they will open their eyes, and recover their appetites, and feel their sins, and observe their daily wants and dangers, and

get but a heart that loveth God, these reasons then will seem sufficient to convince them of so sweet, and profitable, and necessary a work: and if they observe the difference between praying and prayerless families, and care for their souls and communion with God, much fewer words than these may serve their turn. It is a dead, and graceless, carnal heart, that must be cured before these men will be well satisfied; a better appetite would help their reason. If God should say in general to all men, You shall eat as often as will do you good: the sick stomach would say, Once a day, and that but a little, is enough, and as much as God requireth; when another would say, Thrice a day is little enough. A good and healthful heart is a great help, in the expounding of God's Word, especially of his general commandments. That which men love not, but are weary of, they will not easily believe to be their duty. The new nature, and holy love, and desires, and experience of a sound believer, do so far make all these reasonings needless to him, that I must confess I have written them principally to convince the carnal hypocrite, and to stop the mouths of wrangling enemies.

CHAPTER IV

General Directions for the holy Government of Families

THE principal thing requisite to the right governing of families is the fitness of the governors and the governed thereto, which is spoken of before in the Directions for the Constitution. But if persons unfit for their relations, have joined themselves together in a family, their first duty is to repent of their former sin and rashness, and presently to turn to God, and seek after that fitness which is necessary to the right discharge of the duties of their several places: and in the governors of

families, these three things are of greatest necessity hereunto. I. Authority. II. Skill. III. Holiness and readiness of will.

I. Gen. Direct. 'Let governors maintain their authority in their families.' For if once that be lost, and you are despised by those you should rule, your word will be of no effect with them; you do but ride without a bridle; your power of governing is gone, when your authority is lost. And here you must first understand the nature, use, and extent of your authority: for as your relations are different to your wife, your children and your servants, so also is your authority. Your authority over your wife, is but such as is necessary to the order of your family the safe and prudent management of your affairs, and your comfortable cohabitation. The power of love and complicated interest must do more than magisterial commands. Your authority over your children is much greater; but yet only such as conjunct with love, is needful to their good education and felicity. Your authority over your servants is to be measured by your contract with them (in these countries where there are no slaves) in order to your service, and the honour of God. In other matters, or to other ends you have no authority over them. For the maintaining of this your authority observe these following sub-directions.

Direct. I. 'Let your family understand that your authority is of God, who is the God of order, and that in obedience to him they are obliged to obey you.' There is no power but of God; and there is none that the intelligent creature can so much reverence as that which is of God. All bonds are easily broken and cast away (by the soul at least, if not by the body), which are not perceived to be Divine. An enlightened conscience will say to ambitious usurpers, God I know, and his Son Jesus I know, but who are ye?

Direct. II. 'The more of God appeareth upon you, in your knowledge, and holiness, and unblamableness of life, the greater will your authority be in the eyes of all your inferiors that fear God.' Sin will make you contemptible and vile; and holiness, being the image of God, will make you honourable. In the eyes of the faithful a 'vile person is contemned; but they honour them that fear the Lord." "Righteousness exalteth a nation," (and a person) "but sin is a reproach to any peopleb." "Those that honour God he will honour, and those that despise him shall be lightly esteemed." They that give up themselves to "vile affections" and conversationsd, will seem vile when they have made themselves so. "Eli's sons made themselves vile by their sin." I know men should discern and honour a person placed in authority by God, though they are morally and naturally vile: but this is so hard that it is seldom well done. And God is so severe against proud offenders, that he usually punisheth them by making them vile in the eyes of others; at least when they are dead and men dare freely speak of them, their names will rot. The instances of the greatest emperors in the world, both Persian, Roman and Turkish do tell us, that if (by whoredom, drunkenness, gluttony, pride, and especially persecution) they will make themselves vile, God will permit them by uncovering their nakedness, to become the shame and scorn of men; and shall a wicked master of a family think to maintain his authority over others, while he rebelleth against the authority of God?

Direct. III. 'Shew not your natural weakness by passions, or imprudent words or deeds.' For if they think contemptuously of your persons, a little thing will draw them further, to despise your words. There is naturally in man so high an esteem of reason, that men are hardly persuaded that they should rebel against reason to be governed (for order's sake) by folly. They are very apt to think that rightest reason should bear rule. And therefore any silly, weak

expressions, or any inordinate passions, or any imprudent actions, are very apt to make you contemptible in your inferiors' eyes.

Direct. IV. 'Lose not your authority by a neglect of using it.' If you suffer children and servants but a little while to have the head, and to have, and say, and do what they will, your government will be but a name or image. A moderate course between a lordly rigour, and a soft subjection, or neglect of exercising the power of your place, will best preserve you from your inferiors' contempt.

Direct. V. 'Lose not your authority by too much familiarity.' If you make your children and servants your playfellows, or equals, and talk to them, and suffer them to talk to you as your companions, they will quickly grow upon you, and hold their custom; and though another may govern them, they will scarce ever endure to be governed by you, but will scorn to be subject, where they have once been as equal.

II. Gen. Direct. 'Labour for prudence and skilfulness in governing.' He that undertaketh to be a master of a family, undertaketh to be their governor; and it is no small sin or folly to undertake such a place, as you are utterly unfit for, when it is a matter of so great importance. You could discern this in a case that is not your own; as if a man undertake to be a schoolmaster that cannot read or write; or to be a physician, who knoweth neither diseases nor their remedies; or to be a pilot that cannot tell how to do a pilot's work; and why cannot you much more discern it in your own case?

Direct. I. 'To get the skill of holy governing, it is needful that you be well studied in the Word of God:' therefore God commandeth kings themselves that "they read in the law all the days of their lives;" and that "it depart not out of their mouths, but that they meditate in it day and nighth. And all parents must be able to "teach it their children, and talk of it both at home and abroad, lying down and

rising up. All government of men is but subservient to the government of God, to promote obedience to his laws. And it is necessary that we understand the laws which all laws and precepts must give place to and subserve.

Direct. II. 'Understand well the different tempers of your inferiors, and deal with them as they are, and as they can bear; and not with all alike.' Some are more intelligent and some more dull: some are of tender, and some of hardened dispositions; some will be best wrought upon by love and gentleness; and some have need of sharpness and severity: prudence must fit your dealings to their dispositions.

Direct. III. 'You must put much difference between their different faults, and accordingly suit your reprehensions.' Those must be most severely rebuked that have most wilfulness, and those that are faulty in matters of greatest weight. Some faults are so much through mere disability and unavoidable frailty of the flesh, that there is but little of the will appearing in them. These must be more gently handled, as deserving more compassion than reproof. Some are habituate vices, and the whole nature is more desperately depraved than in others. These must have more than a particular correction. They must be held to such a course of life, as may be most effectual to destroy and change those habits. And some there are upright at the heart, and in the main and most momentous things, are guilty but of some actual faults; and of these, some more seldom, and some more frequent; and if you do not prudently diversify your rebukes according to their faults, you will but harden them, and miss of your ends: for there is a family-justice that must not be overthrown, unless you will overthrow your families: as there is a more public justice necessary to the public good.

Direct. IV. 'Be a good husband to your wife, and a good father to your children, and a good master to your servants, and let love have dominion in all your government, that your inferiors may easily find, that it is their interest to obey you.' For interest and self-love are the natural rulers of the world. And it is the most effectual way to procure obedience or any good, to make men perceive that it is for their own good, and to engage self-love for you; that they may see that the benefit is like to be their own. If you do them no good, but are sour, and uncourteous, and closehanded to them, few will be ruled by you.

Direct. V. 'If you would be skilful in governing others, learn first exactly to command yourselves.' Can you ever expect to have others more at your will and government than yourselves? Is he fit to rule his family in the fear of God and a holy life, who is unholy and feareth not God himself? Or is he fit to keep them from passion or drunkenness, or gluttony, or lust, or any way of sensuality, that cannot keep himself from it? Will not inferiors despise such reproofs which are by yourselves contradicted in your lives? You know this true of wicked preachers; and is it not as true of other governors?

III. Gen. Direct. 'You must be holy persons, if you would be holy governors of your families.' Men's actions follow the bent of their dispositions. They will do as they are. An enemy of God will not govern a family for God: nor an enemy of holiness (nor a stranger to it) set up a holy order in his house, and in a holy manner manage his affairs. I know it is cheaper and easier to the flesh to call others to mortification and holiness of life, than to bring ourselves to it: but yet when it is not a bare command or wish that is necessary, but a course of holy and industrious government, unholy persons (though some of them may go far) have not the ends and principles which such a work requireth.

Direct. I. 'To this end, be sure that your own souls be entirely subjected to God, and that you more accurately obey his laws, than you expect any inferior should obey your commands.' If you dare disobey God, why should they fear disobeying you? Can you more severely revenge disobedience; or more bountifully reward obedience, than God can do? Are you greater and better than God himself is?

Direct. II. 'Be sure that you lay up your treasure in heaven, and make the enjoyment of God in glory to be the ultimate commanding end, both of the affairs and government of your family, and all things else with which you are intrusted.' Devote yourselves and all to God, and do all for him: do all as passengers to another world, whose business on earth is but to provide for heaven, and promote their everlasting interest. If thus you are separated unto God, you are sanctified: and then you will separate all that you have to his use and service, and this, with his acceptance, will sanctify all.

Direct. III. 'Maintain God's authority in your family more carefully than your own.' Your own is but for his. More sharply rebuke or correct them that wrong and dishonour God, than those that wrong and dishonour your selves. Remember Eli's sad example: make not a small matter of any of the sins, especially the great sins, of your children or servants. It is an odious thing to slight God's cause, and put up all with 'It is not well done,' when you are fiercely passionate for the loss of some small commodity of your own. God's honour must be greatest in your family: and his service must have the pre-eminence of yours; and sin against him, must be the most intolerable offence.

Direct. IV. 'Let spiritual love to your family be predominant, and let your care be greatest for the saving of their souls, and your

compassion greatest in their spiritual miseries.' Be first careful to provide them a portion in heaven, and to save them from whatsoever would deprive them of it: and never prefer the transitory pelf of earth, before their ever lasting riches. Never be so cumbered about many things, as to forget that one thing is necessary; but choose for yourselves and them the better part.

Direct. V. 'Let your family be neither kept in idleness and flesh-pleasing, nor yet overwhelmed with such a multitude of business, as shall take up and distract their minds, diverting and unfitting them for holy things.' Where God layeth on you a necessity of excessive labours, it must patiently and cheerfully be undergone: but when you draw them unnecessarily on yourselves for the love of riches, you do but become the tempters and tormentors of yourselves and others; forgetting the terrible examples of them, that have this way fallen off from Christ, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Direct. VI. 'As much as is possible, settle a constant order of all your businesses that every ordinary work may know its time, and confusion may not shut out godliness.' It is a great assistance in every calling to do all in a set and constant order: it maketh it easy: it removeth impediments; and promoteth success: distraction in your business causeth a distraction in your minds in holy duty. Some callings I know can hardly be cast into any order or method; but others may, if prudence and diligence be used. God's service will thus be better done, and your work will be better done, to the ease of your servants, and quiet of your own minds. Foresight and skilfulness would save you abundance of labour and vexation.

CHAPTER V

Special Motives to persuade Men to the holy Governing of their Families

IF it were but well understood what benefits come by the holy governing of families, and what mischiefs come by its neglect, there would few that walk the streets among us, appear so odious as those careless, ungodly governors that know not nor mind a duty of such exceeding weight. While we lie all as overwhelmed with the calamitous fruits of this neglect, I think meet to try, if with some, the cause may be removed; by awakening sluggish souls, to do their undertaken work.

Motive I. 'Consider that the holy government of families, is a considerable part of God's own government of the world, and the contrary is a great part of the devil's government.' It hath pleased God to settle as a natural, so a political order in the world and to honour his creatures to be the instruments of his own operations: and though he could have produced all effects without any inferior causes, and could have governed the world by himself alone without any instruments (he being not as kings, constrained to make use of deputies and officers, because of their own natural confinement and insufficiency), yet is he pleased to make inferior causes partakers in such excellent effects, and taketh delight in the frame and order of causes, by which his will among his creatures is accomplished. So that as the several justices in the countries do govern as officers of the king, so every magistrate and master of a family, doth govern as an officer of God. And if his government by his officers be put down or neglected, it is a contempt of God himself, or a rebellion against him. What is all the practical atheism, and rebellion, and ungodliness

of the world, but a rejecting of the government of God? It is not against the being of God in itself considered, that his enemies rise up with malignant, rebellious opposition: but it is against God as the holy and righteous governor of the world, and especially of themselves. And as in an army, if the corporals, sergeants, and lieutenants, do all neglect their offices, the government of the general or colonels is defeated and of little force; so if the rulers of families and other officers of God will corrupt or neglect their part of government, they do their worst to corrupt or cast out God's government from the earth. And if God shall not govern in your families, who shall? The devil is always the governor where God's government is refused; the world and the flesh are the instruments of his government; worldliness and fleshly living are his service: undoubtedly he is the ruler of the family where these prevail, and where faith and godliness do not take place. And what can you expect from such a master?

Motive II. 'Consider also that an ungoverned, ungodly family is a powerful means to the damnation of all the members of it:' it is the common boat or ship that hurrieth souls to hell; that is bound for the devouring gulf; he that is in the devil's coach or boat is like to go with the rest, as the driver or the boatman pleaseth. But a well-governed family is an excellent help to the saving of all the souls that are in it. As in an ungodly family there are continual temptations to ungodliness, to swearing, and lying, and railing, and wantonness, and contempt of God; so in a godly family there are continual provocations to a holy life, to faith, and love, and obedience, and heavenly-mindedness: temptations to sin are fewer there, than in the devil's shops and workhouses of sin; the authority of the governors, the conversation of the rest, the examples of all, are great inducements to a holy life. As in a well-ordered army of valiant men, every coward is so linked in by order, that he cannot choose but fight

and stand to it with the rest, and in a confused rout the valiantest man is borne down by the disorder, and must perish with the rest; even so in a well-ordered, holy family, a wicked man can scarce tell how to live wickedly, but seemeth to be almost a saint, while he is continually among saints, and heareth no words that are profane or filthy, and is kept in to the constant exercises of religion, by the authority and company of those he liveth with. O how easy and clean is the way to heaven, in such a gracious, well-ordered family, in comparison of what it is to them that dwell in the distracted families of profane and sensual worldlings! As there is greater probability of the salvation of souls in England where the Gospel is preached and professed, than in Heathen or Mahometan countries; so is there a greater probability of their salvation that live in the houses and company of the godly, than of the ungodly. In one the advantages of instruction, command, example, and credit, are all on God's side; and in the other they are on the devil's side.

Motive III. 'A holy, well-governed family tendeth not only to the safety of the members, but also to the ease and pleasure of their lives.' To live where God's law is the principal rule, and where you may be daily taught the mysteries of his kingdom, and have the Scriptures opened to you, and be led as by the hand in the paths of life; where the praises of God are daily celebrated, and his name is called upon, and where all do speak the heavenly language, and where God, and Christ, and heaven are both their daily work and recreation; where it is the greatest honour to be most holy and heavenly, and the greatest contention is, who shall be most humble, and godly, and obedient to God and their superiors, and where there is no reviling scorns at godliness, nor any profane and scurrilous talk; what a sweet and happy life is this! Is it not likest to heaven of anything upon earth? But to live where worldliness, and profaneness, and wantonness, and sensuality bear all the sway, and where God is

unknown, and holiness and all religious exercises are matter of contempt and scorn, and where he that will not swear and live profanely doth make himself the hatred and derision of the rest, and where men are known but by their shape and speaking-faculty to be men, nay where men take not themselves for men but for brutes, and live as if they had no rational souls, nor any expectations of another life, nor any higher employments or delights than the transitory concernments of the flesh, what a sordid, loathsome, filthy, miserable life is this! made up by a mixture of beastly and devilish. To live where there is no communion with God, where the marks of death and damnation are written, as it were, upon the doors, in the face of their impious, worldly lives, and where no man understandeth the holy language; and where there is not the least foretaste of the heavenly, everlasting joys; what is this but to live as the serpent's seed, to feed on dust, and to be excommunicated from the face and favour of God, and to be chained up in the prison of concupiscence and malignity, among his enemies, till the judgment come that is making haste, and will render to all men according to their works.

Motive IV. 'A holy and well-governed family, doth tend to make a holy posterity, and so to propagate the fear of God from generation to generation.' It is more comfortable to have no children, than to beget and breed up children for the devil. Their natural corruption is advantage enough to satan, to engage them to himself, and use them for his service: but when parents shall also take the devil's part, and teach their children by precepts or example how to serve him, and shall estrange them from God and a holy life, and fill their minds with false conceits and prejudice against the means of their salvation, as if they had sold their children to the devil; no wonder then if they have a black posterity that are trained up to be heirs of hell. He that will train up children for God, must begin betimes, before sensitive

objects take too deep possession of their hearts, and custom increase the pravity of their nature. Original sin is like the arched Indian fig tree, whose branches turning downwards and taking root, do all become as trees themselves: the acts which proceed from this habitual viciousness, do turn again into vicious habits: and thus sinful nature doth by its fruits increase itself: and when other things consume themselves by breeding, all that sin breedeth is added to itself, and its breeding is its feeding, and every act doth confirm the habit. And therefore no means in all the world doth more effectually tend to the happiness of souls, than wise and holy education. This dealeth with sin before it hath taken the deepest root, and boweth nature while it is but a twig: it preventeth the increase of natural pravity, and keepeth out those deceits, corrupt opinions, and carnal fantasies and lusts, which else would be serviceable to sin and satan ever after: it delivereth up the heart to Christ betime, or at least doth bring him a disciple to his school to learn the way to life eternal; and to spend those years in acquainting himself with the ways of God, which others spend in growing worse, and in learning that which must be again unlearned, and in fortifying satan's garrison in their hearts, and defending it against Christ and his saving grace. But of this more anon.

Motive V. 'A holy, well-governed family, is the preparative to a holy and well-governed church.' If masters of families did their parts, and sent such polished materials to the churches, as they ought to do, the work and life of the pastors of the church would be unspeakably more easy and delightful: it would do one good to preach to such an auditory, and to catechise them, and instruct them, and examine them, and watch over them, who are prepared by a wise and holy education, and understand and love the doctrine which they hear. To lay such polished stones in the building is an easy and delightful work; how teachable and tractable will such be! and how

prosperously will the labours of their pastors be laid out upon them! and how comely and beautiful the churches be, which are composed of such persons! and how pure and comfortable will their communion be! But if the churches be sties of unclean beasts; if they are made up of ignorant and ungodly persons, that savour nothing but the things of the flesh, and use to worship they know not what, we may thank ill-governed families for all this. It is long of them that ministers preach as to idiots or barbarians that cannot understand them; and that they must be always feeding their auditors with milk, and teaching them the principles, and catechising them in the church, which should have been done at home: yea, it is long of them that there are so many wolves and swine among the sheep of Christ, and that holy things are administered to the enemies of holiness, and the godly live in communion with the haters of God and godliness; and that the Christian religion is dishonoured before the heathen world, by the worse than heathenish lives of the professors; and the pollutions of the churches do hinder the conversion of the unbelieving world; whilst they that can judge of our religion no way but by the people that profess it, do judge of it by the lives of them that are in heart the enemies of it; when the haters of Christianity and godliness are the Christians by whose conversations the infidel world must judge of Christianity, you may easily conjecture what judgment they are like to make. Thus pastors are discouraged, the churches defiled, religion disgraced, and infidels hardened, through the impious disorder and negligence of families! What Universities were we like to have, if all the grammar-schools should neglect their duties, and send up their scholars untaught as they received them? and if all tutors must teach their pupils first to spell and read? Even such churches we are like to have, when every pastor must first do the work which all the masters of families should have done, and the part of many score, or hundreds, or thousands, must be performed by one.

Motive VI. 'Well-governed families tend to make a happy state and commonwealth; a good education is the first and greatest work to make good magistrates and good subjects, because it tends to make good men.' Though a good man may be a bad magistrate, yet a bad man cannot be a very good magistrate. The ignorance, or worldliness, or sensuality, or enmity to godliness, which grew up with them in their youth, will shew itself in all the places and relations that ever they shall come into. When an ungodly family hath once confirmed them in wickedness, they will do wickedly in every state of life: when a perfidious parent hath betrayed his children into the power and service of the devil, they will serve him in all relations and conditions. This is the school from whence come all the injustice, and cruelties, and persecutions, and impieties of magistrates, and all the murmurings and rebellions of subjects: this is the soil and seminary where the seed of the devil is first sown, and where he nurseth up the plants of covetousness, and pride, and ambition, and revenge, malignity, and sensuality, till he transplant them for his service into several offices in church and state, and into all places of inferiority, where they may disperse their venom, and resist all that is good, and contend for the interest of the flesh and hell, against the interest of the Spirit and of Christ. But O! what a blessing to the world would they be, that shall come prepared by a holy education to places of government and subjection! And how happy is that land that is ruled by such superiors, and consisteth of such prepared subjects, as have first learnt to be subject to God, and to their parents!

Motive VII. 'If the governors of families did faithfully perform their duties, it would be a great supply as to any defects in the pastor's part, and a singular means to propagate and preserve religion in times of public negligence or persecution.' Therefore Christian families are called churches, because they consist of holy persons,

that worship God, and learn, and love, and obey his Word. If you lived among the enemies of religion, that forbad Christ's ministers to preach his Gospel, and forbad God's servants to meet in church-assemblies for his worship; the support of religion, and the comfort and edification of believers, would then lie almost all upon the right performance of family duties. There masters might teach the same truth to their households, which ministers are forbidden to preach in the assemblies: there you might pray together as fervently and spiritually as you can: there you may keep up as holy converse and communion, and as strict a discipline as you please: there you may celebrate the praises of your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, and observe the Lord's day in as exact and spiritual a manner as you are able: you may there provoke one another to love and to good works, and rebuke every sin, and mind each other to prepare for death, and live together as passengers to eternal life. Thus holy families may keep up religion, and keep up the life and comfort of believers, and supply the want of public preaching, in those countries where persecutors prohibit and restrain it, or where unable or unfaithful pastors do neglect it.

Motive VIII. 'The duties of your families are such as you may perform with greatest peace, and least exception or opposition from others.' When you go further, and would be instructing others, they will think you go beyond your call, and many will be suspicious that you take too much upon you; and if you do but gently admonish a rout of such as the Sodomites, perhaps they will say, "This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge." But your own house is your castle; your family is your charge; you may teach them as oft and as diligently as you will. If the ungodly rabble scorn you for it, yet no sober person will condemn you, nor trouble you for it (if you teach them no evil). All men must confess that nature and

Scripture oblige you to it as your unquestionable work. And therefore you may do it (among sober people) with approbation and quietness.

Motive IX. 'Well-governed families are honourable and exemplary unto others.' Even the worldly and ungodly use to bear a certain reverence to them; for holiness and order have some witness that commendeth them, in the consciences of many that never practised them. A worldly, ungodly, disordered family, is a den of snakes, a place of hissing, railing, folly and confusion: it is like a wilderness overgrown with briars and weeds; but a holy family is a garden of God: it is beautified with his graces, and ordered by hid government, and fruitful by the showers of his heavenly blessing. And as the very sluggard, that will not be at the cost and pains to make a garden of his thorny wilderness, may yet confess that a garden is more beautiful, and fruitful, and delightful, and if wishing would do it, his wilderness should be such; even so the ungodly, that will not be at the cost and pains to order their souls and families in holiness, may yet see a beauty in those that are so ordered, and wish for the happiness of such, if they could have it without the labour and cost of self-denial. And, no doubt, the beauty of such holy and well-governed families hath convinced many, and drawn them to a great approbation of religion, and occasioned them at last to imitate them.

Motive X. 'Lastly, consider, 'That holy, well-governed families are blessed with the special presence and favour of God.' They are his churches where he is worshipped; his houses where he dwelleth: he is engaged both by love and promise to bless, protect, and prosper them. It is safe to sail in that ship which is bound for heaven, and where Christ is the pilot. But when you reject his government, you refuse his company, and contemn his favour, and forfeit his blessing, by despising his presence, his interest, and his commands.

So that it is an evident truth, that most of the mischiefs that now infest or seize upon mankind throughout the earth, consist in, or are caused by the disorders and ill-governedness of families. These are the schools and shops of satan, from whence proceed the beastly ignorance, lust and sensuality, the devilish pride, malignity, and cruelty against the holy ways of God, which have so unmanned the progeny of Adam. These are the nests in which the serpent doth hatch the eggs of covetousness, envy, strife, revenge, of tyranny, disobedience, wars and bloodshed, and all the leprosy of sin that hath so odiously contaminated human nature, and all the miseries by which they make the world calamitous. Do you wonder that there can be persons and nations so blind and barbarous as we read of the Turks, Tartarians, Indians, and most of the inhabitants of the earth? A wicked education is the cause of all, which finding nature depraved, doth sublimate and increase the venom which should by education have been cured; and from the wickedness of families doth national wickedness arise. Do you wonder that so much ignorance, and voluntary deceit, and obstinacy in errors, contrary to all men's common senses, can be found among professed Christians, as great and small, high and low through all the Papal kingdom do discover? Though the pride, and covetousness, and wickedness of a worldly, carnal clergy, is a very great cause, yet the sinful negligence of parents and masters in their families is as great, if not much greater than that. Do you wonder that even in the reformed churches, there can be so many unreformed sinners, of beastly lives, that hate the serious practice of the religion which themselves profess? It is ill education in ungodly families that is the cause of all this. O therefore how great and necessary a work is it, to cast salt into these corrupted fountains! Cleanse and cure these vitiated families, and you may cure almost all the calamities of the earth. To tell what the emperors and princes of the earth might do, if they were wise and good, to the remedy of this common misery, is the idle talk of those negligent

persons, who condemn themselves in condemning others. Even those rulers and princes that are the pillars and patrons of heathenism, Mahometanism, Popery, and ungodliness in the world, did themselves receive that venom from their parents, in their birth and education, which inclineth them to all this mischief. Family reformation is the easiest and the most likely way to a common reformation: at least to send many souls to heaven, and train up multitudes for God, if it reach not to national reformation.

CHAPTER VI

More special Motives for a Holy and Careful Education of Children

BECAUSE the chief part of family care and government consisted in the right education of children, I shall adjoin here some more special Motives to quicken considerate parents to this duty: and though most that I have to say for it be already said in my "Saints' Rest," Part iii. Chap. 14. Sect. 11. &c., and therefore shall be here omitted, yet something shall be inserted, lest the want here should appear too great.

Motive I. 'Consider how deeply nature itself doth engage you to the greatest care and diligence for the holy education of your children.' They are, as it were, parts of yourselves, and those that nature teacheth you to love and provide for, and take most care for, next yourselves: and will you be regardless of their chief concernments? and neglective of their souls? Will you no other way shew your love to your children, than every beast or bird will to their young, to cherish them till they can go abroad and shift for themselves, for corporal sustenance? It is not dogs or beasts that you bring into the world, but children that have immortal souls; and therefore it is a

care and education suitable to their natures which you owe them: even such as conduceth most effectually to the happiness of their souls. Nature teacheth them some natural things without you, as it doth the bird to fly; but it hath committed it to your trust and care to teach them the greatest and most necessary things: if you should think that you have nothing to do but to feed them, and leave all the rest to nature, then they would not learn to speak: and if nature itself would condemn you, if you teach them not to speak, it will much more condemn you, if you teach them not to understand both what they ought to speak and do. They have an everlasting inheritance of happiness to attain: and it is that which you must bring them up for. They have an endless misery to escape: and it is that which you must diligently teach them. If you teach them not to escape the flames of hell, what thanks do they owe you for teaching them to speak and go? If you teach them not the way to heaven and how they may make sure of their salvation, what thanks do they owe you for teaching them how to get their livings a little while in a miserable world? If you teach them not to know God, and how to serve him, and be saved, you teach them nothing, or worse than nothing. It is in your hands to do them the greatest kindness or cruelty in all the world: help them to know God and to be saved, and you do more for them than if you helped them to be lords or princes: if you neglect their souls, and breed them in ignorance, worldliness, ungodliness and sin, you betray them to the devil, the enemy of souls; even as truly as if you sold them to him; you sell them to be slaves to satan; you betray them to him that will deceive them and abuse them in this life, and torment them in the next. If you saw but a burning furnace, much more the flames of hell, would you not think that man or woman more fit to be called a devil than a parent, that could find in their hearts to cast their child into it, or to put him into the hands of one that would do it? What monsters then of inhumanity are you, that read in Scripture which is the way to hell, and who they be that

God will deliver up to satan, to be tormented by him; and yet will bring up your children in that very way, and will not take pains to save them from it? What a stir do you make to provide them food and raiment, and a competent maintenance in the world when you are dead! And how little pains take you to prepare their souls for the heavenly inheritance! If you seriously believe that there are such joys or torments for your children (and yourselves) as soon as death removeth you hence, is it possible that you should take this for the least of their concernments, and make it the least and last of your cares, to assure them of an endless happiness? If you love them, shew it in those things on which their everlasting welfare doth depend. Do not say you love them; and yet lead them unto hell. If you love them not, yet be not so unmerciful to them as to damn them: it is not your saying, 'God forbid,' and 'we hope better,' that will make it better, or be any excuse to you. What can you do more to damn them, if you studied to do it as maliciously as the devil himself? You cannot possibly do more, than to bring them up in ignorance, carelessness, worldliness, sensuality and ungodliness. The devil can do nothing else to damn either them or you, but by tempting to sin, and drawing you from godliness. There is no other way to hell. No man is damned for any thing but this. And yet will you bring them up in such a life, and say, 'God forbid, we do not desire to damn them?' But it is no wonder; when you do by your children but as you do by yourselves; who can look that a man should be reasonable for his child, that is so unreasonable for himself? Or that those parents should have any mercy on their children's souls, that have no mercy on their own? You desire not to damn yourselves, but yet you do it; if you live ungodly lives: and so you will do by your children if you train them up in ignorance of God, and in the service of the flesh and world. You do like one that should set fire on his house, and say, 'God forbid, I intend not to burn it:' or like one that casteth his child into the sea, and saith, he intendeth not to drown

him; or traineth him up in robbing or thievery, and saith, he intendeth not to have him hanged; but if you intend to make a thief of him, it is all one in effect, as if you intended his hanging; for the law determineth it, and the judge will intend it. So if you intend to train up your children in ungodliness, as if they had no God, nor souls to mind, you may as well say, you intend to have them damned. And were not an enemy, yea, and is not the devil more, excusable, for dealing thus cruelly by your children, than you that are their parents, that are bound by nature to love them, and prevent their misery? It is odious in ministers that take the charge of souls, to betray them by negligence, and be guilty of their everlasting misery; but in parents it is more unnatural, and therefore more inexcusable.

Motive II. 'Consider that God is the Lord and owner of your children, both by the title of creation and redemption: therefore in justice you must resign them to him, and educate them for him.' Otherwise you rob God of his own creatures, and rob Christ of those for whom he died, and this to give them to the devil, the enemy of God and them. It was not the world, or the flesh, or the devil that created them, or redeemed them, but God; and it is not possible for any right to be built upon a fuller title, than to make them of nothing, and redeem them from a state far worse than nothing. And after all this, shall the very parents of such children steal them from their absolute Lord and Father, and sell them to slavery and torment?

Motive III. 'Remember that in their baptism you did dedicate them to God; you entered them into a solemn vow and covenant, to be wholly his, and to live to him.' Therein they renounced the flesh, the world and the devil; therein you promised to bring them up virtuously to lead a godly and Christian life, that they might obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of their lives. And after all this, will you break so

solemn a promise, and cause them to break such a vow and covenant, by bringing them up in ignorance and ungodliness? Did you understand and consider what you then did? How solemnly you yourselves engaged them in a vow to God, to live a mortified and holy life? And will you so solemnly do that in an hour, which all their life after with you, you will endeavour to destroy?

Motive IV. 'Consider how great power the education of children hath upon all their following lives;' except nature and grace, there is nothing that usually doth prevail so much with them. Indeed the obstinacy of natural viciousness doth often frustrate a good education; but if any means be like to do good, it is this; but ill education is more constantly successful, to make them evil. This cherisheth those seeds of wickedness which spring up when they come to age; this maketh so many to be proud, and idle, and flesh-pleasers, and licentious, and lustful, and covetous, and all that is naught. And he hath a hard task that cometh after to root out these vices, which an ungodly education hath so deeply radicated. Ungodly parents do serve the devil so effectually in the first impressions on their children's minds, that it is more than magistrates and ministers and all reforming means can afterwards do, to recover them from that sin to God. Whereas if you would first engage their hearts to God by a religious education, piety would then have all those advantages, that sin hath now. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." The language which you teach them to speak when they are children, they will use all their life after, if they live with those that use it. And so the opinions which they first receive, and the customs which they are used to at first, are very hardly changed afterward. I doubt not to affirm, that a godly education is God's first and ordinary appointed means, for the begetting of actual faith, and other graces in the children of believers: many may have seminal grace before, but they cannot sooner have

actual faith, repentance, love, or any grace, than they have reason itself in act and exercise. And the preaching of the Word by public ministers is not the first ordinary means of grace, to any but those that were graceless till they come to hear such preaching: that is, to those on whom the first appointed means hath been neglected, or proved in vain: that is, it is but the second means, to do that which was not done by the first. The proof is undeniable: because God appointeth parents diligently to teach their children the doctrine of his holy Word, before they come to the public ministry: parents' teaching is the first teaching: and parents' teaching is for this end, as well as public teaching, even to beget faith, and love, and holiness: and God appointeth no means to be used by us, on which we may not expect his blessing. Therefore it is apparent, that the ordinary appointed means for the first actual grace, is parents' godly instruction and education of their children. And public preaching is appointed for the conversion of those only that have missed the blessing of the first appointed means. Therefore if you deny your children religious education, you deny them the first appointed means of their actual faith and sanctification; and then the second cometh upon disadvantage.

Motive V. 'Consider also how many and great are your advantages above all others for your children's good.' As 1. Nothing doth take so much with any one, as that which is known to come from love: the greater love is discerned in your instruction, the greater success may you expect. Now your children are more confident of their parents' love, than of any others; whether ministers and strangers speak to them in love, they cannot tell; but of their parents' love they make no doubt. 2. And their love to you is as great a preparative to your success. We all hearken to them that we dearly love, with greater attention and willingness than to others. They love not the minister as they do their parents. 3. You have them in hand betime, before

they have received any false opinions, or bad impressions: before they have any sin but that which was born with them: you are to make the first impressions upon them: you have them while they are most teachable, and flexible, and tender, and make least resistance against instruction: they rise not up at first against your teaching with self-conceitedness and proud objections. But when they come to the minister, they are as paper that is written on or printed before, unapt to receive another impression; they have much to be untaught, before they can be taught: and come with proud and stiff resistance, to strive against instruction, rather than readily to receive it. 4. Your children wholly depend on you for their present maintenance, and much for their future livelihood and portions: and therefore they know that it is their interest to obey and please you; and as interest is the common bias of the world, so is it with your children; you may more easily rule them that have this handle to hold them by, than any other can do that have not this advantage. They know they serve you not for nought. 5. Your authority over your children is most unquestionable. They will dispute the authority of ministers, yea, and of magistrates, and ask them, who gave them the power to teach them, and to command them? But the parent's authority is beyond all dispute. They will not call you tyrants or usurpers, nor bid you prove the validity of your ordination, or the uninterruptedness of your succession. Therefore father and mother as the first natural power, are mentioned rather than kings or queens in the fifth commandment. 6. You have the power of the rod to force them. "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." And your correction will be better understood to come from love, than that of the magistrate or any other. 7. You have best opportunity to know both the diseases and temperature of your children: which is a great advantage for the choosing and applying of the best remedy. 8. You have opportunity of watching over them, and discerning all their faults in time: but if a

minister speak to them, he can know no more what fault to reprehend, than others tell him, or the party will confess. You may also discern what success your former exhortations had, and whether they amend or still go on in sin, and whether you should proceed to more severe remedies. 9. You have opportunity of speaking to them in the most familiar manner; which is better understood than the set speech of a minister in the pulpit, which few of them mark or understand. You can quicken their attention by questions which put them upon answering you, and so awaken them to a serious regard of what you say. 10. You are so frequently with them, that you can repeat your instructions, and drive them home, that what is not done at one time, may be done at another: whereas other men can seldom speak to them, and what is so seldom spoken is easily neglected or forgotten. 11. You have power to place them under the best means, and to remove many impediments out of their way which usually frustrate other men's endeavours. 12. Your example is near them and continually in their sight, which is a continual and powerful sermon. By all these advantages God hath enabled you above all others, to be instruments of your children's good, and the first and greatest promoters of their salvation.

Motive VI. 'Consider how great a comfort it would be to you, to have your children such as you may confidently hope are the children of God, being brought to know him, and love, and serve him, through your own endeavours in a pious education of them.' 1. You may love your children upon an higher account than as they are yours; even as they are God's, adorned with his image, and quickened with a divine celestial life; and this is to love them with a higher kind of love, than mere natural affection is. It would rejoice you to see your children advanced to be lords or princes; but O how much greater cause of joy is it, to see them made the members of Christ, and quickened by his Spirit, and sealed up for life eternal? 2. When once your children are

made the children of God, by the regeneration of the Spirit, you may be much more free from care and trouble for them than before. Now you may boldly trust them on the care of your heavenly Father, who is able to do more for them than you are able to desire: he loveth them better than you can love them: he is bound by promise to protect them, and provide for them, and to see that all things work together for their good. He that cloatheth the lilies of the fields, and suffereth not the young lions or ravens to be unprovided for, will provide convenient food for his own children, (though he will have you also do your duty for them, as they are your children). While they are the children of satan, and the servants of sin, you have cause to fear, not only lest they be exposed to miseries in this world, but much more lest they be snatched away in their sin to hell: your children while they are ungodly are worse than among wolves and tigers. But when once they are renewed by the Spirit of Christ, they are the charge of all the blessed Trinity, and under God the charge of angels: living or dying they are safe: for the eternal God is their portion and defence. 3. It may be a continual comfort to you to think what a deal of drudgery and calamity your child is freed from: to think how many oaths he would have sworn, and how many lies and curses he would have uttered, and how beastly and fleshly a life he would have lived, how much wrong he would have done to God and men, and how much he would have pleased the devil, and what torments in hell he must have endured as the reward of all; and then to think how mercifully God hath prevented all this; and what service he may do God in the world, and finally live with Christ in glory: what a joy is this to a considering, believing parent, that taketh the mercies of his children as his own? 4. Religion will teach your children to be more dutiful to yourselves, than nature can teach them. It will teach them to love you, even when you have no more to give them, as well as if you had the wealth of all the world: it will teach them to honour you, though you are poor and contemptible in

the eyes of others. It will teach them to obey you, and if you fall into want, to relieve you according to their power: it will fit them to comfort you in the time of your sickness and distress; when ungodly children will be as thorns in your feet and eyes, or cut your hearts, and prove a greater grief than any enemies to you. A gracious child will bear with your weaknesses, when a Ham will not cover his father's nakedness: a gracious child can pray for you, and pray with you, and be a blessing to your house; when an ungodly child is fitter to curse, and prove a curse to those he lives with. 5. And is it not an exceeding joy to think of the everlasting happiness of your child? and that you may live together in heaven for ever? When the foreseen misery of a graceless child may grieve you whenever you look him in the face. 6. Lastly, it will be a great addition to your joy, to think that God blessed your diligent instructions, and made you the instrument of all that good that is done upon your children, and of all that good that is done by them, and of all the happiness they have for ever. To think that this was conveyed to them by your means, will give you a larger share in the delights of it.

Motive VII. 'Remember that your children's original sin and misery is by you; and therefore in justice you that have undone them, are bound to do your best to save them.' If you had but conveyed a leprosy, or some hereditary disease to their bodies, would you not have done your best to cure them? O that you could do them but as much good as you do them hurt! It is more than Adam's sin that runneth down into the natures of your children, yea, and that bringeth judgments on them: and even Adam's sin cometh not to them but by you.

Motive VIII. Lastly, 'Consider what exceeding great need they have of the utmost help you can afford them.' It is not a corporal disease, an easy enemy, a tolerable misery, that we call unto you for their help:

but it is against sin, and satan, and hell-fire. It is against a body of sin: not one, but many; not small, but pernicious, having seized on the heart: deep-rooted sins, that are not easily plucked up. All the teaching, and diligence, and watchfulness that you can use, is little enough, and may prove too little. They are obstinate vices that have possessed them: they are not quickly nor easily cast out: and the remnants and roots are apt to be still springing up again, when you thought they had been quite destroyed: O then what wisdom and diligence is requisite to so great and necessary a work!

And now let me seriously speak to the hearts of those careless and ungodly parents, that neglect the holy education of their children: yea, and to those professors of godliness, that slubber over so great a work with a few customary formal duties and words, that are next to a total omission of it. O be not so unmerciful to the souls that you have helped to bring into the world! Think not so basely of them, as if they were not worth your labour. Make not your children so like your beasts, as to make no provision but only for their flesh. Remember still that it is not beasts but men, that you have begotten and brought forth: educate them then and use them as men for the love and obedience of their Maker: O pity and help the souls that you have defiled and undone! Have mercy on the souls that must perish in hell, if they be not saved in this day of salvation! O help them that have so many enemies to assault them! Help them that have so many temptations to pass through; and so many difficulties to overcome; and so severe a judgment to undergo! Help them that are so weak, and so easily deceived and overthrown! Help them speedily while your advantages continue; before sin have hardened them, and grace have forsaken them, and satan place a stronger garrison in their hearts. Help, them while they are tractable, before they are grown up to despise your help: before you and they are separated asunder, and your opportunities be at an end. You think not your pains from year

to year, too much to make provision for their bodies: O be not cruel to their souls! Sell them not to satan, and that for naught! Betray them not by your ungodly negligence to hell. Or if any of them will perish, let it not be by you, that are so much bound to do them good: the undoing of your children's souls is a work much fitter for satan, than for their parents. Remember how comfortable a thing it is, to work with Christ for the saving of souls. You think the calling of ministers honourable and happy; and so it is, because they serve Christ in so high a work: but if you will not neglect it, you may do for your children more than any minister can do. This is your preaching place: here God calleth you to exercise your parts; even in the holy instruction of your families: your charge is small in comparison of the minister's, he hath many hundred souls to watch over, that are scattered all abroad the parish: and will you think it much to instruct and watch over those few of your own that are under your roof? You can speak odiously of unfaithful, soul-betraying ministers; and do you not consider how odious a soul-betraying parent is? If God intrust you but with earthly talents, take heed how you use them, for you must be accountable for your trust; and when he hath intrusted you with souls, even your children's souls, will you betray them? If any rulers should but forbid you the instructing and well-governing of your families; and restrain you by a law, as they would have restrained Daniel from praying in his house, then you would think them monsters of impiety and inhumanity: and you would cry out of a satanical persecution, that would make men traitors to their children's souls, and drive away all religion from the earth. And yet how easily can you neglect such duties, when none forbid them you, and never accuse yourselves of any such horrid impiety or inhumanity? What hypocrisy, and blind partiality is this? Like a lazy minister that would cry out of persecution, if he were silenced by others, and yet will not be provoked to be laborious, but ordinarily by his slothfulness silence himself, and make no such matter of it:

would it be so heinous a sin in another to restrain you? And is it not as heinous for you, that are so much obliged to it, voluntarily to restrain yourselves? O then deny not this necessary diligence to your necessitous children, as you love their souls, as you love the happiness of the church or commonwealth, as you love the honour and interest of Christ, and as you love your present and everlasting peace. Do not see your children the slaves of satan here, and the firebrands of hell for ever, if any diligence of yours may contribute to prevent it. Do not give conscience such matter of accusation against you, as to say, 'All this was long of thee! If thou hadst instructed them diligently, and watched over them, and corrected them, and done thy part, it is like they had never come to this.' You till your fields; you weed your gardens: what pains take you about your grounds and cattle? And will you not take more for your children's souls? Alas, what creatures will they be if you leave them to themselves? How ignorant, careless, rude and beastly? O what a lamentable case have ungodly parents brought the world into? Ignorance and selfishness, beastly sensuality, and devilish malignity have covered the face of the earth as a deluge, and driven away wisdom, and self-denial, and piety, and charity, and justice, and temperance almost out of the world, confining them to the breasts of a few obscure humble souls, that love virtue for virtue's sake, and look for their reward from God alone, and expect that by abstaining from iniquity, they make themselves a prey to wolves. Wicked education hath unmanned the world, and subdued it to satan, and made it almost like to hell. O do not join with the sons of Belial in this unnatural, horrid wickedness!

CHAPTER VII

The mutual Duties of Husbands and Wives towards each other

IT is the pernicious subversion of all societies, and so of the world, that selfish, ungodly persons enter into all relations with a desire to serve themselves there, and fish out all that gratifieth their flesh, but without any sense of the duty of their relation. They bethink them what honour, or profit, or pleasure their relation will afford them, but not what God and man require or expect from them. All their thought is, what they shall have, but not what they shall be, and do. They are very sensible what others should be, and do to them; but not what they should be, and do to others. Thus it is with magistrates, and with people, with too many pastors and their flocks, with husbands and wives, with parents and children, with masters and servants, and all other relations. Whereas our first care should be to know and perform the duties of our relations, and please God in them, and then look for his blessing by way of encouraging reward. Study and do your parts, and God will certainly do his.

Direct. I. 'The first duty of husbands is to love their wives (and wives their husbands) with a true, entire conjugal love.' "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.—So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies; he that loveth his wife, loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. —Let every one of you in particular so love his wife, even as himself." It is a relation of love that you have entered. God hath made it your duty for your mutual help and comfort: that you may be as willing and ready to succour one another, as the hand is to help the eye or other fellow member, and that your converse may be sweet, and your burdens easy, and your lives may be comfortable. If love be removed but for an hour between husband and wife, they are so long as a bone

out of joint; there is no ease, no order, no work well done, till they are restored and set in joint again. Therefore be sure that conjugal love be constantly maintained.

The sub-directions for maintaining conjugal love are such as these. Direct. 1. Choose one at first that is truly amiable, especially in the virtues of the mind. 2. Marry not till you are sure that you can love entirely. Be not drawn for sordid ends, to join with one that you have but ordinary affections for. 3. Be not too hasty, but know beforehand, all the imperfections, which may tempt you afterwards to loathing. But if these duties have been sinfully neglected, yet 4. Remember that justice commandeth you to love one that hath, as it were, forsaken all the world for you, and is contented to be the companion of your labours and sufferings, and be an equal sharer in all conditions with you, and that must be your companion until death. It is worse than barbarous inhumanity to entice such a one into a bond of love, and society with you, and then to say, you cannot love her. This was by perfidiousness to draw her into a snare to her undoing. What comfort can she have in her converse with you, and care, and labour, and necessary sufferings, if you deny her conjugal love? Especially, if she deny not love to you, the inhumanity is the greater. 5. Remember that women are ordinarily affectionate, passionate creatures, and as they love much themselves, so they expect much love from you. And when you joined yourself to such a nature, you obliged yourself to answerable duty: and if love cause not love, it is ungrateful and unjust contempt. 6. Remember that you are under God's command; and to deny conjugal love to your wives, is to deny a duty which God hath urgently imposed on you. Obedience therefore should command your love. 7. Remember that you are relatively, as it were, one flesh; you have drawn her to forsake father and mother, to cleave to you; you are conjoined for procreation of such children as must bear the image and nature of you both; your possessions and

interests are in a manner the same. And therefore such nearness should command affection; they that are as yourselves, should be most easily loved as yourselves. 8. Take more notice of the good, that is in your wives, than of the evil. Let not the observation of their faults make you forget or overlook their virtues. Love is kindled by the sight of love or goodness. 9. Make not infirmities to seem odious faults, but excuse them as far as lawfully you may, by considering the frailty of the sex, and of their tempers, and considering also your own infirmities, and how much your wives must bear with you. 10. Stir up that most in them into exercise which is best, and stir not up that which is evil; and then the good will most appear, and the evil will be as buried, and you will more easily maintain your love. There is some uncleanness in the best on earth; and if you will be daily stirring in the filth, no wonder if you have the annoyance; and for that you may thank yourselves: draw out the fragrancy of that which is good and delectable in them, and do not by your own imprudence or peevishness stir up the worst, and then you shall find that even your faulty wives will appear more amiable to you. 11. Overcome them with love; and then whatever they are in themselves, they will be loving to you, and consequently lovely. Love will cause love, as fire kindleth fire. A good husband is the best means to make a good and loving wife. Make them not forward by your froward carriage, and then say, we cannot love them. 12. Give them examples of amiableness in yourselves; set them the pattern of a prudent, lowly, loving, meek, self-denying, patient, harmless, holy, heavenly life. Try this a while, and see whether it will not shame them from their faults, and make them walk more amiably themselves.

Direct. II. 'Another duty of husbands and wives is, cohabitation and (where age prohibiteth not) a sober and modest conjunction for procreation.' Avoiding lasciviousness, unseasonableness, and whatever tendeth to corrupt the mind, and make it vain and filthy,

and hinder it from holy employment. And therefore lust must not be cherished in the married; but the mind be brought to a moderate, chaste, and sober frame; and the remedy must not be turned into an increase of the disease, but used to extinguish it. For if the mind be left to the power of lust, and only marriage trusted to for the cure, with many it will be found an insufficient cure; and lust will rage still as it did before, and will be so much the more desperate and your case the more miserable, as your sin prevaileth against the remedy. Yet marriage being appointed for a remedy against lust, for the avoiding all unlawful congress, the apostle hath plainly described your duty. "It is good for a man not to touch a woman: nevertheless to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband; let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence; and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud you not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer, and come together again, that satan tempt you not for your incontinency." Therefore those persons live contrary to the nature of their relation, who live a great part of their lives asunder, as many do for worldly respects; when they have several houses, possessions or trades, and the husband must live at one, and the wife at another, for their commodity sake; and only come together once in a week, or in many weeks; when this is done without great necessity, it is a constant violation of their duties. And so it is for men to go trade or live beyond sea, or in another land, and leave their wives behind them; yea, though they have their wives' consent; it is an unlawful course, except in a case of mere necessity, or public service, or when they are able on good grounds to say, that the benefits are like to be greater to soul and body than the loss; and that they are confirmed against the danger of incontinence. The offices which husband and wife are

bound to perform for one another are such as, for the most part, suppose their cohabitation, like the offices of the members of the body for each other, which they cannot perform, if they be dismembered and divided.

Direct. III. 'Abhor not only adultery itself, but all that tendeth to unchasteness and the violation of your marriage-covenant.' Adultery is so contrary to the conjugal bond and state of life, that though 'de facto' it do not actually dissolve the bond, and nullify the marriage; yet it so far disobligeth the wronged innocent party, that 'de jure' it is to such a sufficient ground to warrant a divorce. And God required, that it be punished by deathe. When lust is the chiefest cause of marriage, and when married persons live not in the fear of God, but pamper the flesh and live licentiously, no wonder if marriage prove an insufficient remedy against such cherished lust. Such carnal, beastly persons are still casting fuel on the fire; by wanton, unbridled thoughts and speeches, by gluttony, drinking, sports, and idleness, by vain, enticing company, and not avoiding occasions, opportunities, and temptations, they burn as much when they are married as they did before. And the devil that bloweth up this fire in their flesh, doth conduct and accommodate them in the satisfying of their lusts; so that their brutish concupiscence is like a fire burning in the sea; water itself will not quench it. One woman will not satisfy their bestiality; and perhaps they loathe their own wives, and run after others, though their own (in the eye of any impartial man) be the more comely and amiable, and their whores be never so deformed, or impudent, filthy lumps of dirt. So that one would think that they had no other reason, to love and follow such unlovely things, but only because God forbiddeth it; as if the devil did it to shew his power over them, that he can make them do that, as in despite of God, which else they would abhor themselves. When once their sensuality and their forsaking of God, hath provoked God to

forsake them, and give them up to the rage of that sensuality, an unclean spirit sometimes takes possession of them, and wholly inclineth them to wallow in uncleanliness: they can scarce look a comely person in the face, that is of the other sex, but unclean thoughts are rising in their hearts; they think of filthiness when they are alone; they dream of filthiness in the night; they talk of filthiness with others: the tongues of the dogs that licked Lazarus his sores, were not used in such a filthy employment as theirs are. "They are as fed horses in the morning; every one neigheth after his neighbour's wife." "They declare their sin as Sodom, and hide it notg." And usually when they are given over to this filthy sin, it utterly debaucheth their consciences, and maketh them like blocks or beasts, insensible of their misery and the wrath of God, and given over to all other villanies, and even to hate and persecute godliness, if not civility itself. Some few adulterers I have known, that sin so much against their consciences, that they live in continual despair; tormented in the sense of their own unhappiness, and yet sinning still, as if the devil would make them a derision: and yet these are the better sort, because there is some testimony for a better life remaining in their minds; but others of them "being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." "They have eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin.—As natural brute beasts that are made to be taken and destroyedk." Take heed therefore of the causes of this odious sin, and of all appearance of it; suffer not your eye or thought to go after a stranger, nor to begin a breach in your covenant and conjugal fidelity.

Direct. IV. 'Husband and wife must take delight in the love, and company, and converse of each other.' There is nothing that man's heart is so inordinately set upon as delight; and yet the lawful delight allowed them by God, they can turn into loathing and disdain. The

delight which would entangle you in sin, and turn you from your duty and from God, is it that is forbidden you: but this is a delight that is helpful to you in your duty, and would keep you from sin. When husband and wife take pleasure in each other, it uniteth them in duty, it helpeth them with ease to do their work, and bear their burdens; and is not the least part of the comfort of the married state. "Rejoice with the wife of thy youth, as the loving hind and pleasant roe, let her breasts satisfy thee at all times, and be thou ravished always with her love." Therefore a wife is called 'The desire of the eyesm." Avoid therefore all things that may represent you unpleasant or unlovely to each other; and use all lawful means to cherish complacency and delight: not by foolish, ridiculous, or proud attire, or immodest actions; but by cleanness, and decency, and kind deportment. Nastiness, and uncleanness, and unseemly carriage, and foolish speech, and whatever is loathsome in body or mind, must be shunned as temptations which would hinder you from that love, and pleasure, and content, which husband and wife should have in one another. And yet it is a foolish, fleshly person, that will continue love no longer than it is cherished with all this care. If there be any deformity of the body, or any thing unseemly in behaviour, or if God should visit them with any loathsome sores or sickness, they must for all that love each other, yea, and take pleasure in their converse. It is not a true friend that leaveth you in adversity; nor is it true conjugal affection which is blasted by a loathsome sickness. The love of mothers to their children will make them take pleasure in them, notwithstanding their sickness or uncleanness; and so should their love do between a husband and his wife. He that considereth that his own flesh is liable to the same diseases, and like ere long to be as loathsome, will do as he would be done by, and not turn away in time of her affliction from her that is become his flesh. Much less excusable is the crime of them that, when they have nothing extraordinary to distaste or disaffect them, are weary of the company

of one another, and had rather be in their neighbours' houses, than in their own, and find more pleasure in the company of a stranger, than of one another.

Direct. V. 'It is a great duty of husbands and wives to live in quietness and peace, and avoid all occasions of wrath and discord.' Because this is a duty of so great importance, I shall first open to you the great necessity of it, and then give you more particular Directions to perform it.

I. It is a duty which your union or near relation doth especially require. Will you fall out with yourselves? Cannot you agree with your own flesh? 2. Your discord will be your pain, and the vexation of your lives. Like a bile, or wound, or fracture in your own bodies, which will pain you till it is cured; you will hardly keep peace in your minds, when peace is broken so near your own family. As you would take heed of hurting yourselves, and as you would hasten the cure when you are hurt; so should you take heed of any breach of peace, and quickly seek to heal it when it is broken. 3. Dissention tends to cool your love; oft falling out doth tend to leave a habit of distaste and averseness on the mind. Wounding is separating; and to be tied together by any outward bonds, when your hearts are separated, is but to be tormented; and to have the insides of adversaries, while you have conjugal outsides. As the difference between my house and my prison is that I willingly and with delight dwell in the one, but am unwillingly confined to the other, such will be the difference between a quiet and an unquiet life, in your married state: it turneth your dwelling and delight into a prison, where you are chained to those calamities, which in a free condition you might overrun. 4. Dissention between the husband and the wife, do disorder all their family affairs; they are like oxen unequally yoked, that can rid no work for striving with one another. Nothing is well done because of

the variance of those that should do it, or oversee it. 5. It exceedingly unfitteth you for the worship of God; you are not fit to pray together, nor to confer together of heavenly, things, nor to be helpers to each other's souls: I need not tell you this, you feel it by experience. Wrath and bitterness will not allow you so much exercise of love and holy composedness of mind, as every one of those duties do require. 6. Dissention disableth you to govern your families aright. Your children and servants will take example, by you; or think they are at liberty to do what they list, when they find you taken up with such work between yourselves: and they will think you unfit to reprove them for their faults, when they see you guilty of such faults and folly of your own; nay you will become the shame and secret derision of your family, and bring yourselves into contempt. 7. Your dissentions will expose you to the malice, of satan, and give him advantage for manifold temptations. A house divided cannot stand: an army divided is easily conquered, and made a prey to the enemy. You cannot foresee what abundance of sin you put yourselves in danger of. By all this you may see what dissentions between husband and wife do tend to, and how they should be avoided.

II. For the avoiding of them observe these sub-directions. 1. Keep up your conjugal love in a constant heat and vigor. Love will suppress wrath: you cannot have a bitter mind upon small provocations, against those that you dearly love; much less can you proceed to reviling words or to averseness and estrangedness, or any abuse of one another. Or if a breach and wound be unhappily made, the balsamic quality of love will heal it. But when love once cooleth, small matters exasperate and breed distaste.

2. Both husband and wife must mortify their pride and passion, which are the causes of impatiency; and must pray and labour for a humble, meek, and quiet spirit. For it is the diseased temper of the

heart, that causeth dissention, more than the occasions or matter of offence do. A proud heart is troubled and provoked by every word or carriage that seemeth to tend to their undervaluing. A peevish, froward mind is like a sore and ulcerated member, that will be hurt if it be touched. He that must live near such a sore, diseased, impatient mind, must live even as the nurse doth with the child, that maketh it her business to rock it, and lull, and sing it quiet when it crieth; for to be angry with it, will do no good: and if you have married one of such a sick or childish temper, you must resolve to bear and use them accordingly. But no Christian should bear with such a vexatious malady in themselves; nor be patient with such impatiency of mind. Once get the victory over yourselves, and get the cure of your own impatience, and you will easily keep peace with one another.

3. Remember still that you are both diseased persons, full of infirmities; and therefore expect the fruit of those infirmities in each other; and make not a strange matter of it, as if you had never known of it before. If you had married one that is lame, would you be angry with her for halting? Or if you had married one that had a putrid ulcer, would you fall out with her because it stinketh? Did you not know beforehand, that you married a person of such weaknesses, as would yield you some matter of daily trial and offence? If you could not bear this, you should not have married her; if you resolved that you could bear it then, you are obliged to bear it now. Resolve therefore to bear with one another; as remembering that you took one another as sinful, frail, imperfect persons, and not as angels, or as blameless and perfect.

4. Remember still that you are one flesh; and therefore be no more offended with the words or failings of each other, than you would be if they were your own. Fall out no more with your wife for her faults, than you do with yourself for your own faults; and than you would

do, if hers had been your own. This will allow you such an anger and displeasure against a fault, as tendeth to heal it; but not such as tendeth but to fester and vex the diseased part. This will turn anger into compassion, and speedy, tender diligence for the cure.

5. Agree together beforehand, that when one is in the diseased, angry fit, the other shall silently and gently bear, till it be past and you are come to yourselves, again. Be not angry both at once; when the fire is kindled, quench it with gentle words and carriage, and do not cast on oil or fuel, by answering provokingly and sharply, or by multiplying words, and by answering wrath with wrath. But remember that now the work that you are called to is to mollify, and not to exasperate, to help, and not to hurt, to cure another rather than to right yourself: as if another fall and hurt him, your business is to help him up, and not to tread upon him.

6. Look before you, and remember that you must live together until death, and must be the companions of each others fortunes, and the comforts of each others lives, and then you will see how absurd it is for you to disagree and vex each other. Anger is the principle of revenge, and falling out doth tend to separation. Therefore those that must not revenge, should not give way to anger; and those that know they must not part, should not fall out.

7. As far as you are able, avoid all occasions of wrath and falling out, about the matters of your families. Some by their slothfulness bring themselves into want; and then being unable to bear it, they contract a discontented, peevish habit, and in their impatiency they wrangle and disquiet one another. Some plunge themselves into a multitude of business, and have to do with so many things and persons, that one or other is still offending them, and then they are impatient with one another. Some have neither skill nor diligence to manage their

businesses aright; and so things fall cross, and go out of order, and then their impatiency turneth itself against each other. Avoid these, occasions, if you would avoid the sin, and see that you be not unfurnished of patience, to bear that which cannot be avoided.

8. If you cannot quickly quench your passion, yet at least refrain your tongues; speak not reproachful or provoking words: talking it out hotly doth blow the fire, and increase the flame; be but silent, and you will the sooner return to your serenity and peace. Foul words tend to more displeasure. As Socrates said when his wife first railed at him, and next threw a vessel of foul water upon him, "I thought when I heard the thunder, there would come rain:" so you may portend worse following, when foul, unseemly words begin. If you cannot easily allay your wrath, you may hold your tongues, if you are truly willing.

9. Let the sober party condescend to speak fair and to entreat the other, (unless it be with a person so insolent as will be the worse.) Usually a few sober, grave admonitions, will prove as water to the boiling pot. Say to your angry wife or husband, 'You know this should not be betwixt us; love must allay it, and it must be repented of. God doth not approve it, and we shall not approve it when this heat is over. This frame of mind is contrary to a praying frame, and this language contrary to a praying language; we must pray together anon; let us do nothing contrary to prayer now: sweet water and bitter come not from one spring,' &c. Some calm and condescending words of reason, may stop the torrent, and revive the reason which passion had overcome.

10. Confess your fault to one another, when passion hath prevailed against you; and ask forgiveness of each other, and join in prayer to God for pardon; and this will lay a greater engagement on you, the

next time to forbear: you will sure be ashamed to do that which you have so confessed and asked forgiveness for of God and man. If you will but practise these ten directions, your conjugal and family peace may be preserved.

Direct. VI. 'A principal duty between husband and wife, is, with special care, and skill, and diligence, to help each other in the knowledge, and worship, and obedience of God in order to their salvation.' Because this is a duty in which you are the greatest helps and blessings to each other, if you perform it. I shall 1. Endeavour to quicken you to make conscience of it; and then 2. Direct you how to do it.

I. Consider, 1. How little it can stand with rational love, to neglect the souls of one another? I suppose you believe that you have immortal souls, and an endless life of joy or misery to live; and then you cannot choose but know that your great concernment and business is, to make sure provision for those souls, and for the endless life. Therefore if your love do not help one another in this which is your main concernment, it is little worth, and of little use. Every thing in this world is valuable as it is useful. A useless or unprofitable love, is a worthless love. It is a trifling, or a childish, or a beastly love, which helpeth you but in trifling, childish, or beastly things. Do you love your wife, and yet will leave her in the power of satan, or will not help to save her soul? What! love her, and yet let her go to hell! and rather let her be damned than you will be at the pains to endeavour her salvation! If she were but in bodily pain or misery, and you refused to do your part to succour her, she would take it but for cold, unprofitable love, though you were never so kind to her in compliments and trifles. The devil himself maketh shew of such a love as that; he can vouchsafe men pleasures, and wealth, and honour, so he may but see the perdition of their souls. And if your

love to your wife or husband, do tend to no greater matters than the pleasures of this life, while the soul is left to perish in sin, bethink yourselves seriously how little more kindness you shew them than the devil doth. O can you see the danger of one that you love so dearly, and do no more to save them from it? Can you think of the damnation of so dear a friend, and not do all that you are able to prevent it? Would you be separated from them in the world that you are going to? Would you not live with them in heaven for ever? Never say you love them, if you will not labour for their salvation. If ever they come to hell, or if ever you see them there, both they and you will then confess, that you behaved not yourselves like such as loved them. It doth not deserve the name of love, which can leave a soul to endless misery.

What then shall we say of them that do not only deny their help, but are hinderers of the holiness and salvation of each other! And yet (the Lord have mercy on the poor miserable world!) how common a thing is this among us! If the wife be ignorant and ungodly, she will do her worst to make or keep her husband such as she is herself: and if God put any holy inclinations into his heart, she will be to it as water to the fire, to quench it or to keep it under. And if he will not be as sinful and miserable as herself, he shall have little quietness or rest. And if God open the eyes of the wife of a bad man, and shew her the amiableness and necessity of a holy life, and she do but resolve to obey the Lord, and save her soul, what an enemy and tyrant will her husband prove to her, (if God restrain him not!) so that the devil himself doth scarce do more against the saving of their souls, than ungodly husbands and wives do against each other.

2. Consider also that you live not up to the ends of marriage, nor of humanity, if you are not helpers to each other's souls. To help each other only for your bellies, is to live together but like beasts. You are

appointed to live together as "heirs of the grace of life." "And husbands must love their wives as Christ loved his church, who gave himself for it that he might sanctify it and cleanse it, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemishp." That which is the end of your very life and being, must be the end of your relations, and your daily converse.

3. Consider also, if you neglect each other's souls, what enemies you are to one another, and how you prepare for your everlasting sorrows: when you should be preparing for your joyful meeting in heaven, you are laying up for yourselves everlasting horror. What a dreadful meeting and greeting will you have at the bar of Christ, or in the flames of hell, when you shall find there how perversely you have done? Is it not better to be praising God together in glory, than to be raging against each other in the horror of your consciences, and flying in the faces of one another with such accusations as these?—"O cruel husband! O merciless, deceitful wife! It was long of you that I came to this miserable, woeful end! I might have lived with Christ and his saints in joy, and now I am tormented in these flames in desperation! You were commanded by God to have given me warning, and told me of my sin and misery, and never to let me rest in it, but to have instructed and entreated me, till I had come home by Christ, that I might not have come to this place of torment: but you never so much as spake to me of God, and my salvation, unless it were lightly in jest or in your common talk! If the house had been on fire, you would have been more earnest to have quenched it, than you were to save my soul from hell! You never told me seriously of the misery of a natural, unrenewed state! Nor of the great necessity of regeneration and a holy life! Nor ever talked to me of heaven and hell, as matters of such consequence should have been mentioned; but morning and night, your talk was nothing but about the world, and the things of the world. Your idle talk, and jesting, and froward,

and carnal, and unprofitable discourse, was it that filled up all the time; and we had not one sober word of our salvation. You never seriously foretold me of this day: you never prayed with me, nor read the Scripture and good books to me. You took no pains to help me to knowledge, nor to humble my hardened heart for my sins, nor to save me from them, nor to draw me to the love of God and holiness by faith in Christ: you did not go before me, with the good example of a holy and heavenly conversation: but with the evil example of an ungodly, fleshly, worldly life. You neither cared for your own soul, nor mine; nor I for yours or mine own. And now we are justly condemned together, that would not live in holiness together!" O foolish, miserable souls, that by your ungodliness and negligence in this life, will prepare each other for such a life of endless woe and horror!

O therefore resolve without delay, to live together as heirs of heaven, and to be helpers to each other's souls. To which end I will give you these following Sub-directions, which if you will faithfully practise, may make you to be special blessings to each other.

Direct. I. 'If you would help to save each other's souls, you must each of you be sure that you have a care of your own; and retain a deep and lively apprehension of those great and everlasting matters, of which you are to speak to others.' It cannot be reasonably expected that he should have a due compassion to another's soul, that hath none to his own; and that he should be at the pains that is needful to help another to salvation, that setteth so little by his own, as to sell it for the base and momentary ease and pleasure of the flesh. Nor is it to be expected that a man should speak with any suitable weight and seriousness about those matters whose weight his heart did never feel, and about which he was never serious himself. First see that you feel throughly, that which would speak profitably; and that you be

what you persuade another to be; and that all your counsel may be perceived to arise from the bottom of your hearts, and that you speak of things which by experience you are well acquainted with.

Direct. II. 'Take those opportunities which your ordinary nearness and familiarity affordeth you, to be speaking seriously to each other about the matters of God, and your salvation.' When you lie down and rise together, let not your worldly business have all your talk; but let God and your souls have the first and the last, and at least the freest and sweetest of your speech, if not the most. When you have said so much of your common business as the nature and dispatch of it requireth, lay it by, and talk together of the state and duty of your souls towards God, and of your hopes of heaven, as those that take these for their greatest business. And speak not lightly, or unreverently, or in a rude and wrangling manner; but with gravity and sobriety, as those that are advising together about the greatest matter that ever they had to do in the world.

Direct. III. 'When either husband or wife is speaking seriously about holy things, let the other be careful to cherish, and not to extinguish and put an end to the discourse.' There are two ways to cherish such discourse: the first is, by taking your turn, and bearing a due proportion in the discourse with wisdom and gravity; but all cannot do this, some are but learners, and those must take the second way, which is, to ask for resolution in matters of which they doubt, or are uninstructed, and to draw on more by pertinent questions. The two ways by which such discourse is silenced are these: the first is, by the constant silence of the hearer; when a man talketh as to a post, that giveth him no answer, nor putteth any pertinent question, he will be wearied out at last, and will give over: the second is, by a cross, contradicting, cavilling, wrangling against what is spoken, or by interruptions and diversions; when you come in presently with some

worldly or impertinent talk, and wind about from sober conference to something that is unedifying: and some that will not seem merely profane, and vain, and worldly, will destroy all holy, fruitful conference, even by a kind of religious talk; presently carrying you away from heart-searching and heavenly discourse, to some controversy, or doctrinal, or formal, or historical matter, that is sufficiently distant from the heart and heaven. Take heed of these courses, if you would help each other.

Direct. IV. 'Watch over the hearts and lives of one another, and labour to discern the state of one another's souls, and the strength or weakness of each other's sins and graces, and the failings of each other's lives, that so you may be able to apply to one another the most suitable help.' What you are unacquainted with, you cannot be very helpful in; you cannot cure unknown diseases; you cannot give wise and safe advice, about the state of one another's souls, if you are mistaken in them. God hath placed you nearest to each other, that you might have so much interest in each other, as to quicken you to a loving care, and so much acquaintance with each other, as to keep you from misunderstanding, and so from neglecting or deceiving one another. And you should be always provided of those fit remedies, that are most needful and suitable to each other's case. If that preacher be like to be dull and unsuccessful that is all upon mere doctrine, and little or nothing in close and lively application, you may conceive that it will be so also with your familiar conference.

Direct. V. 'See that you neither flatter one another through fond and foolish love, nor exasperate one another by a passionate or contemptuous kind of reprehension.' Some persons are so blinded with fond affection, that they can scarce see in husband, wife, or children any aggravated sin or misery; but they think all is well that they do, or not so ill as in another they would perceive it; but this is

the same course that self-loving sinners take with their own souls, to their delusion and perdition. This flattering of yourselves or others, is but the devil's charm to keep you from effectual repentance and: salvation: and the ease of such anodynes and narcotics doth endure but a little while. On the other side, some cannot speak to one another of their faults, without such bitterness of passion, or contempt, as tendeth to make the stomach of the receiver to loathe the medicine, and so to refuse it, or to cast it up. If common reproofs to strangers must all be offered in love, much more between the nearest relations.

Direct. VI. 'Be sure that you keep up true conjugal love to one another, and that you grow not to disaffect the persons of each other.' For if you do, you will despise each other's counsels and reproofs. They that slight, or loathe, or are weary of each other, will disdain reproofs, and scorn advice from one another; when entire affection greatly disposeth to the right entertainment of instruction.

Direct. VII. 'Discourage not each other from instruction or reproof by taking it ill, or by churlish reflections, or by obstinate unreformedness.' When you will not learn, or will not amend, you discourage your instructor and reprover. Men will be apt to give over, when they are requited with ingratitude, and snappish retortions, or when they perceive that their labour is all in vain. And as it is the heaviest judgment of God that befalleth any upon earth, when he withdraweth his advice and help, and leaveth sinners wholly to themselves; so it is the saddest condition in your relations, when the ignorant and sinning party is forsaken by the other, and left to their own opinions and ways; though indeed it should not be so, because while there is life there is hope.

Direct. VIII. 'So far as you are able to instruct or quicken one another, call in for better helps: engage each other in the reading of the most convincing, quickening books, and in attendance on the most powerful ministry, and in profitable converse with the holiest persons.' Not so as to neglect your duty to one another ever the more, but that all helps concurring may be the more effectual. When they find you speak to them but the same things which ministers and other Christians speak, it will be the more easily received.

Direct. IX. 'Conceal not the state of your souls, nor hide your faults from one another.' You are as one flesh, and should have one heart: and as it is most dangerous for a man to be unknown to himself, so is it very hurtful to husband or wife to be unknown to one another, in those cases wherein they have need of help. It is foolish tenderness of yourselves, when you conceal your disease from your physician, or your helpful friend; and who should be so tender of you, and helpful to you, as you should be to one another? Indeed in some few cases, where the opening of a fault or secret will but tend to quench affection, and not to get assistance from another, it is wisdom to conceal it; but that is not the ordinary case. The opening your hearts to each other is necessary to your mutual help.

Direct. X. 'Avoid as much as may be, contrariety of opinions in religion:' for if once you be of different judgments in matters which you take to be of great concernment, you will be tempted to disaffect, contemn, or undervalue one another; and so to despise the help which you might receive: and if you fall into several sects, and follow several teachers, you will hardly avoid that contention and confusion, which will prove a great advantage to the devil, and a great impediment to your spiritual good.

Direct. XI. 'If difference in judgment in matters of religion do fall out between you, be sure that it be managed with holiness, humility, love, and peace, and not with carnality, pride, uncharitableness, or contention.' 1. To manage your differences holily, is to take God for the judge, and to refer the matter to his Word, and to aim at his glory, and the pleasing of his will, and to use his means for the concord of your judgments; which is, to search the Scripture, and consult with the faithful, able pastors of the church, and soberly and patiently to debate the case, and pray together for the illumination of the Spirit. On the contrary your differences are carnally managed, when carnal reasons breed or feed them; and when you run after this or that sect or party, through admiration of the persons, and value not the persons for the sake of the truth, but measure truth by the opinion and estimate of the persons; and when you end your differences by selfish, carnal principles and respects: and hence it comes to pass, that if the husband be a Papist or otherwise erroneous, it is two to one that the wife becometh of his erroneous religion, not because of any cogent evidence, but because he is of the stronger parts, and hath constant opportunity to persuade, and because love prepareth and inclineth her to be of his opinion: and thus man instead of God, is the master of the faith of many. 2. Your differences are managed in humility, when you have a just and modest suspicion of your own understandings, and debate and practise your differences with meekness and submission; and do not proudly overvalue all your own apprehensions, and despise another's reasons as if they were not worthy of your consideration, 3. Your differences must be so far managed in love, not that mere love should make you turn to another's opinion be it true or false, but that you must be very desirous to be of the same mind, and if you cannot, must take it for a sore affliction, and must bear with the tolerable mistakes of one another, as you bear with your own infirmities; that they cool not love, nor alienate your hearts from one another, but

only provoke you to a tender, healing, compassionate care, and endeavour to do each other good. 4. And you must manage your differences in quietness, without any passionate wranglings and dissentions, that no bitter fruits may be bred by it in your families, among yourselves. Thus all true Christians must manage their differences in matters of religion; but married persons above all.

Direct. XII. 'Be not either blindly indulgent to each other's faults, nor yet too censorious of each other's state, lest satan thereby get advantage to alienate your affections from one another.' To make nothing of the faults of those whom you love, is to love them foolishly, to their hurt, and to shew that it is not for their virtues that you love them. And to make too great a matter of one another's faults, is but to help the tempter to quench your love, and turn your hearts from one another. Thus many good women that have husbands that are guilty of too much coldness in religion, or worldlymindedness, or falling into ill company, and misspending their time, are first apt to overlook all possibility of any seed of grace that may be in them, and then looking on them as ungodly persons, to abate too much their love and duty to them. There is great wisdom and watchfulness requisite in this case, to keep you from being carried into either of the extremes.

Direct. XIII. 'If you are married to one that is indeed an infidel, or an ungodly person, yet keep up all the conjugal love which is due for the relation's sake.' Though you cannot love them as true Christians, yet love them as husband or wife. Even heathens are bound to love those that are thus related to them. The apostle hath determined the case, 1 Cor. 7 that Christians must perform their duties to husbands or wives that are unbelievers. The faults of another discharge you not from your duty. As satan hath deceived some by separating principles about church communion, to deny almost all God's ordinances to

many, to whom they are due; so doth he thus deceive some persons in family relations, and draw them from the duties which they owe for one another's good.

Direct. XIV. 'Join together in frequent and fervent prayer.' Prayer doth force the mind into some composedness and sobriety, and affecteth the heart with the presence and majesty of God. Pray also for each other when you are in secret, that God may do that work which you most desire, upon each other's hearts.

Direct. XV. Lastly, 'Help each other by an exemplary life.' Be that yourselves which you desire your husband or wife should be: excel in meekness, and humility, and charity, and dutifulness, and diligence, and self-denial, and patience, as far as you do excel in profession of religion. St. Peter saith, that even those that will not be won by the Word, may be won without it by the conversation of their wives: that is, the excellency of religion may so far appear to them, by the fruits of it in their wives' conversations, as may first incline them to think well and honourably of it, and so to inquire into the nature and reason of it, and to hearken to their wives; and all this without the public ministry. A life of undissembled holiness, and heavenliness, and self-denial, and meekness, and love, and mortification, is a powerful sermon; which, if you be constantly preaching before those that are still near you, will hardly miss of a good effect. Works are more palpably significant and persuasive, than words alone.

Direct. VII. 'Another great conjugal duty is, to be helpful to each other for the health and comfort of their bodies.' Not to pamper each other's flesh, or cherish the vices of pride, or sloth, or gluttony, or voluptuousness in each other; but to further the health and cheerfulness of the body, to fit it for the. service of the soul and God. Such cherishing or pleasing of the flesh, which is unlawful in each

person to himself, is also unlawful (ordinarily) to use to another. But such as you may use for yourself, you may use also for your wife or husband. Not to live above your estates, nor as servants to your guts, to serve the appetites of one another by delicious fare; but to be careful of that health, without which your lives will be made unserviceable or uncomfortable: and this must proceed from such a love to one another as you have to yourselves: and that both in time of health and sickness.

1. In health, you must be careful to provide for each other (not so much pleasing as) wholesome food, and to keep each other from that which is hurtful to your health; dissuading each other from gluttony and idleness, the two great murderers of mankind. If the bodies of the poor, in hunger, and cold, and nakedness must be relieved, much more of those that are become as your own flesh.

2. Also in sickness, you are to be tenderly regardful of each other; and not to be sparing of any costs or pains, by which the health of each other may be restored, or your souls confirmed, and your comforts cherished. You must not loathe the bodies of each other in the most loathsome sickness, nor shun them through loathing; no more than you would do your owny. "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity:" much more those that are so nearly bound for sickness and health, till death shall separate them. It is an odious sin to be weary of a sick or suffering friend, and desirous that God would take them, merely that you may be eased of the trouble. And usually such persons do meet with such measure as they measured to others; and those that they look for help and comfort from, will perhaps be as weary of them, and as glad to be rid of them.

Direct. VIII. 'Another duty of husbands and wives is to be helpful to each other in their worldly business, and estates.' Not for worldly

ends, nor with a worldly mind; but in obedience to God who will have them labour, as well as pray, for their daily bread, and hath determined that in the sweat of their brows they shall eat their bread; and that six days they shall labour and do all that they have to do; and that he that will not work must not eat. The care of their affairs doth lie upon them both, and neither of them must cast it off and live in idleness (unless one of them be an idiot, or so witless, as to be unfit for care, or so sick or lame, as to be unfit for labour).

Direct. IX. 'Also you must be careful of the lawful honour and good names of one another.' You must not divulge but conceal the dishonourable failings of each other: (as Abigail, except in any case compassion or justice require you to open them to any one for a cure, or to clear the truth.) The reputation of each other must be as dear to you as your own. It is a sinful and unfaithful practice of many, both husbands and wives, who among their companions are opening the faults and infirmities of each other, which they are bound in tenderness to cover. As if they perceived not that by dishonouring one another, they dishonour themselves. Love will cover a multitude of faults. Nay, many disaffected, peevish persons will aggravate all the faults of one another behind their backs to strangers; and sometimes slander them, and speak more than is truth. Many a man hath been put to clear his good name from the slanders of a jealous or a passionate wife: and an open enemy is not capable of doing one so much wrong as she that is in his bosom, because she will easily be believed, as being supposed to know him better than any other.

Direct. X. 'It is also a great part of the duty of husbands and wives, to be helpful to one another in the education of their children, and in the government of the inferiors of the family.' Some men cast all the care of their children while they are young upon their wives: and many women by their passion and indiscretion do make themselves

unfit to help their husbands in the government either of their children or servants: but this is one of the greatest parts of their employment. As to the man's part, to govern his house well, it is a duty unquestionable. And it is not to be denied of the wife. "I will that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the housed." Bathsheba taught Solomon. Abigail took better care of Nabal's house than he did himself. They that have a joint interest, and are one flesh, must have a joint part in government; although their power be not equal, and one may better oversee some business, and the other, other business; yet in their places they must divide the care, and help each other: and not as it is with many wicked persons, who are the most unruly part of the family themselves, and the chiefest cause that it is ungoverned and ungodly, or one party hindereth the other from keeping order, or doing any good.

Direct. XI. 'Another part of their duty is, to help each other in works of charity and hospitality.' While they have opportunity to do good to all, but especially to them of the household of faith; and to sow to the Spirit, that of the Spirit they may reap everlasting life: yea, to sow plentifully that they may reap plentifullyg, that if they are able their houses may afford relief and entertainment for the needy; especially for Christ's servants for their master's sake; who hath promised that "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward: and whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." The woman of Shunem lost nothing by the entertainment of Elisha, when she said to her husband, "Behold, now I perceive that this is an holy man of God which passeth by us continually: let us make him a little chamber I pray thee on the wall, and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a

candlestick: and it shall be when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thitheri." But now how common is it for the people to think all too little for themselves; and if one of them be addicted to works of charity, the other is covetous and is always hindering them.

Direct. XII. 'Lastly, it is a great part of the duty of husbands and wives, to be helpers and comforters of each other in order to a safe and happy death.' 1. In the time of health, you must often and seriously remember each other of the time when death will make the separation; and live together in your daily converse, as those that are still expecting the parting hour. Help to awaken each other's souls, to make ready all those graces which then will prove necessary, and to live in a constant preparation for your change. Reprove all that in one another, which will be unsavoury and ungrateful to your review at death. If you see each other dull and slow in your preparations, or to live in vanity, worldliness, or sloth, as if you had forgotten that you must shortly die, stir up one another to do all that without delay which the approach of such a day requireth. 2. And when death is at hand, O then what abundance of tenderness, and seriousness, and skill, and diligence, is needful for one, that hath the last office of love to perform, to the departing soul of so near a friend! O then what need will there be of your most wise, and faithful, and diligent help! When nature faileth, and the pains of flesh divert the mind, and temptations are strongest while the body is weakest; when a languishing body, and a doubting, fearful, troubled mind, do call for your compassion and help, O then what skill and holy seriousness will be necessary! O what a calamity is it to have a carnal, unsanctified husband or wife, which will neither help you to prepare for death, nor can speak a serious word of counsel or comfort to you at a dying hour: that can do nothing but stand by and weep over you; but have not a sensible word to say, about the life that you are going to, nor about the duty of a departing soul, nor against the

temptations and fears which then may be ready to overwhelm you. They that are utterly unprepared and unfit to die themselves, can do little to prepare or help another. But they that live together as the heirs of heaven, and converse on earth as fellow-travellers to the land of promise, may help and encourage the souls of one another, and joyfully part at death, as expecting quickly to meet again in life eternal.

Were it not lest I be over-tedious, I should next speak of the manner how husbands and wives must perform their duties to each other: as 1. That it should be all done in such entire love, as maketh the case of one another to you as your own. 2. That therefore all must be done in patience and mutual forbearance. 3. And in familiarity, and not with strangeness, distance, sourness, nor affected compliment. 4. And in secrecy; where I should have shewed you in what cases secrecy may be broken, and in what not. 5. And in confidence of each other's fidelity, and not in suspicion, jealousy, and distrust. 6. And in prudence to manage things aright, and to foresee and avoid impediments and inconveniencies. 7. And in holiness that God may be the first and last, and all in all. 8. And in constancy that you cease not your duties for one another until death. But necessary abbreviation alloweth me to say no more of these.

CHAPTER VIII

The special Duties of Husbands to their Wives

HE that will expect duty or comfort from his wife, must be faithful in doing the duty of a husband. The failing of yourselves in your own duty, may cause the failing of another to you, or at least will some other way as much afflict you, and will be more bitter to you in the end, than if an hundred failed of their duty to you. A good husband

will either make a good wife, or easily and profitably endure a bad one. I shall therefore give you directions for your own part of duty, as that which your happiness is most concerned in.

Direct. I. 'The husband must undertake the principal part of the government of the whole family, even of the wife herself.' And therefore I. He must labour to be fit and able for that government which he undertaketh: this ability consisteth 1. In holiness and spiritual wisdom, that he may be acquainted with the end to which he is to conduct them, and the rule by which he is to guide them; and the principal works which they are to do. An ungodly, irreligious man is both a stranger and an enemy to the chiefest part of family-government. 2. His ability consisteth in a due acquaintance with the works of his calling, and the labours in which his servants are to be employed. For he that is utterly unacquainted with their business, will be very unfit to govern them in it: unless he commit that part of their government to his wife or a steward that is acquainted with it. 3. And he must be acquainted both with the common temper and infirmities of mankind, that he may know how much is to be borne with, and also with the particular temper, and faults, and virtues of those whom he is to govern. 4. And he must have prudence to direct himself in all his carriage to them; and justice to deal with every one as they deserve; and love to do them all the good he can, for soul and body. II. And being thus able, he must make it his daily work, and especially be sure that he govern himself well, that his example may be part of his government of others.

Direct. II. 'The husband must so unite authority and love, that neither of them may be omitted or concealed, but both be exercised and maintained.' Love must not be exercised so imprudently as to destroy the exercise of authority: and authority must not be exercised over a wife so magisterially and imperiously, as to destroy the

exercise of love. As your love must be a governing love, so your commands must all be loving commands. Lose not your authority; for that will but disable you from doing the office of a husband to your wife, or of a master to your servants. Yet must it be maintained by no means inconsistent with conjugal love; and therefore not by fierceness or cruelty, by threatenings or stripes (unless by distraction or loss of reason, they cease to be incapable of the carriage otherwise due to a wife). There are many cases of equality in which authority is not to be exercised; but there is no case of inequality or unworthiness so great, in which conjugal love is not to be exercised; and therefore nothing must exclude it.

Direct. III. 'It is the duty of husbands to preserve the authority of their wives, over the children and servants of the family.' For they are joint governors with them over all the inferiors. And the infirmities of women are apt many times to expose them to contempt: so that servants and children will be apt to slight them, and disobey them, if the husband interpose not to preserve their honour and authority. Yet this must be done with such cautions as these: 1. Justify not any error, vice or weakness of your wives. They may be concealed and excused as far as may be, but never owned or defended. 2. Urge not obedience to any unlawful command of theirs. No one hath authority to contradict the law of God, or disoblige any from his government. You will but diminish your own authority with persons of any understanding, if you justify any thing that is against God's authority. But if the thing commanded be lawful, though it may have some inconveniences, you must rebuke the disobedience of inferiors, and not suffer them to slight the commands of your wives, nor to set their own reason and wills against them, and say, 'We will not do it.' How can they help you in government, if you suffer them to be disobeyed.

Direct. IV. 'Also you must preserve the honour as well as the authority of your wives.' If they have any dishonourable infirmities, they are not to be mentioned by children or servants. As in the natural body we cover most carefully the most dishonourable parts (for our comely parts have no need), so must it be here. Children of servants must not be suffered to carry themselves contemptuously or rudely towards them, nor to despise them, or speak unmannerly, proud or disdainful words to them. The husband must vindicate them from all such injury and contempt.

Direct. V. 'The husband is to excel the wife in knowledge, and be her teacher in the matters that belong to her salvation.' He must instruct her in the Word of God, and direct her in particular duties, and help her to subdue her own corruptions, and labour to confirm her against temptations; if she doubt of any thing that he can resolve her in, she is to ask his resolution, and he to open to her at home, the things which she understood not in the congregation. But if the husband be indeed an ignorant sot, or have made himself unable to instruct his wife, she is not bound to ask him in vain, to teach her that which he understandeth not himself. Those husbands that despise the Word of God, and live in wilful ignorance, do not only despise their own souls, but their families also; and making themselves unable for their duties, they are usually themselves despised by their inferiors: for God hath told such in his message to Eli, "Them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed."

Direct VI. 'The husband must be the principal teacher of the family.' He must instruct them, and examine them, and rule them about the matters of God, as well as his own service, and see that the Lord's day and worship be observed by all that are within his gates. And therefore he must labour for such understanding and ability as is

necessary hereunto. And if he be unable or negligent, it is his sin, and will be his shame. If the wife be wiser and abler, and it be cast upon her, it is his dishonour: but if neither of them do it, the sin, and shame, and suffering, will be common to them both.

Direct. VII. 'The husband is to be the mouth of the family, in their daily conjunct prayers unto God.' Therefore he must be able to pray, and also have a praying heart. He must be as it were the priest of the household; and therefore should be the most holy, that he may be fit to stand between them and God, and to offer up their prayers to him. If this be cast on the wife, it will be his dishonour.

Direct. VIII. 'The husband is to be the chief provider for the family (ordinarily).' It is supposed that he is most able for mind and body, and is the chief disposer of the estate. Therefore he must be specially careful, that wife and children want nothing that is fit for them, so far as he can procure it.

Direct. IX. 'The husband must be strongest in family-patience; bearing with the weakness and passions of the wife: not so as to make light of any sin against God, but so as not to make a great matter of any frailty as against himself, and so as to preserve the love and peace which is to be as the natural temper of their relation.'

Direct. X. 'The manner of all these duties must also be carefully regarded.' As 1. That they be done in prudence; and not with folly, rashness, or inconsiderateness. 2. That all be done in conjugal love, and tenderness, as over one that is tender, and the weaker vessel; and that he do not teach, or command, or reprove a wife, in the same imperious manner as a child or servant. 3. That due familiarity be maintained, and that he keep not at a distance and strangeness from his wife. 4. That love be confident, without base suspicions, and causeless jealousies. 5. That all be done in gentleness, and not in

passion, roughness and sourness. 6. That there be no unjust and causeless concealment of secrets, which should be common to them both. 7. That there be no foolish opening of such secrets to her as may become her snare, and she is not able to bear or keep. 8. That none of their own matters, which should be kept secret, be made known to others. His teaching and reproving her, should be for the most part secret. 9. That he be constant, and not weary of his love or duty. This briefly of the manner.

CHAPTER IX

The Special Duties of Wives to Husbands

THE wife that expecteth comfort in a husband, must make conscience of all her own duty to her husband: for though it be his duty to be kind and faithful to her, though she prove unkind and froward, yet 1. Men are frail and apt to fail in such difficult duties as well as women. 2. And it is so ordered by God, that comfort and duty shall go together, and you shall miss of comfort, if you cast off duty.

Direct. I. 'Be specially loving to your husbands:' your natures give you the advantage in this; and love feedeth love. This is your special requital for all the troubles that your infirmities put them to.

Direct. II. 'Live in a voluntary subjection and obedience to them.' If their softness or yieldingness cause them to relinquish their authority; and for peace they are fain to let you have your wills; yet remember that it is God that hath appointed them to be your heads and governors. I they are so silly as to be unable, you should not have chosen such to rule you as are unfit: but having chosen them, you must assist them with your better understanding, in a submissive, and not a ruling, masterly way. A servant that hath a foolish master,

may help him without becoming master. And do not deceive yourselves by giving the bare titles of government to your husbands, when yet you must needs in all things have your own wills; for this is but mockery, and not obedience. To be subject and obedient, is to take the understanding and will of another to govern you, before (though not without) your own; and to make your understandings and wills to follow the conduct of his that governeth you. Self-willedness is contrary to subjection and obedience.

Direct. III. 'Learn of your husbands as your appointed teachers, and be not self-conceited and wise in your own eyes, but ask of them such instructions as your case requireth.' "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted to them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law: and if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home;" (unless when the husband is so ignorant as to be utterly unable; which is his sin and shame. For it is vain to ask that of them which they know not.)

Direct. IV. 'Set yourselves seriously to amend all those faults which they reprove in you.' Do not take it ill to be reproved; swell not against it, as if they did you harm or wrong: it is a very ill sign to "hate reproof." And what doth their government of you signify, if you will not amend the faults that are reproved in you, but continue impenitent and grudge at the reproof? It is a miserable folly to desire to be flattered, and soothed by any, but especially by one that is bound to be faithful to you, and whose intimacy should make you as ready to hear of your faults from him, as to be acquainted with them yourselves; and especially when it concerneth the safety or benefit of your souls.

Direct. V. 'Honour your husbands according to their superiority.' Behave not yourselves towards them with unreverence and contempt, in titles, speeches, or any behaviour: if the worth of their persons deserve not honour, yet their place deserveth it. Speak not of their infirmities to others behind their backs; as some twattling gossips use to do, that know not that their husband's dishonour is their own, and that to open it causelessly to others, is their double shame. Those that silently hear you, will tell others behind your back, how foolishly and shamefully you spake to them against your husbands. If God have made your nearest friend an affliction to you, why should you complain to one that is farther off? (Unless it be to some special, prudent friend, in case of true necessity for advice.)

Direct. VI. 'Live in a cheerful contentedness with your condition; and take heed of an impatient, murmuring spirit.' It is a continual burden to a man to have an impatient, discontented wife. Many a poor man can easily bear his poverty himself, that yet is not able to bear his wife's impatience under it. To hear her night and day complaining, and speaking distrustfully, and see her live disquietedly, is far heavier than his poverty itself. If his wife could bear it as patiently as he, it would be but light to him. Yea, in case of suffering for righteousness' sake, the impatience of a wife is a greater trial to a man than all the suffering itself; and many a man that could easily have suffered the loss of his estate, or banishment, or imprisonment for Christ, hath betrayed his conscience, and yielded to sin, because his wife hath grieved him with impatiency, and could not bear what he could bear. Whereas a contented, cheerful wife doth help to make a man cheerful and contented in every state.

Direct. VII. 'In a special manner strive to subdue your passions, and to speak and do all in meekness and sobriety.' The rather because that the weakness of your sex doth usually subject you more to

passions than men: and it is the common cause of the husband's disquietness, and the calamity of your relation. It is the vexation and sickness of your own minds; you find not yourselves at ease within as long as you are passionate. And then it is the grief and disquietness of your husbands: and being provoked by you, they provoke you more; and so your disquietness increaseth, and your lives are made a weary burden to you. By all means therefore keep down passion, and keep a composed, patient mind.

Direct. VIII. 'Take heed of a proud and contentious disposition; and maintain a humble, peaceable temper.' Pride will make you turbulent and unquiet with your husbands, and contentious with your neighbours: it will make you foolish and ridiculous, in striving for honour and precedency, and envying those that exceed you, or go before you. In a word, it is the devil's sin, and would make you a shame and trouble to the world. But humility is the health, the peace, and the ornament of the soul. "A meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price." (Write those words in your bed-chamber on the walls where they may be daily before your eyes.) "Put on as the elect of God; holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one anotherd." If this be the duty of all to one another; much more of wives to husbands. "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." Proud women oft ruin their husbands' estates, and quietness, and their own souls.

Direct. IX. 'Affect not a childish gaudiness of apparel, nor a vain, or costly, or troublesome curiosity in any thing about you.' Uncleanness and nastiness is a fault, but very small in comparison of this pride and curiosity. It dishonoureth your sex and selves to be so childish, as to over-mind such toyish things. If you will needs be proud, be

proud of somewhat that is of worth and proper to a man: to be proud of reason, or wisdom, or learning, or goodness, is bad enough; but this is to be proud of something. But to be proud of fashions and fine clothes, of spots and nakedness, of sumptuous entertainments, and neat rooms, is to be proud of your shame, and not your virtue; and of that which you are not so much as commendable for. And the cost, the time (O precious time!) which themselves and their servants must lay out, upon their dressings, entertainments and other curiosities, will be the shame and sorrow of their souls, whenever God shall open their eyes, and make them know what time was worth, and what greater matters they had to mind. If vain and empty persons like yourselves, commend you for your bravery or curiosity, so will not any judicious, sober person, whose commendation is much worth. And yet I must here with grief take notice, that when some few that in other matters seem wise and religious, are themselves a little tainted with this childish curiosity and pride, and let fall words of disparagement against those whose dress, and dwellings, and entertainments, are not so curious as their own; this proves the greatest maintainer of this sin, and the most notable service to the devil: for then abundance will plead this for this sinful curiosity and pride, and say, 'I shall else be accounted base or sordid; even such and such will speak against me.' Take heed, if you will needs be such yourselves, that you prate not against others that are not as vain and curious as you: for the nature of man is more prone to pride and vanity, than to humility, and the improvement of their time and cost in greater matters; and while you think that you speak but against indecency, you become the devil's preachers, and do him more service than you consider of. You may as wisely speak against people for using to eat or drink too little, when there is not one of a multitude that liveth not ordinarily in excess; and so excess will get advantage by it.

Direct. X. 'Be specially careful in the government of your tongues; and let your words be few, and well considered before you speak them.' A double diligence is needful in this, because it is the most common miscarriage of your sex: a laxative, running tongue, is so great a dishonour to you, that I never knew a woman very full of words, but she was the pity of her friends, and the contempt of others; who behind her back will make a scorn of her, and talk of her as some crack-brained or half-witted person; yea, though your talk be good, it will be tedious and contemptible, if it be thus poured out, and be too cheap. "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise." You must answer in judgment for your "idle wordsg." You will take it ill to be accounted fools, and made the derision of those that talk of you: judge by the Scripture what occasion you give them. "A dream cometh by the multitude of business, and a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words: in the multitude of dreams, and many words, there are divers vanities." "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness; and the end of his talk is mischievous madness: a fool also is full of words." Whereas a woman that is cautelous and sparing of her words, is commonly reverenced and supposed to be wise. So that if you had no higher design in it, but merely to be well thought of, and honoured by men; you can scarcely take a surer way, than to let your words be few and weighty; though the avoiding of sin, and unquietness, should prevail with you much more.

Direct. XI. 'Be willing and diligent in your proper part, of the care and labour of the family.' As the primary provision of maintenance belongeth most to the husband, so the secondary provision within doors belongeth specially to the wife. Read over and over the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs; especially the care of nursing your own children, and teaching them, and watching over them when they are

young; and also watching over the family at home, when your husbands are abroad, is your proper work.

Direct. XII. 'Dispose not of your husband's estate, without his knowledge and consent.' You are not only to consider, whether the work be good that you lay it out upon, but what power you have to do it. Quest. But may a woman give nothing, nor lay out nothing in the house, without her husband's consent? Answ. 1. If she have his general or implicit consent, it may suffice; that is, if he allow her to follow her judgment; or, if he commit such a proportion to her power, to do what she will with it. Or, if she know, that if he knew it, he would not be against it. 2. Or, if the law, or his consent, do give her any propriety in any part of his estate, or make her a joint-proprietor, she may proportionably dispose of it in a necessary case. The husband is considerable, either as a proprietor, or as her governor. As a proprietor, he only may dispose of the estate, where he is the sole proprietor: but where consent or the law of the land doth make the woman joint-proprietor, she is not disabled from giving for the want of a propriety. But then no law exempteth her from his government; and therefore she is not to give any thing in a way of disobedience, though it be her own: except when he forbiddeth that which is her duty, or which he hath ho power to forbid. So that in case of joint-propriety she may give without him, so be it she exceed not her proportion, and also if it be in a case of duty, where he may not hinder her. As to save the lives of the poor in extreme necessity, famine, or imprisonment, or the like. 3. But if the thing be wholly her own, excepted from his propriety, and she be sole proprietor, then she need not ask his consent at all, any other way than as he is her guide, to direct her to the best way of disposing of it: which, if he forbid her, instead of directing her to it, she is not thereby excusable before God, for the abusing of her trust and talent. 4. I conceive that 'ad aliquid' as to certain absolutely necessary uses,

the very relation maketh the woman as a joint-proprietor: as if her husband will not allow her such food and raiment as is necessary to preserve the lives and health of herself, and all her children; she is bound to do it without or against his will (if she can, and if it be not to a greater hurt, and the estate be his own, and he be able) rather than let her children contract such diseases, as apparently will follow to the hazard of their lives. Yea, and to save the life of another that in famine is ready to perish: for she is not as a stranger to his estate. But out of these cases, if a wife shall secretly waste or give, or lay it out on bravery or vanity, or set her wit against her husband's; and because she thinks him too strait or penurious, therefore she will dispose of it, without his consent. This is thievery, disobedience, and injustice.

Quest. I. 'But as the case standeth with us in England, hath the wife a joint-propriety, or not?'

Answ. Three ways (at least) she may have a propriety. 1. By a reserve of what was her own before; which (however some question it) may in some cases be done in their agreement at marriage. 2. By the law of the land. 3. By the husband's consent or donation. What the law of the land saith in case, I leave to the lawyers: but it seemeth to me, that his words at marriage 'With all my worldly goods I thee endow,' do signify his consent to make her a joint-proprietor: and his consent is sufficient to the collation of a title, to that which was his own. Unless any can prove that law or custom, doth otherwise expound the words (as an empty formality), and that at the contract, this was or should be known to her to be the sense. And the law's allowing the wife the third part upon death or separation, doth intimate a joint-propriety before.

Quest. II. 'If the husband live upon unlawful gain, as cheating, stealing, robbing by the highway, &c. is not the wife guilty as a joint-proprietor, in retaining such ill-gotten goods, if she know it? And is she bound to accuse her husband, or to restore such goods?'

Answ. Her duty is first to admonish her husband of his sin and danger, and endeavour his repentance, in the mean time disclaiming all consent, and reception of the goods. And if she cannot prevail for his repentance, restitution, and reformation, she hath a double duty to perform; the one is to help them to their goods whom he hath injured and robbed (by prudent and just means): the other is to prevent his robbing of others for the time to come. But how these must be done is the great difficulty.

1. If she foresee (or may do) that either by her husband's displeasure, or by the cruel revenge of the injured party, the hurt of discovering the fraud or robbery, will be greater than the good, then I think that she is not bound to discover it. But by some secret, indirect way, to help the owner to his own; if it may be done without a greater hurt.

2. To prevent his sin and other men's future suffering by him, she seemeth to me to be bound to reveal her husband's sinful purposes to the magistrate, if she can no other way prevail with him to forbear. My reasons are, because the keeping of God's law, and the law of the land, and the public order and good, and the preventing of our neighbours' hurt by robbery or fraud; and so the interest of honesty and right, is of greater importance than any duty to her husband, or preservation of her own peace, which seemeth to be against it. But then I must suppose that she liveth under a magistrate, who will take but a just revenge. For if she know the laws and magistrate to be so unjust, as to punish a fault with death, which deserveth it not, she is

not to tell such a magistrate, but to preserve her neighbours' safety by some other way of intimation.

If any one think that a wife may in no case, accuse a husband, to the hazard of his life or estate, let them, 1. Remember what God obliged parents to do against the lives of incorrigible children, Deut. 21. 2. And that the honour of God, and the lives of our neighbours, should be preferred before the life of one offender, and their estates before his estate alone. 3. And that the light of reason telleth us, that a wife is to reveal a treason against the king, which is plotted by a husband; and therefore also the robbing of the king's treasury, or deceiving him in any matter of great concernment. And therefore in due proportion, the laws and common good, and our neighbours' welfare, are to be preserved by us, though against the nearest relation: only all due tenderness of the life and reputation of the husband is to be preserved, in the manner of proceedings, as far as will stand with the interest of justice, and the common good.

Quest. III. 'May the wife go hear sermons when the husband forbiddeth her?'

Answ. There are some sermons which must not be heard; there are some sermons which may be heard, and must when no greater matter doth divert us; and there are some sermons which must be heard, whoever shall forbid it. Those which must not be heard are such as are heretical (ordinarily) and such as are superfluous, and at such times when greater duties call us another way. Those which may be heard, are either occasional sermons, or such lectures as are neither of necessity to ourselves, nor yet to the owning of God and his public worship. One that liveth where there are daily or hourly sermons, may hear them as oft as suiteth with their condition, and their other duties: but in this case, the command of a husband, with

the inconveniences that will follow disobeying him, may make it a duty to forbear. But that we do sometimes publicly own God's worship, and church ordinances, and receive ministerial teaching for our edification, is of double necessity; that we deny not God, and that we betray not, or desert not our own souls. And this is especially necessary (ordinarily) on the Lord's days, which are appointed for these necessary uses. And here the husband hath no power to forbid the wife, nor should she (formally) obey his prohibition. But yet as affirmatives bind not 'ad semper,' and no duty is a duty at every season; so it is possible that on the Lord's day, it may extraordinarily become a duty to forbear sermons or sacraments, or other public worship. As when any greater duty calleth us away: as to quench a fire; and to save men's lives; and to save our country from an enemy in the time of war; and to save our own lives (if we knew the assembly would be assaulted), or to preserve our liberty for greater service. Christ set us to learn the meaning of this lesson 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice.' In such a case also a mischief may be avoided, even from a husband by the omission of a duty at that time (when it would be no duty) for this is but a transposition of it. But this is but an act of prudent self-preservation, and not an act of formal obedience.

Quest. IV. 'If a woman have a husband so incorrigible in vice, as that by long trial she findeth that speaking against it, maketh him worse, and causeth him to abuse her, is she bound to continue her dissuasion, or to forbear?'

Answ. That is not here a duty which is not a means to do some good: and that is no means which we know beforehand is like, if not certain, to do no good, or to do more harm. We must not by weariness, laziness, or censoriousness, take a case to be desperate, which is not; nor must we so easily desist with so near a relation, as

with a stranger or a neighbour. But yet Christ's indulgence of not exposing ourselves to be torn by dogs, and his word trodden in the dirt by swine, doth extend to relations as well as others. But then you must observe that she that is justly discouraged from sharp reproofs, may yet have hope that gentle and humble persuasions may succeed. And she that is discouraged from open, or frequent, or plain reproofs; may yet have hope that secret, or more seldom, or more distant and general admonitions may not be lost. And she that is discouraged from one way of doing him good, may yet have many other ways (as to set some minister whom he reverenceth, to speak to him; to put some suitable book into his hand, &c.) And she that is discouraged at the present, ought not totally to despair, but may make some more attempts hereafter; either in some sickness, or time of mortality, or danger, or affliction, or when possibly time and consideration may have better prepared him to hear. And in the mean time she is to continue all conjugal affection and duty, and a convincing, winning course of life; which may prove the most effectual reproof.

Quest. V. 'What should a woman do in controverted cases of religion, when her judgment and her husband's differ?'

Answ. 1. Some make a controversy of that which with all good Christians or sober persons, should be past controversy; and some controversies are indeed of real, if not insuperable difficulty. 2. Some controversies are about important, necessary things, and some about things of lesser moment. 3. Some are about mere opinion, or other men's practice, and some about our own practice.

(1.) In all differences of judgment the wife must exercise such self-suspicion, and modesty, and submission, as may signify her due sense, both of the weakness of her sex, and of her subjection to her

husband. (2.) In things indifferent she must in practice obey her husband; unless when superior powers do forbid it, and that in cases where their authority is greater. (3.) She may modestly give her reasons of dissent. (4.) She must not turn it to an unpeaceable quarrel, or matter of disaffection, or pretend any differences against her conjugal duties. (5.) In dark and difficult cases she should not be peremptory, and self-conceited, nor importunate; but if she have faith (that is, some more knowledge than he) have it to herself, in quietness and silence; and seek further information lest she err. (6.) She must speak no untruth, nor commit any known sin, in obedience to her husband's judgment. (7.) When she strongly suspecteth it to be sin, she must not do it merely in obedience to him, but seek for better satisfaction. For she is sure that he hath no power to force her to sin; and therefore hath no more assurance of his power in that point than she hath of the lawfulness of the thing. (8.) But if she prove to be in the error, she will sin on either side, till she recover. (9.) If a husband be in dangerous error, she must wisely, but unweariedly seek his reformation, by herself or others.

Cases about Divorce and Separation

Quest. I. 'Is it lawful for husband and wife to be long absent from each other? and how long, and in what cases?'

Answ. It is lawful to be absent either in the case of prayer which Paul mentioneth, or in case of the needful affairs of their estates, so long as may be no danger to either of them as to mental or corporal incontinency, nor to any other hurt which will be greater than the benefits of their absence, nor cause them to be guilty of the neglect of any real duty. Therefore the cases of several persons do much differ according to the different tempers of their minds, and bodies, and affairs. He that hath a wife of a chaste, contented, prudent temper,

may stay many months or years in some cases, when, all things considered, it tendeth to more good than hurt: as lawyers by their callings are often necessitated to follow their callings at terms and assizes: and merchants may be some years absent in some weighty cases. But if you ask, whether the getting of money be a sufficient cause? I answer, that it is sufficient to those whose families must be so maintained, and their wives are easily continent, and so the good of their gain is greater than any loss or danger that cometh by it. But when covetousness puts them upon it needlessly, and their wives cannot bear it, or in any case when the hurt that is like to follow is greater than the good, it is unlawful.

Quest. II. 'May husband and wife be separated by the bare command of princes, if they make a law that in certain cases they shall part: as suppose it to ministers, judges, or soldiers?'

Answ. You must distinguish between the bare command or law, and the reasons and ends of that command: and so between a lawful command and an unlawful. In some cases a prince may justly command a separation for a time, or such as is like to prove for perpetuity, and in some cases he may not. If a king command a separation without sufficient cause, so that you have no motive but his authority, and the question is, whether formally you are bound to obedience: I answer, No; because what God hath joined, no man hath power to put asunder. Nor can either prince, pope, or prelate dispense with your marriage covenant. In such a case, it is as a private act, because God hath given them no authority for it; and therefore their commands or laws are nullities: only if a prince say, he that will be a judge or a justice shall part with his wife, it is lawful to leave the office, and so obey the law. But if he say to all ministers of the gospel, you shall forsake your wives or your ministry, they

should do neither, because they are divinely obliged to both, and he hath no power to forbid them, or to dispense with that obligation.

But it may fall out, that the ends of the command may be so great as to make it lawful, and then it must be obeyed both formally for the authority of the prince, and finally for the reasons of the thing. As if the safety of the commonwealth should require, that married persons be soldiers, and that they go far off; yea, though there be no likelihood of returning to their families, and withal they cannot take their wives with them, without detriment or danger to their service; in this case men must obey the magistrate, and are called by God to forsake their wives, as if it were by death. Nor is it any violation of their marriage covenant, because that was intended or meant to suppose the exception of any such call of God, which cannot be resisted when it will make a separation.

Quest. III. 'May ministers leave their wives to go abroad to preach the Gospel?'

Answ. If they can neither do God's work so well at home, nor yet take their wives with them, nor be excused from doing that part of service, by other men's doing it who have no such impediment; they may and must leave their wives to do it. In this case, the interest of the church, and of the souls of many, must over-rule the interest of wife and family. Those pastors who have fixed stations, must neither leave flock or family without necessity, or a clear call from God. But in several cases a preacher may be necessitated to go abroad; as in case of persecution at home, or of some necessity of foreign or remote parts; which cannot be otherwise supplied: or when some door is opened for the conversion of infidels, heretics, or idolaters, and none else so fit to do that work, or none that will. In any such case, when the cause of God in any part of the world 'consideratis considerandis'

doth require his help, a minister must leave wife and family, yea, and a particular flock to do it. For our obligations are greatest to the Catholic church, and public good; and the greatest good must be preferred. If a king command a subject to be an ambassador in the most remote part of the world, and the public good withal requireth it, if wife and children cannot be taken with him, they must be left behind, and he must go. So must a consecrated minister of Christ for the service of the church refuse all entanglements, which would more hinder his work than the contrary benefits will countervail. And this exception also was supposed in the marriage contract, that family interests and comforts must give way to the public interest, and to God's disposals.

And therefore it is, that ministers should not rashly venture upon marriage, nor any woman that is wise venture to marry a minister, till she is first well prepared for such accidents as may separate them for a shorter or a longer time.

Quest. IV. 'May one leave a wife to save his life, in case of personal persecution or danger?'

Answ. Yes, if she cannot be taken with him; for the means which are for the helps of life, do suppose the preservation of life itself: if he live, he may further serve God, and possibly return to his wife and family; but if he die, he is removed from them all.

Quest. V. 'May husband and wife part by mutual consent, if they find it to be for the good of both?'

Answ. If you speak not of a dissolving the bond of their relations, but withdrawing as to cohabitation, I answer, 1. It is not to be done upon passions and discontents, to feed and gratify each other's vicious distempers or interest; for then both the consent and the separation

are their sins: but if really such an uncurable unsuitableness be between them, as that their lives must needs be miserable by their cohabitation, I know not but they may live asunder; so be it, that (after all other means used in vain) they do it by deliberate, free consent. But if one of them should by craft or cruelty constrain the other to consent, it is unlawful to the constrainer. Nor must impatience make either of them ungroundedly despair of the cure of any unsuitableness which is really curable. But many sad instances might be given, in which cohabitation may be a constant calamity to both, and distance may be their relief, and further them both in God's service, and in their corporal concernments. Yet I say not that this is no sin; for their unsuitableness is their sin: and God still obligeth them to lay down that sin which maketh them unsuitable; and therefore doth not allow them to live asunder, it being still their duty to live together in love and peace: and saying they cannot, freeth them not from the duty. But yet that moral impotency may make such a separation as aforesaid, to be a lesser sin than their unpeaceable cohabitation.

Quest. VI. 'May not the relation itself be dissolved by mutual, free consent, so that they may marry others?'

Answ. As to the relation, they will still be related as those that did covenant to live in conjugal society, and are still allowed it and obliged to it, if the impediments were but removed: and it is but the exercise which is hindered. And they may not consent to marry others: 1. Because the contracted relation was for life, Rom. 7:2. and God's law accordingly obligeth them. Marriages 'pro tempore,' dissoluble by consent, are not of God's institution, but contrary to it. 2. They know not but their impediments of cohabitation may be removed. 3. If he that marrieth an innocent divorced woman commit adultery, by parity of reason (with advantage) it will be so here. If

you say, what if either of them cannot contain? I answer, he that will not take heed before, must be patient afterwards, and not make advantage of his own folly, to the fulfilling of his lusts. If he will do what he ought to do in the use of all means, he may live chastely. And 4. The public interest must overrule the private, and that which would be unjust in private respects, may for public good become a duty: it seemeth unjust here with us, that the innocent country should repay every man his money, who between sun and sun is robbed on the road; and yet because it will engage the country to watchfulness, it is just, as for the common good: and he that consenteth to be a member of a commonwealth, doth thereby consent to submit his own right to the common interest. So here, if all should have leave to marry others when they consent to part, it would bring utter confusion, and it would encourage wicked men to abuse their wives, till they forced them to consent. Therefore some must bear the trouble which their folly hath brought on themselves, rather than the common order should be confounded.

Quest. VII. 'Doth adultery dissolve the bond of marriage, or not? Amesius saith it doth: and Mr. Whateley having said so, afterward recanted it by the persuasion of other divines.'

Answ. The difference is only about the name and not about the matter itself. The reason which moved Dr. Ames is, because the injured person is free; therefore not bound; therefore the bond is dissolved. The reason which Mr. Whateley could not answer is, because it is not fornication, but lawful, if they continue their conjugal familiarity after adultery; therefore that bond is not dissolved. In all which it is easy to perceive, that one of them taketh the word 'vinculum' or bond in one sense, that is, 'For their covenant-obligation to continue their relation and mutual duties. And the other taketh it in another sense, that is, 'For the relation

itself, as by it they are allowed conjugal familiarity, if the injured person will continue it.' The first 'vinculum' or bond is dissolved, the second is not. In the matter we are agreed, that the injured man may put away an adulterous wife (in a regular way) if he please; but withal that he may continue the relation if he please. So that his continued consent shall suffice to continue it a lawful relation and exercise; and his will on the contrary shall suffice to dissolve the relation, and disoblige him. (Saving the public order.)

Quest. VIII. 'But is not the injured party at all obliged to separate, but left free?'

Answ. Considering the thing simply in itself, he is wholly free to do as he please. But for all that, accidents or circumstances may make it one man's duty to divorce, and another's duty to continue the relation; according as it is like to do more good or hurt. Sometimes it may be a duty to expose the sin to public shame, for the prevention of it in others; and also to deliver one's self from a calamity. And sometimes there may be so great repentance, and hope of better effects by forgiving, that it may be a duty to forgive: and prudence must lay one thing with another, to discern on which side the duty lieth.

Quest. IX. 'Is it only the privilege of the man that he may put away an adulterous wife? or also of the woman, to depart from an adulterous husband? The reason of the doubt is, because Christ mentioneth the man's power only, Matt. 5:19.'

Answ. 1. The reason why Christ speaketh only of the man's case is, because he was occasioned only, to restrain the vicious custom of men's causeless putting away their wives; having no occasion to restrain women from leaving their husbands. Men having the rule did abuse it to the woman's injury, which Christ forbiddeth. And as it

is an act of power, it concerneth the man alone; but as it is an act of liberty, it seemeth to me to be supposed, that the woman hath the same freedom; seeing the covenant is violated to her wrong. And the apostle in 1 Cor. 7 doth make the case of the man and of the woman to be equal in the point of infidelity and desertion. I confess that it is unsafe, extending the sense of Scripture beyond the importance of the words upon pretence of a parity of reason (as many of the perjured do by Lev. 27 in case of vows); lest man's deceitful wit should make a law to itself as divine, upon pretence of interpreting God's laws; but yet when the plain text doth speak but of one case (that is, of men's putting away their wives,) he that will thence gather an exclusion of the woman's liberty, doth seem by addition to be the corrupter of the law. And where the context plainly sheweth a parity of reason, and that reason is made the ground of the determination in the text, there it is safe to expound the law extensively accordingly. Surely the covenant of marriage hath its conditions on both parts; and some of those conditions are necessary to the very being of the obligations, though others are but needful to the well-being of the parties in that state. And therefore, though putting away be only the part of the husband, as being the ruler, and usually the owner of the habitation, yet departing may be the liberty of the wife. And I know no reason to blame those countries, whose laws allow the wife to sue out a divorce, as well as the husband.

Quest. X. 'May the husband put away the wife without the magistrate, or the wife depart from the husband without a public legal divorce or licence?'

Answ. Where the laws of the land do take care for the prevention of injuries, and make any determination in the case (not contrary to the law of God,) there it is a Christian's duty to obey those laws: therefore if you live under a law which forbiddeth any putting away

or departing, without public sentence or allowance, you may not do it privately upon your own will. For the civil governors are to provide against the private injuries of any of the subjects. And if persons might put away or depart at pleasure, it would introduce both injury and much weakness into the world. But where the laws of men do leave persons to their liberty in this case, they need then to look no further than to the laws of God alone. But usually the sentence of the civil power, is necessary only in case of appeal, or complaint of the party injured: and a separation may be made without such a public divorce, so that each party may make use of the magistrate to right themselves if wronged. As if the adultery be not openly known, and the injuring party desire rather to be put away privily than publicly, (as Joseph purposed to do by Mary) I see not but it is lawful so to do, in case that the law, or the necessity of making the offender an example, require not the contrary, nor scandal or other accidents forbid it not. See Grotius's learned Notes on Matt. 5:31, 32. and on Matt. 19 and 1 Cor. 7 about these questions.

Ques. XI. Is not the case of sodomy or buggery a ground for warrantable divorce as well as adultery?

Answ. Yes, and seemeth to be included in the very word itself in the text, Matt. V. 31, 32 which signifieth uncleanness; or at least is fully implied in the reason of it. See Grotis ibid. also of this.

Quest. XII. 'What if both parties commit adultery? may either of them put away the other, or depart; or rather must they forgive each other?'

Answ. If they do it both at once, they do both forfeit the liberty of seeking any compensation for the injury; because the injury is equal (however some would give the advantage to the man): but if one

commit adultery first, and the other after; then either the last offender knew of the first, or not. If not, then it seemeth all one as if it had been done at once. But if yea, then they did it either on a supposition of the dissolution of the matrimonial obligation, as being loosed from the first adulterer, or else upon a purpose of continuing in the first relation: in the latter case, it is still all one as if it had been done by them at once, and it is a forfeiture of any satisfaction: but in the former case, though the last adulterer did sin, yet being before set at liberty, it doth not renew the matrimonial obligation: but yet, if the first offender desire the continuance of it, and the return of the first-injured party; shame and conscience of their own sin, will much rebuke them, if they plead that injury for continuance of the separation.

Quest. XIII. 'But what if one do purposely commit adultery, to be separated from the other?'

Answ. It is in the other's power and choice, whether to be divorced and depart, or not, as they find the good or evil consequents preponderate.

Quest. XIV. 'Doth not infidelity dissolve the relation or obligation; seeing there is no communion between light and darkness, a believer and an infidel?'

Answ. It maketh it unlawful for a believer to marry an infidel (except in case of true necessity); because they can have no communion in religion. But it nullifieth not a marriage already made, nor maketh it lawful to depart or divorce: because they may have mere conjugal communion still. As the apostle purposely determineth the case, in 1 Cor. 7.

Quest. XV. 'Doth not the desertion of one party, disoblige the other?'

Answ. 1. It must be considered what is true desertion. 2. Whether it be a desertion of the relation itself for continuance, or only a temporary desertion of co-habitation, or congress. 3. What the temper and state of the deserted party is. It is sometimes easy, and sometimes hard to discern which is the deserting party. If the wife go away from the husband unwarrantably, though she require him to follow her, and say that she doth not desert him, yet it may be taken for a desertion, because it is the man who is to rule and choose the habitation. But if the man go away, and the woman refuse to follow him, it is not he that is therefore the deserter.

Quest. 'But what if the man have not sufficient cause to go away, and the woman hath great and urgent reasons not to go? As suppose that the man will go away in hatred of an able preacher, and good company, and the woman if she follow him, must leave all those helps, and go among ignorant, profane, heretical persons, or infidels; which is the deserter then?'

Answ. If she be one that is either like to do good to the infidels, heretics, or bad persons whom they must converse with, she may suppose that God calleth her to receive good by doing good: or if she be a confirmed, well-settled Christian, and not very like, either by infection, or by want of helps, to be unsettled and miscarry, it seemeth to me to be the safest way to follow her husband. She must lose indeed God's public ordinances by following him: but it is not imputable to her, as being out of her choice; and she must lose the benefits, and neglect the duties of the conjugal ordinance, if she do not follow him. But if she be a person under such weaknesses, as make her remove apparently dangerous as to her perseverance and salvation, and her husband will by no means be prevailed with to change his mind, the case then is very difficult what is her duty, and who is the deserter. Nay, if he but lead her into a country where her

life were like to be taken away, (as under the Spanish Inquisition,) unless her suffering were like to be as serviceable to Christ as her life. Indeed these cases are so difficult, that I will not decide them: the inconveniences, (or mischiefs rather) are great, which way soever she take: but I most incline to judge as followeth: viz. It is considerable first, what marriage obligeth her to, simply of its own nature; and what it may do next, by any superadded contract, or by the law or custom of the land, or any other accident. As to the first, it seemeth to me, that every one's obligation is so much first to God, and then to their own souls and lives; that marriage as such, which is for mutual help, as a means to higher ends, doth not oblige her to forsake all the communion of saints, and the place or country where God is lawfully worshipped, and to lose all the helps of public worship, and to expose her soul both to spiritual famine and infection, to the apparent hazard of her salvation (and perhaps bring her children into the same misery); nor hath God given her husband any power to do her so much wrong, nor is the marriage-covenant to be interpreted to intend it. But what any human law or contract, or other accident which is of greater public consequence, may do more than marriage of itself, is a distinct case, which must have a particular discussion.

Quest. 'But what if the husband would only have her follow him, to the forsaking of her estate, and undoing herself and children in the world, (as in the case of Galeacius Caracciolus, Marquis of Vicum;) yea, and if it were without just cause?'

Answ. If it be for greater spiritual gain; (as in his case,) she is bound to follow him: but if it be apparently foolish, to the undoing of her and her children without any cause, I see not that marriage simply obligeth a woman so to follow a fool in beggary, or out of a calling, or to her ruin. But if it be at all a controvertible case, whether the cause be just or not, then the husband being governor must be judge. The

laws of the land are supposed to be just, which allow a woman by trustees to secure some part of her former estate from her husband's disposal: much more may, she beforehand secure herself and children from being ruined by his wilful folly: but she can by no contract except herself from his true government.

Yet still she must consider, whether she can live continently in his absence: otherwise the greatest sufferings, must be endured, to avoid incontinency.

2. Moreover, in all these cases, a temporary removal may, be further followed, than a perpetual transmigration, because it hath fewer evil consequents.

And if either party renounce the relation itself, it is a fuller desertion, and clearer discharge of the other party, than a mere removal is.

Quest. XVI. 'What if a man or wife know that the other in hatred doth really intend by poison or other murder, to take away their life? May they not then depart?'

Answ. They may not do it upon a groundless or rash surmise; nor upon a danger which by other lawful means may be avoided; (as by vigilancy, or the magistrate, or especially by love and duty.) But in plain danger, which is not otherwise like to be avoided, I doubt not, but it may be done and ought. For it is a duty to preserve our own lives as well as our neighbours. And when marriage is contracted for mutual help, it is naturally implied that they shall have no power to deprive one another of life: (however some barbarous nations have given men power of the lives of their wives.) And killing is the grossest kind of desertion, and a greater injury and violation of the marriage-covenant than adultery; and may be prevented by avoiding

the murderer's presence; if that way be necessary. None of the ends of marriage can be attained, where the hatred is so great.

Quest. XVII. 'If there be but fixed hatred of each other, is it inconsistent with the ends of marriage? And is parting lawful in such a case?'

Answ. The injuring party is bound to love and not to separate; and can have no liberty by his or her sin. And to say, I cannot love, or my wife or husband is not amiable, is no sufficient excuse; because every person hath somewhat that is amiable, if it be but human nature; and that should have been foreseen before your choice. And as it is no excuse to a drunkard to say, I cannot leave my drink; so it is none to an adulterer, or hater of another, to say, I cannot love them: for that is but to say, I am so wicked, that my heart or will is against my duty. But the innocent party's case is harder (though commonly both parties are faulty, and therefore both are obliged to return to love, and not to separate). But if hatred proceed not to adultery, or murder, or intolerable injuries, you must remember that marriage is not a contract for years, but for life, and that it is possible that hatred may be cured (how unlikely soever it may be). And therefore you must do your duty, and wait, and pray, and strive by love and goodness to recover love, and then stay to see what God will do; for mistakes in your choice will not warrant a separation.

Quest XVIII. 'What if a woman have a husband that will not suffer her to read the Scriptures, nor go to God's worship public or private, or that so beateth or abuseth her, as that it cannot be expected that human nature should be in such a case kept fit for any holy action; or if a man have a wife that will scold at him when he is praying or instructing his family, and make it impossible to him to serve God with freedom, or peace, and comfort?'

Answ. The woman must (at necessary seasons, though not when she would) both read the Scriptures, and worship God, and suffer patiently what is inflicted on her. Martyrdom may be as comfortably suffered from a husband, as from a prince. But yet if neither her own love, and duty, and patience, nor friend's persuasion, nor the magistrate's justice, can free her from such inhuman cruelty, as quite disableth her for her duty to God and man, I see not but she may depart from such a tyrant. But the man hath more means to restrain his wife from beating him, or doing such intolerable things; either by the magistrate, or by denying her what else she might have, or by his own violent restraining her, as belongeth to a conjugal ruler, and as circumstances shall direct a prudent man. But yet in case that unsuitableness or sin be so great, that after long trial, there is no likelihood of any other co-habitation, but what will tend to their spiritual hurt and calamity, it is their lesser sin to live asunder by mutual, consent.

Quest. XIX. May one part from a husband or wife that hath the leprosy, or that hath the French pox by their adulterous practices, when the innocent person's life is endangered by it?

Answ. If it be an innocent persons disease, the other must cohabit, and tenderly cherish and comfort the diseased; yea, so as somewhat to hazard their own lives; but no so as apparently to cast them away, upon a dander not like to be avoided, unless the other's life of some greater good be like to be purchased by it.

But if it be the pox of an adulterer, the innocent party is at liberty by the other's adultery; and the saving of their own lives, doth add thereto. But without adultery, the disease alone will not excuse them from cohabitation, though it may from congress.

Quest. XX. 'Who be they that may or may not marry again when they are parted?'

Answ. 1. They that are released by divorce upon the other's adultery, &c. may marry again. 2. The case of all the rest is harder. They that part by consent, to avoid mutual hurt, may not marry again: nor the party that departeth for self-preservation, or for the preservation of estate, or children, or comforts, or for liberty of worship, as aforesaid: because it is but an intermission of conjugal fruition, and not a total dissolution of the relation: and the innocent party must wait to see whether there be any hope of a return. Yea, Christ seemeth to resolve it, Matt. 5:31, 32., that he is an adulterer that marrieth the innocent party that is put away; because the other living in adultery, their first contracted relation seemeth to be still in being. But Grotius and some others think, that Christ meaneth this only of the man that over-hastily marrieth the innocent divorced woman, before it be seen whether he will repent and re-assume her. But how can that hold, if the husband after adultery free her? May it not therefore be meant, that the woman must stay unmarried in hope of his reconciliation, till such time as his adultery with his next married wife doth disoblige her. But then it must be taken as a law for Christians: for the Jew that might have many wives, disobligeth not one by taking another.

A short desertion must be endured in hope: but in case of a very long, or total desertion or rejection, if the injured party should have an untameable lust, the case is difficult. I think there are few but by just means may abstain. But if there be any that cannot, (after all means,) without such trouble as overthroweth their peace, and plainly hazardeth their continence, I dare not say that marriage in that case is unlawful to the innocent.

Quest. I. 'Is it lawful to suffer or tolerate, yea, or contribute to the matter of known sin in a family, ordinarily, in wife, child or servant: and consequently in any other relations.?'

Answ. In this some lukewarm men are apt to run into the extreme of remissness; and some unexperienced young men, that never had families, into the extreme of censorious rigour, as not knowing what they talk of.

1. It is not lawful either in family, commonwealth, church or any where, to allow of sin, nor to tolerate it, or leave it uncured, when it is truly in our power to cure it. 2. So that all the question is, when it is, or is not in our power? Concerning which, I shall answer by some instances.

I. It is not in our power to do that which we are naturally unable to do. No law of God bindeth us to impossibilities. And natural impotency here is found in these several cases. 1. When we are overmatched in strength; when wife, children, or servants are too strong for the master of the house, so that he cannot correct them, nor remove them. A king is not bound to punish rebellious or offending subjects, when they are too strong for him, and he is unable: either by their numbers or other advantages. If a pastor censure an offender, and all the church be against the censure, he cannot procure it executed, but must acquiesce in having done his part, and leave their guilt upon themselves.

2. When the thing to be done is an impossibility, at least moral. As to hinder all the persons of a family, church or kingdom from ever sinning: it is not in their own power so far to reform themselves; much less in a ruler so far to reform them: even as to ourselves, perfection is but desired in this life, but not attained; much less for others.

3. When the principal causes co-operate not with us, and we are but subservient moral causes; we can but persuade men to repent, believe, and love God and goodness. We cannot save men without and against themselves. Their hearts are out of our reach; therefore in all these cases we are naturally unable to hinder sin!

II. It is not in our power to do any thing which God forbiddeth us. That which is sinful is to be accounted out of our power in this sense. To cure the sin of a wife, by such cruelty or harshness as is contrary to our conjugal relation and to the office of necessary love, is out of our power, because forbidden, as contrary to our duty; and so of other.

III. Those actions are out of our power, which are acts of higher authority than we have. A subject cannot reform by such actions as are proper to the sovereign, nor a layman by actions proper to the pastor, for want of authority. So a schoolmaster cannot do that which is proper to a patient; nor the master of a family that which is proper to the magistrate (as to punish with death, &c.)

IV. We have not power to do that which a superior power forbiddeth us (unless it be that which God indispensably commandeth us.) The wife may not correct a child or servant, or turn him away, when the husband forbiddeth it. Nor the master of a family so punish a sin, as the king and laws forbid on the account of public interest.

V. We have not power to do that for the power of sin, which is like to do more hurt than good; yea, perhaps to prove a pernicious mischief. If my correcting a servant, would make him kill me, or set my house on fire, I may not do it. If my sharp reproof is like to do more hurt, or less good than milder dealing; if I have reason to believe that correction will make a servant worse, I am not to use it; because we have our power to edification, and not to destruction. God hath not

tied us just to speak such and such words, or to use this or that correction, but to use reproofs and corrections only in that time, measure and manner as true reason telleth us, is likest to attain their end. To do it, if it would do never so much hurt with a 'fiat justitia etsi pereat mundus,' is to be righteous overmuch.

Yea, great and heinous sins may be endured in families sometimes, to avoid a greater hurt, and because there is no other means to cure them. For instance, a wife may be guilty of notorious pride, and of malignant deriding the exercises of religion, and of railing, lying, slandering, backbiting, covetousness, swearing, cursing, &c. and the husband be necessitated to bear it; not so far as not to reprove it, but so far as not to correct her, much less cure her; divines use to say, that it is unlawful for a man to beat his wife: but the reason is not, that he wanteth authority to do it; but, 1. Because he is by his relation obliged to a life of love with her; and therefore must so rule, as tendeth not to destroy love: and 2. Because it may often do otherwise more hurt to herself and the family, than good. It may make her furious and desperate, and make her contemptible in the family, and diminish the reverence of inferiors, both to wife and husband, for living so uncomely a life.

Quest. 'But is there any case in which a man may silently bear the sins of a wife, or other inferior without reproof, or urging them to amend?'

Answ. Yes: in case, 1. That reproof hath been tried to the utmost: 2. And it is most evident by full experience, that it is like to do a great deal more hurt than good.

The rule given by Christ, extendeth as well to families, as to others; not to cast pearls before swine, nor to give that which is holy to dogs: because it is more to the discomposure of a man's own peace, to have

a wife turn again, and all to rend him, than a stranger. As the church may cease admonishing a sinner, after a certain time of obstinacy, when experience hath ended their present hopes of bringing the person to repentance, and thereupon may excommunicate him: so a husband may be brought to the same despair with a wife, and may be disobliged from ordinary reproof, though the nearness of the relation forbid him to eject her. And in such a case where the family and neighbourhood know the intractableness and obstinacy of the wife, it no scandal, nor sign of approbation, or neglect of duty, for a man to be silent at her sinm; because they look upon her at present as incorrigible by that means: and it is the sharpest reproof to such a one, to be unreproved, and to be let alone in her sin; as it is God's greatest judgment on a sinner, to leave him to himself, and say, 'be filthy still.'

And there are some women whose fantasies and passions are naturally so strong, as that it seemeth to me that in many cases they have not so much as natural free-will or power to restrain them: but if in all other cases they acted as in some, I should take them for mere brutes, that had no true reason: they seem naturally necessitated to do as they do. I have known the long profession of piety, which in other respects hath seemed sincere, to consist in a wife, with such unmastered, furious passion, that she could not before strangers forbear throwing what was in her hand in her husband's face, or thrusting the burning candle into his face; and slandering him of the filthiest sins; and when the passion was over, confess all to be false, and her rage to be the reason of her speech and actions: and the man though a minister, of more than ordinary wit and strength, yet fain to endure all without returns of violence till her death. They that never knew such a case by trial, can tell how all might be cured easily; but so cannot they that are put upon the cure.

And there are some other women of the same uncurable strength of imagination and passion, who in other respects are very pious and prudent too, and too wise and conscionable to wrong their husbands with their hands or tongues, who yet are utterly unable to forbear an injury of the highest nature to themselves; but are so utterly impatient of being crossed of their wills, that it would in all likelihood cast them into melancholy or madness, or some mortal sickness: and no reason signifieth any thing to abate such passions. In case of pride, or some sinful custom, they are not able to bear reproof, and to be hindered in the sin, without apparent danger of distraction or death. I suppose these cases are but few; but what to do in such cases when they come, is the present question.

Nay, the question is still harder, 'Whether to avoid such inconvenience, one may contribute towards another's sin, by affording them the means of committing it?'

Answ. 1. No man may contribute to sin as sin, formally considered. 2. No man may contribute to another's sin, for sinful ends, nor in a manner forbidden or sinful in himself. 3. No man may contribute to another's sin, when he is not naturally or morally necessitated to it, but might forbear it.

But as it is consistent with the holiness of God to contribute those natural and providential mercies, which he knoweth men will abuse to sin, so is it in some cases with us his creatures to one another. God giveth all men their lives and time, their reason and free-will, which he knoweth they will abuse to sin: he giveth them that meat, and drink, and riches, and health, and vigour of senses, which are the usual means of the sin and undoing of the world.

Object. 'But God is not under any law or obligation as we are.'

Answ. His own perfection is above all law, and will not consist with a consent or acting of any thing that is contrary to holiness and perfection. But this I confess, that many things are contrary to the order and duty of the creature, which are not contrary to the place and perfection of the Creator.

1. When man doth generate man, he knowingly contributeth to a sinful nature and life: for he knoweth it is unavoidable, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. And yet he sinneth not by so doing, because he is not bound to prevent sin by the forbearance of generation.

2. When one advanceth another to the office of magistracy, ministry, &c. knowing that he will sin in it, he contributeth accidentally to his sin; but so as he is not culpable for so doing.

3. A physician hath to do with a froward and intemperate patient, who will please his appetite, or else if he be denied his passion, will increase his disease and kill him. In this case he may lawfully say, let him take a little, rather than kill him; though by so doing he contribute to his sin. Because it is but a not-hindering that which he cannot hinder without a greater evil. The sin is only his that chooseth it.

And it is specially to be noted, that that which physically is a positive act and contributing to the matter of the sin, yet morally is but a not-hindering the sin by such a withholding of materials as we are not obliged to withhold (which is the case also of God's contributing to the matter of sin). If the physician in such a case, or the parent of a sick and froward child, do actually give them that which they sin in desiring, that giving is indeed such a furthering of the sin as cannot be lawfully forborne, lest we do hurt, and therefore is morally but a not-hindering it, when we cannot hinder it.

4. If a man have a wife so proud that she will go mad, or disturb him and his family by rage, if her pride be not gratified by some sinful fashions, curiosities, or excesses, if he give her money or materials to do it with, to prevent her distraction, it is but like the foresaid case of the physician, or parents of a sick child.

In these cases I will give you a rule to walk by for yourselves, and a caution how to judge of others.

1. Be sure that you leave nothing undone that you can lawfully do, for the cure and prevention of others' sins; and that it be not for want of zeal against sin, through indifference or slothfulness, that you forbear to hinder it, but merely through disability. 2. See that in comparing the evil that is like to follow the impedition, you do not mistake, but be sure that it be indeed a greater evil which you avoid by not hindering that particular sin. 3. See therefore that your own carnal interest weigh not with you more than there is cause; and that you account not mere fleshly suffering a greater evil than sin. 4. But yet that dishonour which may be cast upon religion, and the good of souls which may be hindered by a bodily suffering, may come into the comparison. 5. And your own duties to men's bodies (as to save men's lives, or health, or peace) are to be numbered with spiritual things, and the materials of a sin may in some cases be administered for the discharge of such a duty. If you knew a man would die if you give him not hot water, and he will be drunk if you do give it him; in this case you do but your duty, and he commits the sin: you do that which is good, and are not bound to forbear it, because he will turn it to sin, unless you see that the hurt by that sin is like to be so great (besides the sin itself) as to discharge you from the duty of doing good.

2. As to others, (1.) Put them on to their duty and spare not. (2.) But censure them not for the sins of their families, till you are acquainted with all the case. It is usual with rash and carnal censurers, to cry out of some godly ministers or gentlemen, that their wives are as proud, and their children and servants as bad as others. But are you sure that it is in their power to remedy it? Malice and rashness judge at a distance of things which men understand not, and sin in speaking against sin.

Quest. II. 'If a gentleman, e.g. of £500, or £1000, or £2000, or £3000, per annum, could spare honestly half his yearly rents, for his children and for charitable uses, and his wife be so proud and prodigal, that she will waste it all in housekeeping and excesses, and will rage, be unquiet, or go mad, if she be hindered, what is a man's duty in such a case?'

Answ. It is but an instance of the fore-mentioned case, and must thence be answered. 1. It is supposed that she is incurable by all wise and rational means of persuasion. 2. He is wisely to compare the greatness of the evil that will come by crossing her, with the good that may come by the improvement of his estate, and the forbearance of those excesses. If her rage, or distraction, or unquietness were like by any accident to do more hurt than his estate may do good, he might take himself disabled from hindering the sin; and though he give her the money which she misspendeth, it is not sinning, but only not hindering sin when he is unable. 3. Ordinarily some small or tolerable degree of sinful waste and excess may be tolerated to avoid such mischiefs as else would follow; but not too much. And though no just measure can be assigned, at what rate a man may lawfully purchase his own peace, and consequently his liberty to serve God, or at what rate he may save his wife from madness, or some mortal mischiefs of her discontent, yet the case must be resolved by such

considerations; and a prudent man, that knoweth what is like to be the consequent on both sides, may and must accordingly determine it. 4. But ordinarily the life, health, or preservation of so proud, luxurious, and passionate a woman, is not worth the saving at so dear a rate, as the wastling of a considerable estate, which might be used to relieve a multitude of the poor, and perhaps to save the lives of many that are worthier to live. And, (1.) A man's duty to relieve the poor and provide for his family is so great. (2.) And the account that all men must give of the use of their talents is so strict, that it must be a great reason indeed, that must allow him to give way to very great wastefulness. And unless there be somewhat extraordinary in the case, it were better deal with such a woman as a bedlam, and if she will be mad, to use her as the mad are used, than for a steward of God to suffer the devil to be served with his master's goods.

Lastly, I must charge the reader to remember, that both these cases are very rare; and it is but few women that are so liable to so great mischiefs, which may not be prevented at cheaper rates; and therefore that the indulgence given in these decisions, is nothing to the greater part of men, nor is to be extended to ordinary cases. But commonly men every where sin by omission of a stricter government of their families, and by Eli's sinful indulgence and remisness: and though a wife must be governed as a wife, and a child as a child, yet all must be governed as well as servants. And though it may be truly said, that a man cannot hinder that sin, which he cannot hinder but by sin, or by contributing to a greater hurt, yet it is to be concluded, that every man is bound to hinder sin whenever he is able lawfully to hinder it.

And by the same measures, tolerations, or not-hindering errors and sins about religion in church and commonwealth, is to be judged of: None must commit them or approve them; nor forbear any duty of

their own to cure them: but that is not a duty which is destructive, which would be a duty when it were a means of edifying.

CHAPTER X

The Duties of Parents for their Children

OF how great importance the wise and holy education of children is, to the saving of their souls, and the comfort of the parents, and the good of church and state, and the happiness of the world, I have partly told you before; but no man is able fully to express. And how great that calamity is, which the world is fallen into through the neglect of that duty, no heart can conceive; but they that think what a case the heathen, infidel, and ungodly nations are in, and how rare true piety is grown, and how many millions must lie in hell for ever, will know so much of this inhuman negligence, as to abhor it.

Direct. I. 'Understand and lament the corrupted and miserable state of your children, which they have derived from you, and thankfully accept the offers of a Saviour for yourselves and them, and absolutely resign, and dedicate them to God in Christ in the sacred covenant, and solemnize this dedication and covenant by their baptism. And to this end understand the command of God for entering your children solemnly into covenant with him, and the covenant-mercies belonging to them thereuponb.'

You cannot sincerely dedicate yourselves to God, but you must dedicate to him all that is yours, and in your power; and therefore your children as far as they are in your power. And as nature hath taught you your power and your duty to enter them in their infancy

into any covenant with man, which is certainly for their good; (and if they refuse the conditions when they come to age, they forfeit the benefit;) so nature teacheth you much more to oblige them to God for their far greater good, in case he will admit them into covenant with him. And that he will admit them into his covenant, (and that you ought to enter them into it,) is past doubt, in the evidence which the Scripture giveth us, that from Abraham's time till Christ it was so with all the children of his people: nay, no man can prove that before Abraham's time, or since, God had ever a church on earth, of which the infants of his servants (if they had any) were not members dedicated in covenant to God, till of late times that a few began to scruple the lawfulness of this. As it is a comfort to you, if the king would bestow upon your infant children, (who were tainted by their father's treason,) not only a full discharge from the blot of that offence, but also the titles and estates of lords, though they understand none of this till they come to age; so is it much more matter of comfort to you, on their behalf, that God in Christ will pardon their original sin, and take them as his children, and give them title to everlasting life; which are the mercies of his covenant.

Direct. II. 'As soon as they are capable, teach them what a covenant they are in, and what are the benefits, and what the conditions, that their souls may gladly consent to it when they understand it; and you may bring them seriously to renew their covenant with God in their own persons.' But the whole order of teaching both children and servants, I shall give you after by itself; and therefore shall here pass by all that, except that which is to be done more by your familiar converse, than by more solemn teaching.

Direct. III. 'Train them up in exact obedience to yourselves, and break them of their own wills.' To that end, suffer them not to carry themselves unreverently or contemptuously towards you; but to keep

their distance. For too much familiarity breedeth contempt, and emboldeneth to disobedience. The common course of parents is to please their children so long, by letting them have what they crave, and what they will, till their wills are so used to be fulfilled, that they cannot endure to have them denied; and so can endure no government, because they endure no crossing of their wills. To be obedient, is to renounce their own wills, and be ruled by their parents' or governor's wills; to use them therefore to have their own wills, is to teach them disobedience, and harden and use them to a kind of impossibility of obeying. Tell them oft familiarly and lovingly of the excellency of obedience, and how it pleaseth God, and what need they have of government, and how unfit they are to govern themselves, and how dangerous it is to children to have their own wills; speak often with great disgrace of self-willedness and stubbornness, and tell others in their hearing what hath befallen self-willed children.

Direct. IV. 'Make them neither too bold with you, nor too strange or fearful; and govern them not as servants, but as children, making them perceive that you dearly love them, and that all your commands, restraints and corrections are for their good, and not merely because you will have it so.' They must be ruled as rational creatures, that love themselves, and those that love them. If they perceive that you dearly love them, they will obey you the more willingly, and the easier be brought to repent of their disobedience, and they will as well obey you in heart as in outward actions, and behind your back as before your face. And the love of you (which must be caused by your love to them,) must be one of the chiefest means to bring them to the love of all that good which you commend to them; and so to form their wills sincerely to the will of God, and make them holy. For if you are too strange to them, and too terrible, they will fear you only, and not much love you; and then they will

love no books, no practices, that you commend to them, but like hypocrites they will seek to please you to your face, and care not what they are in secret and behind your backs. Nay, it will tempt them to loathe your government, and all that good which you persuade them to, and make them like birds in a cage, that watch for an opportunity to get away and get their liberty. They will be the more in the company of servants and idle children, because your terror and strangeness maketh them take ho delight in yours. And fear will make them liars, as oft as a lie seemeth necessary to their escape. Parents that shew much love to their children, may safely shew severity when they commit a fault. For then they will see, that it is their fault only that displeaseth you, and not their persons; and your love reconcileth them to you when they are corrected; when less correction from parents that are always strange or angry, and shew no tender love to their children, will alienate them, and do no good. Too much boldness of children leadeth them before you are aware, to contempt of parents and all disobedience; and too much fear and strangeness depriveth them of most of the benefits of your care and government: but tender love, with severity only when they do amiss, and this at a reverend, convenient distance, is the only way to do them good.

Direct. V. 'Labour much to possess their hearts with the fear of God, and a reverence of the Holy Scriptures; and then whatsoever duty you command them, or whatsoever sin you forbid them, shew them some plain and urgent texts of Scripture for it; and cause them to learn them and oft repeat them; that so they may find reason and Divine authority in your commands.' Till their obedience begin to be rational and Divine, it will be but formal and hypocritical. It is conscience that must watch them in private, when you see them not; and conscience is God's officer and not yours; and will say nothing to them, till it speak in the name of God. This is the way to bring the

heart itself into subjection; and also to reconcile them to all your commands, when they see that they are first the commands of God: (of which more anon.)

Direct. VI. 'In all your speech of God, and of Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Scripture, or the life to come, or of any holy duty, speak always with gravity, seriousness, and reverence, as of the most great, and dreadful, and most sacred things.' For before children come to have any distinct understanding of particulars, it is a hopeful beginning to have their hearts possest with a general reverence and high esteem of holy matters: for that will continually awe their consciences, and help their judgments; and settle them against prejudice and profane contempt, and be as a seed of holiness in them. For "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." And the very manner of the parents' speech and carriage, expressing great reverence to the things of God, hath a very great power to leave the like impression on a child: most children of godly parents, that ever came to good, I am persuaded can tell you this by experience, (if their parents did their duty in this point,) that the first good that ever they felt upon their hearts, was a reverence to holy things, which the speech and carriage of their parents taught them.

Direct. VII. 'Speak always before them with great honour and praise of holy ministers and people, and with dispraise and loathing of every sin, and of ungodly men.' For this is also a thing that children will quickly and easily receive from their parents. Before they can understand particular doctrines, they can learn in general what kind of persons are most happy or most miserable, and they are very apt to receive such a liking or disliking from their parents' judgment, which hath a great hand in all the following good or evil of their lives. If you possess them with good and honourable thoughts of them that fear God, they will ever after be inclined to think well of them, and to

dislike those that speak evil of them, and to hear such preachers, and to wish themselves such Christians; so that in this and the foregoing point it is that the first stirrings of grace in children are ordinarily felt. And therefore on the other side, it is a most pernicious thing to children, when they hear their parents speak contemptuously or lightly of holy things and persons, and irreverently talk of God, and Scripture, and the life to come, or speak dispraisingly or scornfully of godly ministers or people, or make a jest of the particular duties of a religious life: these children are like to receive that prejudice or profane contempt into their hearts betimes, which may bolt the doors against the love of God and holiness, and make their salvation a work of much greater difficulty, and much smaller hope. And therefore still I say, that wicked parents are the most notable servants of the devil in all the world, and the deadliest enemies to their children's souls. More souls are damned by ungodly parents (and next them by ungodly ministers and magistrates) than by any instruments in the world besides. And hence it is also, that whole nations are so generally carried away with enmity against the ways of God: the heathen nations against the true God, and the infidel nations against Christ, and the papist nations against reformation and spiritual worshippers: because the parents speak evil to the children of all that they themselves dislike; and so possess them with the same dislike from generation to generation. "Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

Direct. VIII. 'Let it be the principal part of your care and labour in all their education, to make holiness appear to them the most necessary, honourable, gainful, pleasant, delightful, amiable state of life; and to keep them from apprehending it either as needless, dishonourable, hurtful, or uncomfortable. Especially draw them to the love of it, by representing it as lovely. And therefore begin with that which is

easiest and most grateful to them (as the history of the Scripture, and the lives of the martyrs, and other good men, and some short, familiar lessons). For though in restraining them from sin, you must go to the highest step at first, and not think to draw them from it by allowing them the least degree (for every degree disposeth to more, and none is to be allowed, and a general reformation is the easiest as well as absolutely necessary). Yet in putting them upon the practice of religious duties, you must carry them on by degrees, and put them at first upon no more than they can bear; either upon the learning of doctrines too high and spiritual for them, or upon such duty for quality or quantity as is over-burdensome to them: for if you once turn their hearts against religion, and make it seem a slavery and a tedious life to them, you take the course to harden them against it. And therefore all children must not be used alike; as all stomachs must not be forced to eat alike. If you force some to take so much as to become a surfeit, they will loathe that sort of meat as long as they live. I know that nature itself, as corrupt, hath already an enmity to holiness, and I know that this enmity is not to be indulged in children at all; but withal I know that misrepresentations of religion, and imprudent education is the way to increase it, and that the enmity being in the heart, it is the change of the mind and love that is the overcoming of it, and not any such constraint as tendeth not to reconcile the mind by love. The whole skill of parents for the holy education of their children, doth consist in this, to make them conceive of holiness as the most amiable and desirable life; which is by representing it to them in words and practice, not only as most necessary, but also as most profitable, honourable, and delightful. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace, &c."

Direct. IX. 'Speak often to them of the brutish baseness, and sinfulness of flesh-pleasing sensuality, and of the greater excellency of the pleasures of the mind; which consist in wisdom, and in doing

good.' For your chiefest care must be to save them from flesh-pleasing; which is not only in general the sum of all iniquity whatsoever, but that which in special children are most prone to. For their flesh and sense is as quick as others; and they want not only faith, but clear reason to resist it: and so (besides their natural pravity) the custom of obeying sense (which is in strength) without reason (which is in infancy and almost useless) doth much increase this pernicious sin. And therefore still labour to imprint in their minds an odious conceit of a flesh-pleasing life; speak bitterly to them against gluttony, and drunkenness, and excess of sport; and let them often hear or read the parable of the glutton and Lazarus in the sixteenth of Luke; and let them learn without book, Rom. 8:1, 5–9, 13, 13:13, 14. and oft repeat them.

Direct. X. 'To this end, and also for the health of their bodies, keep a strict guard upon their appetites (which they are not able to guard themselves): keep them as exactly as you can to the rules of reason, both in the quantity and quality of their food.' Yet tell them the reason of your restraint, or else they will secretly strive the more to break their bounds. Most parents that ever I knew, or had any good account of in that point, are guilty of the great hurt and danger of their children's, health and souls, by pleasing and glutting them with meat and drink. If I should call them devils and murderers to their own children, they would think I spake too harshly; but I would not have them give so great occasion for it, as by destroying (as far as lieth in them) the souls and bodies of their children. They destroy their souls by accustoming them to gluttony, and to be ruled by their appetites; which all the teaching in the world will hardly ever after overcome, without the special grace of God. What is all the vice and villany in the world, but the pleasing of the desires of the flesh? And when they are habituated to this, they are rooted in their sin and misery. And they destroy their bodies, by suffering them to please

their appetites, with raw fruits and other hurtful things; but especially by drowning and overwhelming nature by excess: and all this is through that beastly ignorance joined with self-conceitedness, which maketh them also overthrow themselves. They think that their appetite is the measure of their eating and drinking, and that if they drink but when they are thirsty (as some drunkards are continually); and eat but when they are hungry, it is no excess: and because they are not presently sick, or vomit it not up again, the beasts think it doth them no harm, but good. You shall hear them like mad people say, 'I warrant them, it will do them no harm to eat and drink when they have list, it will make them strong and healthy: I see not that those that are dieted so strictly are any healthier than others.' When as all this while they are burdening nature, and destroying digestion, and vitiating all the humours of the body, and turning them into a dunghill of phlegm and filth; which is the fuel that breedeth and feedeth almost all the diseases that after seize upon them while they live; and usually bringeth them to an untimely end, (as I have more fully opened before, Part i. in the Directions against Gluttony). If therefore you love either the souls or bodies of your children, use them to temperance from their infancy, and let not their appetites or craving wills, but your own reason be the chooser and the measure of their diet. Use them to eat sparingly, and (so it moderately please their appetite, or be not such as nature loatheth) let it be rather of the coarser than the finer sort of diet; see it measured to them yourselves, and suffer no servant to give them more, nor to let them eat or drink between meals and out of season: and so you will help to overcome their sensual inclinations, and give reason the mastery of their lives; and you will under God, do as much as any one thing can do to help them to a healthful temper of body, which will be a very great mercy to them, and fit them for their duty all their lives.

Direct. XI. 'For sports and recreations, let them be such, and so much, as may be needful to their health and cheerfulness; but not so much as may carry away their minds from better things, and draw them from their books or other duties, nor such as may tempt them to gaming or covetousness.' Children must have convenient sport for the health of the body, and alacrity of the mind; such as well exerciseth their bodies is best, and not such as little stirreth them. Cards and dice, and such idle sports are every way most unfit, as tending to hurt both body and mind. Their time also must be limited them, that their play may not be their work; as soon as ever they have the use of any reason and speech, they should be taught some better things, and not left till they are five or six years of age, to do nothing, but get a custom of wasting all their time in play. Children are very early capable of learning something which may prepare them for more.

Direct. XII. 'Use all your wisdom and diligence to root out the sin of pride. And to that end, do not (as is usual with foolish parents, that) please them with making them fine, and then by telling them how fine they are; but use to commend humility and plainness to them, and speak disgracefully of pride and fineness, to breed an averseness to it in their minds.' Cause them to learn such texts of Scripture as speak of God's abhorring and resisting the proud, and of his loving and honouring the humble: when they see other children that are finely clothed, speak of it to them as their shame, that they may not desire to be like them. Speak against boasting, and every other way of pride which they are liable to: and yet give them the praise of all that is well, for that is but their due encouragement.

Direct. XIII. 'Speak to them disgracefully of the gallantry, and pomp, and riches of the world, and of the sin of selfishness and covetousness, and diligently watch against it, and all that may tempt

them to it.' When they see great houses, and attendance, and gallantry, tell them that these are the devil's baits, to entice poor sinners to love this world, that they may lose their souls, and the world to come. Tell them how much heaven excelleth all this; and that the lovers of the world must never come thither, but the humble, and meek, and poor in spirit. Tell them of the rich glutton in Luke 16 that was thus clothed in purple and silk, and fared deliciously every day; but when he came to hell, could not get a drop of water to cool his tongue, when Lazarus was in the joys of paradise. Do not as the wicked, that entice their children to worldliness and covetousness, by giving them money, and letting them game and play for money, and promising them to make them fine or rich, and speaking highly of all that are rich and great in the world; but tell them how much happier a poor believer is, and withdraw all that may tempt their minds to covetousness. Teach them how good it is to love their brethren as themselves, and to give them part of what they have, and praise them for it: and dispraise them when they are greedy to keep or heap up all to themselves. And all will be little enough to cure this pernicious sin. Teach them such texts as Psal. 10:3. "They bless the covetous whom the Lord abhorreth."

Direct. XIV. 'Narrowly watch their tongues, especially against lying, railing, ribbald talk, and taking the name of God in vain.' And pardon them many lighter faults about common matters, sooner than one such sin against God. Tell them of the odiousness of all these sins, and teach them such texts as most expressly condemn them; and never pass it by or make light of it, when you find them guilty.

Direct. XV. 'Keep them as much as may be from ill company, especially of ungodly play-fellows.' It is one of the greatest dangers for the undoing of children in the world; especially when they are sent to common schools: for there are scarce any of those schools so

good, but hath many rude, and ungodly, ill-taught children in it, that will speak profanely, and filthily, and make their ribbald and railing speeches a matter of boasting, besides fighting, and gaming, and scorning, and neglecting their lessons; and they will make a scorn of him that will not do as they, if not beat and abuse him. And there is such tinder in nature for these sparks to catch upon, that there are very few children, but when they hear others take God's name in vain, or sing wanton songs, or talk filthy words, or call one another by reproachful names, do quickly imitate them: and when you have watched over them at home as narrowly as you can, they are infected abroad with such beastly vices, as they are hardly ever after cured of. Therefore let those that are able, either educate their children most at home, or in private and well-ordered schools; and those that cannot do so, must be the more exceeding watchful over them, and charge them to associate with the best; and speak to them of the odiousness of these practices, and the wickedness of those that use them; and speak very disgracefully of such ungodly children: and when all is done, it is a great mercy of God, if they be not undone by the force of the contagion, notwithstanding all your antidotes. Those therefore that venture their children into the rudest schools and company; and after that to Rome, and other profane or Popish countries, to learn the fashions and customs of the world, upon pretence, that else they will be ignorant of the course of the world, and ill-bred, and not like others of their rank, may think of themselves and their own reasonings as well as they please: for my part, I had rather make a chimney-sweeper of my son (if I had any) than be guilty of doing so much, to sell or betray him to the devil.

Quest. 'But is it not lawful for a man to send his son to travel?'

Answ. Yes, in these cases: 1. In case he be a ripe, confirmed Christian, that is, not in danger of being perverted, but able to resist

the enemies of the truth, and to preach the Gospel, or do good to others; and withal have sufficient business to invite him. 2. Or if he go in the company of wise and godly persons, and such be his companions, and the probability of his gain be greater, than of his loss and danger. 3. Or if he go only into religious countries, among more wise and learned men than he converseth with at home, and have sufficient motives for his course. But to send young, raw, unsettled persons among Papists, and profane, licentious people (though perhaps some sober person be in company with them) and this only to see the countries and fashions of the world, is an action unbeseeming any Christian that knoweth the pravity of human nature, and the mutability of young, unfurnished heads, and the subtlety of deceivers, and the contagiousness of sin and error, and the worth of a soul, and will not do as some conjurers or witches, even sell a soul to the devil, on condition he may see and know the fashions of the world; which alas, I can quickly know enough of to grieve my heart, without travelling so far to see them. If another country have more of Christ, and be nearer heaven, the invitation is great; but if it have more of sin and hell, I had rather know hell, and the suburbs of it too, by the map of the Word of God, than by going thither. And if such children return not the confirmed children of the devil, and prove not the calamity of their country and the church, let them thank special grace, and not their parents or themselves. They overvalue that vanity which they call breeding, who will hazard the substance, (even heavenly wisdom, holiness, and salvation,) to go so far for so vain a shadow.

Direct. XVI. 'Teach your children to know the preciousness of time, and suffer them not to misspend an hour.' Be often speaking to them how precious a thing time is, and how short man's life is, and how great his work, and how our endless life of joy or misery dependeth on this little time: speak odiously to them of the sin of those that play

and idle away their time: and keep account of all their hours, and suffer them not to lose any by excess of sleep, or excess of play, or any other way; but engage them still in some employment that is worth their time.

Train up your children in a life of diligence and labour, and use them not to ease and idleness when they are young. Our wandering beggars, and too many of the gentry utterly undo their children by this means, especially the female sex. They are taught no calling, nor: exercised in any employment, but only such as is meet for nothing but ornament and recreation at the best; and therefore should have but recreation hours, which is but a small proportion of their time. So that by the sin of their patents, they are betimes engaged in a life of idleness, which afterward it is wondrous hard for them to overcome; and they are taught to live, like swine or vermin, that live only to live, and do small good in the world by living: to rise, and dress, and adorn themselves, and take a walk, and so to dinner, and thence to cards or dice, or chat and idle talk, or some play, or visit, or recreation, and so to supper, and to chat again, and to bed, is the lamentable life of too many that have great obligations to God, and greater matters to do, if they were acquainted with them. And if they do but interpose a few hypocritical, heartless words of prayer, they think they have piously spent the day: yea, the health of many is utterly ruined, by such idle, fleshly education. So that disuse doth disable them from any considerable motion or exercise, which is necessary to preserve their health. It would move one's heart with pity, to see how the houses of some of the higher sort are like hospitals; and education hath made, especially, the females like the lame, or sick, or bedrid; so that one part of the day that should be spent in some profitable employment, is spent in bed, and the rest in doing nothing, or worse than nothing; and most of their life is made miserable by diseases, so that if their legs be but used to carry them

about, they are presently out of breath, and are a burden to themselves, and few of them live out little more than half their days. Whereas, poor creatures, if their own parents had not betrayed them into the sins of Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, they might have been in health, and lived like honest Christian people, and their legs and arms might have served them for use, as well as for integrality and ornament.

Direct. XVII. 'Let necessary correction be used with discretion, according to these following rules.' 1. Let it not be so seldom (if necessary) as to leave them fearless and so make it ineffectual; and let it not be so frequent as to discourage them, or breed in them a hatred of their parents. 2. Let it be different according to the different tempers of your children: some are so tender and timorous, and apt to be discouraged, that little or no correction may be best; and some are so hardened and obstinate, that it must be much and sharp correction that must keep them from dissoluteness and contempt. 3. Let it be more for sin against God (as lying, railing, filthy speaking, profaneness, &c.) than for faults about your worldly business. 4. Correct them not in passion, but stay till they perceive that you are calmed; for they will think else, that your anger rather than your reason is the cause. 5. Always shew them the tenderness of your love, and how unwilling you are to correct them, if they could be reformed any easier way; and convince them that you do it for their good. 6. Make them read those texts of Scripture which condemn their sin, and then those which command you to correct them. As for example, if lying be their sin, turn them first to Prov. 12:22. "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord, but they that deal truly are his delight." And 13:5. "A righteous man hateth lying." John 8:44. Ye are of your father the devil,—when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." Rev. 22:15. "For without are dogs—and whosoever loveth and maketha lie." And next turn him to

Prov. 13:24. "He that spareth his rod, hateth his son; but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes." Prov. 29:15. The rod and reproof give wisdom; but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." Prov. 22:15. "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Prov. 23:13, 14. "Withhold not correction from the child; for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die: thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." Prov. 19:18. "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." Ask him whether he would have you by sparing him, to disobey God, and hate him, and destroy his soul. And when his reason is convinced of the reasonableness of correcting him, it will be the more successful.

Direct. XVIII. 'Let your own example teach your children that holiness, and heavenliness, and blamelessness of tongue and life, which you desire them to learn and practise.' The example of parents is most powerful with children, both for good and evil. If they see you live in the fear of God, it will do much to persuade them, that it is the most necessary and excellent course of life, and that they must do so too: and if they see you live a carnal, voluptuous and ungodly life, and hear you curse or swear, or talk filthily, or railingly, it will greatly embolden them to imitate you. If you speak never so well to them, they will sooner believe your bad lives, than your good words.

Direct. XIX. 'Choose such a calling and course of life for your children, as tendeth most to the saving of their souls, and to their public usefulness for church or state.' Choose not a calling that is most liable to temptations and hindrances to their salvation, though it may make them rich: but a calling which alloweth them some leisure for the remembering the things of everlasting consequence, and fit opportunities to get good, and to do good. If you bind them

apprentices, or servants, if it be possible, place them with men fearing God; and not with such as will harden them in their sin.

Direct. XX. 'When they are marriageable, and you find it needful, look out such for them as are suitable betimes.' When parents stay too long, and do not their duties in this, their children often choose for themselves to their own undoing: for they choose not by judgment, but blind affection.

Having thus told you the common duties of parents for their children, I should next have told you what specially belongeth to each parent; but to avoid prolixity, I shall only desire you to remember these two Directions. 1. That the mother who is still present with children when they are young, be very diligent in teaching them, and minding them of good things. When the fathers are abroad, the mothers have more frequent opportunities to instruct them, and be still speaking to them of that which is most necessary, and watching over them. This is the greatest service that most women can do for God in the world: many a church that hath been blessed with a good minister, may thank the pious education of mothers; and many a thousand souls in heaven may thank the holy care and diligence of mothers, as the first effectual means. Good women this way (by the good education of their children) are ordinarily great blessings both to church and state. (And so some understand 1 Tim. 2:15. by "child-bearing," meaning bringing up children for God; but I rather think it is by Mary's bearing Christ, the promised seed.)

2. By all means let children be taught to read, if you are never so poor, and whatever shift you make; or else you deprive them of a singular help to their instruction and salvation. It is a thousand pities that a Bible should signify no more than a chip to a rational creature,

as to their reading it themselves: and that so many excellent books as be in the world, should be as sealed, or insignificant to them.

But if God deny you children, and save you all this care and labour, repine not, but be thankful, believing it is best for you. Remember what a deal of duty, and pains, and heart's grief he hath freed you from, and how few speed well when parents have done their best. What a life of misery, Children must here pass through, and how sad the fear of their sin and damnation would have been to you.

CHAPTER XI

The special Duties of Children towards their Parents

THOUGH precepts to children are not of so much force as to them of riper age, because of their natural incapacity, and their childish passions and pleasures which bear down their weak degree of reason; yet somewhat is to be said to them, because that measure of reason which they have is to be exercised, and by exercise to be improved: and because even those of riper years, while they have parents, must know and do their duty to them; and because God useth to bless even children as they perform their duties.

Direct. I. 'Be sure that you dearly love your parents:' delight to be in their company; be not like those unnatural children, that love the company of their idle play-fellows, better than their parents, and had rather be abroad about their sports, than in their parents' sight. Remember that you have your being from them, and come out of their loins: remember what sorrow you have cost them, and what care they are at for your education and provision; and remember how tenderly they have loved you, and what grief it will be to their hearts if you miscarry, and how much your happiness will make

them glad: remember what love you owe them both by nature and in justice, for all their love to you, and all that they have done for you; they take your happiness or misery to be one of the greatest parts of thy happiness or misery of their own lives. Deprive them not then of their happiness, by depriving yourselves of your own; make not their lives miserable, by undoing yourselves. Though they chide you, and restrain you, and correct you, do not therefore abate your love to them. For this is their duty, which God requireth of them, and they do it for your good. It is a sign of a wicked child that loveth his parents the less, because they correct him, and will not let him have his own will. Yea, though your parents have many faults themselves, yet you must love them as your parents still.

Direct. II. 'Honour your parents both in your thoughts, and speeches, and behaviour.' Think not dishonourably or contemptuously of them in your hearts. Speak not dishonourably, rudely, unreverently or saucily, either to them or of them. Behave not yourselves rudely and unreverently before them. Yea, though your parents be never so poor in the world, or weak of understanding, yea, though they were ungodly, you must honour them notwithstanding all this; though you cannot honour them as rich, or wise, or godly, you must honour them as your parents. Remember that the fifth commandment hath a special promise of temporal blessing; "Honour thy father and mother that thy days may be long in the land," &c. And consequently the dishonourers of parents have a special curse even in this life: and the justice of God is ordinarily seen in the execution of it; the despisers and dishonourers of their parents seldom prosper in the world. There are five sorts of sinners that God useth to overtake with vengeance even in this life. 1. Perjured persons and false witnesses. 2. Murderers. 3. Persecutors. 4. Sacrilegious persons. And 5. The abusers and dishonourers of their parents. Remember the curse on Ham, Gen. 9:22, 25. It is a fearful thing to see and hear how some

illbred, ungodly children will talk contemptuously and rudely to their parents, and wrangle and contend with them, and contradict them, and speak to them as if they were their equals: (and it is commonly long of the parents that breed them to it.) And at last they will grow even to abuse and vilify them. Read Prov. 30:17. "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

Direct. III. 'Obey your parents in all things (which God forbiddeth not).' Remember that as nature hath made you unfit to govern yourselves, so God in nature hath mercifully provided governors for you. Here I shall first tell you, what obedience is, and then tell you, why you must be thus obedient. I. To obey your parents is to do that which they command you, and forbear that which they forbid you because it is their will you should do so. You must 1. Have in your minds a desire to please them, and be glad when you can please them, and sorry when you offend them; and then 2. You must not set your wit or your will against theirs, but readily obey their commands without unwillingness, murmuring, or disputing: though you think your own way is best, and your own desires are but reasonable, yet your own wit and will must be subjected unto theirs, or else how do you obey them? II. And for the reasons of your obedience, 1. Consider it is the will of God that it should be so, and he hath made them as his officers to govern you; and in disobeying them, you disobey him. Read Ephes. 6:1–3. "Children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother, (which is the first commandment with promise) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live long on the earth." Col. 3:20. "Children obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord." Prov. 23:22. "Hearken to thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old." Prov. 13:1. "A wise son heareth his father's instruction." Prov. 1:8, 9. "My son, hear the instruction of thy father,

and forsake not the law of thy mother; for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck." 2. Consider also, that your parents' government is necessary to your own good; and it is a government of love: as your bodies would have perished, if your parents or some others had not taken care for you, when you could not help yourselves; so your minds would be untaught and ignorant, even like to brutes, if you had not others to teach and govern you. Nature teacheth the chickens to follow the hen, and all things when they are young, to be led and guided by their dams, or else what would become of them? 3. Consider also, that they must be accountable to God for you; and if they leave you to yourselves, it may be their destruction as well as yours, as the sad example of Eli telleth you. Rebel not therefore against those that God by nature and Scripture hath set over you; though the fifth commandment require obedience to princes, and masters, and pastors, and other superiors, yet it nameth your father and mother only; because they are the first of all your governors, to whom by nature you are most obliged.

But perhaps you will say, that though little children must be ruled by their parents, yet you are grown up to riper age, and are wise enough to rule yourselves. I answer, God doth not think so; or else he would not have set governors over you. And are you wiser than he? It is but few in the world that are wise enough to rule themselves; else God would not have set princes, and magistrates, and pastors, and teachers over them, as he hath done. The servants of the family are as old as you, and yet are unfit to be the rulers of themselves. God loveth you better than to leave you masterless, as knowing that youth is rash and unexperienced.

Quest. 'But how long are children under the command and government of their parents?'

Answ. There are several acts and degrees of parents' government, according to the several ends and uses of it. Some acts of their government are but to teach you to go and speak, and some to teach you your labour and calling, and some to teach you good manners, and the fear of God, or the knowledge of the Scriptures, and some are to settle you in such a course of living, in which you shall need their nearer oversight no more. When any one of these ends are fully attained, and you have all that your parents' government can help you to, then you are past that part of their government. But still you owe them, not only love, and honour, and reverence; but obedience also in all things in which they are still appointed for your help and guidance: even when you are married from them, though you have a propriety in your own estates, and they have not so strict a charge of you as before; yet if they command you your duty to God or them, you are still obliged to obey them.

Direct. IV. 'Be contented with your parents' provision for you, and disposal of you.' Do not rebelliously murmur against them, and complain of their usage of you; much less take any thing against their wills. It is the part of a fleshly rebel, and not of an obedient child, to be discontent and murmur because they fare not better, or because they are kept from sports and play, or because they have not better clothes, or because they have not money allowed them, to spend or use at their own discretion. Are not you under government? and the government of parents, and not of enemies? Are your lusts and pleasures fitter to govern you, than your parents' discretion? Be thankful for what you have, and remember that you deserve it not, but have it freely: it is your pride or your fleshly sensuality that maketh you thus to murmur, and not any wisdom or virtue that is in you. Get down that pride and fleshly mind, and then you will not be so eager to have your wills. What if your parents did deal too hardly with you, in your food, or raiment, or expences? What harm doth it

do you? Nothing but a selfish, sensual mind would make so great a matter of it. It is a hundred times more dangerous to your souls and bodies to be bred too high, and fed too full and daintily, than to be bred too low, and fed too hardly. One tendeth to pride, and gluttony, and wantonness, and the overthrow of health and life; and the other tendeth to a humble, mortified, self-denying life, and to the health and soundness of the body. Remember how the earth opened, and swallowed all those rebellious murmurers that grudged against Moses and Aaron, Num. 16; read it, and apply it to your case: and remember the story of rebellious Absalom; and the folly of the, prodigal, Luke 15; and desire not to be at your own dispose; nor be eager to have the vain desires of your hearts fulfilled. While you contentedly submit to your parents, you are in God's way, and may expect his blessing; but when you will needs be carvers for yourselves, you may expect the punishment of rebels.

Direct. V. 'Humble yourselves and submit to any labour that your parents shall appoint you to.' Take heed as you love your souls, lest either a proud heart make you murmur and say, 'This work is too low and base a drudgery for me;' or lest a lazy mind and body make you say, 'This work is too hard and toilsome for me;' or else a foolish, playful mind do make you weary of your book or labour, that you may be at your sports, and say, 'This is too tedious for me.' It is little or no hurt that is like to befall you by your labour and diligence; but it is a dangerous thing to get a habit or custom of idleness and voluptuousness in your youth.

Direct. VI. 'Be willing and thankful to be instructed by your parents, or any of your teachers, but especially about the fear of God, and the matters of your salvation.' These are the matters that you are born and live for; these are the things that your parents have first in charger to teach you. Without knowledge and holiness all the riches

and honours of the world are nothing worth: and all your pleasures will but undo you. O what a comfort is it to understanding parents to see their children willing to learn, and to love the Word of God, and lay it up in their hearts, and talk of it, and obey it, and prepare betime for everlasting life! If such children die before their parents, how joyfully may they part with them as into the arms of Christ, who hath said, "That of such is the kingdom of heavenb." And if the parents die first, how joyfully may they leave behind them a holy seed, that is like to serve God in their generation, and to follow them to heaven, and live with them for ever. But, whether they live or die, what a heart-breaking to the parents are ungodly children, that love not the Word and way of God, and love not to be taught or restrained from their own licentious courses.

Direct. VII. 'Patiently submit to the correction which your parents lay upon you' Consider, that God hath commanded them to do it, and that to save your souls from hell; and that they hate you, if they correct you not when there is cause, and that they must not spare for your crying. It is not their delight, but for your own necessity. Avoid the fault, and you may escape the correction. How much rather had your parents see you obedient, than hear you cry. It is not long of them, but of yourselves, that you are corrected. Be angry with yourselves, and not with them. It is a wicked child, that instead of being better by correction, will hate his parents for it, and so grow worse. Correction is a means of God's own appointment; and therefore go to God on your knees in prayer, and entreat him to bless and sanctify it to you, that it may do you good.

Direct. VIII. 'Choose not your own company, but use such company as by your parents is appointed you.' Bad company is the first undoing of a child. When for the love of sport you choose such play-fellows as are idle, and licentious, and disobedient, and will teach

you to curse, and swear, and lie, and talk filthily, and draw you from your book or duty; this is the devil's highway to hell. Your parents are fittest to choose your company.

Direct. IX. 'Choose not your own calling or trade of life, without the choice or consent of your parents.' You may tell them what you are most inclined to, but it belongeth more to them than to you to make the choice: and it is your part to bring your wills to theirs. Unless your parents choose a calling for you that is unlawful; and then you may (with humble submissiveness) refuse it. But if it be only inconvenient, you have liberty afterward to change it for a better, if you can, when you are from under their dispose and government.

Direct. X. 'Marry not without your parents' consent.' Nay, if it may be, let their choice determine first of the person, and not your own: unexperienced youth doth choose by fancy and passion, when your experienced parents will choose by judgment. But if they would force you to join yourselves to such as are ungodly, and like to make your lives either sinful or miserable, you may humbly refuse them. But you must remain unmarried, while by the use of right means you can live in chastity, till your parents are in a better mind. But if indeed you have a flat necessity of marrying, and your parents will consent to none but one of a false religion, or one that is utterly unfit for you; in such a case they forfeit their authority in that point, which is given them for your edification, and not for your destruction; and then you should advise with other friends that are more wise and faithful: but if you suffer your fond affections to contradict your parents' wills, and pretend a necessity (that you cannot change your affections) as if your folly were uncurable: this is but to enter sinfully into that state of life, which should have been sanctified to God, that he might have blessed it to you.

Direct. XI. 'If your parents be in want, it is your duty to relieve them according to your ability; yea, and wholly to maintain them, if there be need' For it is not possible by all that you can do, that ever you can be on even terms with them; or ever requite them for what you have received of them. It is base inhumanity, when parents come to poverty, for children to put them off with some short allowance, and to make them live almost like their servants, when you have riches and plenty for yourselves. Your parents should still be maintained by you as your superiors, and not as your inferiors. See that they fare as well as yourselves, yea, though you got not your riches by their means, yet even for your being, you are their debtors for more than that.

Direct. XII. 'Imitate your parents in all that is good, both when they are living, and when they are dead.' If they were lovers of God, and of his Word and service, and of those that fear him, let their example provoke you, and let the love that you have to them, engage you in this imitation. A wicked child of godly parents is one of the most miserable wretches in the world. With what horror do I look on such a person! How near is such a wretch to hell! When father or mother were eminent for godliness, and daily instructed them in the matters of their salvation, and prayed with them, and warned them, and prayed for them, and after all this the children shall prove covetous, or drunkards, or whoremongers, or profane, and enemies to the servants of God, and deride or neglect the way of their religious parents, it would make one tremble to look such wretches in the face. For though yet there is some hope of them, alas, it is so little, that they are next to desperate; when they are hardened under the most excellent means, and the light hath blinded them, and their acquaintance with the ways of God hath but turned their hearts more against them, what means is left to do good to such resisters of the grace of God as these? The likeliest is some heavy, dreadful

judgment. O what a woeful day will it be to them, when all the prayers, and tears, and teachings, and good examples of their religious parents shall witness against them! How will they be confounded before the Lord! And how sad a thought is it to the heart of holy, diligent parents, to think that all their prayers and pains must witness against their graceless children, and sink them deeper into hell! And yet alas, how many such woeful spectacles are there before our eyes! and how deeply doth the church of God suffer by the malice and wickedness of the children of those parents that taught them better, and walked before them in a holy, exemplary life! But if parents be ignorant, superstitious, idolatrous, popish, or profane, their children are forward enough to imitate them. They can say, Our forefathers were of this mind; and we hope they are saved, and we will rather imitate them, than such innovating reformers as you. As they said to Jeremy, "As for the word that thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken to thee. But we will—burn incense to the queen of heaven—as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings, and our princes in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; for then we had plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil: but since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven,—we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine." Thus they walk "after the imagination of their hearts, and after Baalim (the false worship) which their fathers taught themeters.e" "And they forget God's name as their fathers did forget it." "They and their fathers have transgressed to this dayg." Yea, "They harden their necks, and do worse than their fathers." Thus in error and sin they can imitate their forefathers, when they should rather remember, that it cost Christ his blood "to redeem men from their vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers." And they should penitently confess, as Dan. 9:8. "O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee," Verse 16. And as

Psal. 106:6. "We have sinned with our fathers, &c." Saith God: "Behold your fathers have forsaken me—and have not kept my law; and ye have done worse than your fathers: therefore I will cast you out, &c." "Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and your own wickedness? They are not humbled even unto this dayk." "Be not as your fathers, to whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Turn ye now from your evil ways, but they did not hear." "Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone, away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto youm." "Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers." "Follow not your fathers in their sin and error, but follow them where they follow Christo.

CHAPTER XII

The special Duties of Children and Youth towards God

THOUGH I put your duty to your parents first, because it is first learned, yet your duty to God immediately is your greatest and most necessary duty: learn these following precepts well.

Direct. I. 'Learn to understand the covenant and vow which in your baptism you made with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, your Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator: and when you well understand it, renew that covenant with God in your own persons, and absolutely deliver up yourselves to God, as your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, your Owner, your Ruler, and your Father and felicity.' Baptism is not an idle ceremony, but the solemn entering into covenant with God, in which you receive the greatest mercies, and bind yourselves to the greatest duties. It is but entering into that way which you must walk in all your lives, and avowing that to God which you must be still performing. And though your parents

had authority to promise for you, it is you that must perform it; for it was you that they obliged. If you ask by what authority they obliged you in covenant to God, I answer, by the authority which God had given them in nature, and in Scripture; as they oblige you to be subjects of the king, or as they enter your names into any covenant, by lease or other contract which is for your benefit; and they do it for good, that you may have part in the blessings of the covenant: and if you grudge at it, and refuse your own consent when you come to age, you lose the benefits. If you think they did you wrong, you may be out of covenant when you will, if you will renounce the kingdom of heaven. But it is much wiser to be thankful to God, that your parents were the means of so great a blessing to you, and to do that again more expressly by yourselves which they did for you; and openly with thankfulness to own the covenant in which you are engaged, and live in the performance and in the comforts of it all your days.

Direct. II. 'Remember that you are entering into the way to everlasting life, and not into a place of happiness or continuance. Presently therefore set your hearts on heaven, and make it the design of all your lives, to live in heaven with Christ for ever.' O happy you, if God betimes will throughly teach you, to know what it is that must make you happy; and if at your first setting out, your end be right, and your faces be heavenward! Remember that as soon as you begin to live, you are hasting towards the end of your lives; even as a candle as soon as it beginneth to burn, and the hour-glass as soon as it is turned, is wasting, and hasting to its end: so as soon as you begin to live, your lives are in a consumption, and posting towards your final hour. As a runner, as soon as he beginneth his race, is hasting to the end of it; so are your lives even in your youngest time. It is another kind of life that you must live for ever, than this trifling, pitiful, fleshly life. Prepare therefore speedily for that which God sent you hither to prepare for. O happy you, if you begin betime, and go on

with cheerful resolution to the end! It is blessed wisdom to be wise betime, and to know the worth of time in childhood, before any of it be wasted and lost upon the fooleries of the world. Then you may grow wise indeed, and be treasuring up understanding, and growing up in sweet acquaintance with the Lord, when others are going backwards, and daily making work for sad repentance or final desperation. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, (of all things here below) I have no pleasure in them."

Direct. III. 'Remember that you have corrupted natures to be cured, and that Christ is the physician that must cure them, and the Spirit of Christ must dwell within you, and make you holy, and give you a new heart and nature, which shall love God and heaven above all the honour and pleasures of the world: rest not therefore till you find that you are born anew, and that the Holy Ghost hath made you holy, and quickened your hearts with the love of God, and of your dear Redeemer.' The old nature loveth the things of this world, and the pleasures of this flesh; but the new nature loveth the Lord that made you, and redeemed and renewed you, and the endless joys of the world to come, and that holy life which is the way thereto.

Direct. IV. 'Take heed of loving the pleasures of the flesh, in overmuch eating, or drinking, or play.' Set not your hearts upon your belly or your sport; let your meat, and sleep, and play be moderate. Meddle not with cards or dice, or any bewitching or riotous sports: play not for money, lest it stir up covetous desires, and tempt you to be over-eager in it, and to lie, and wrangle, and fall out with others. Use neither food or sports which are not for your health; a greedy appetite enticeth children to devour raw fruits, and to rob their neighbours' orchards, and at once to undo both soul and body. And an excessive love of play, doth cause them to run among bad

companions, and lose their time, and destroy the love of their books, and their duty, and their parents themselves, and all that is good. You must eat, and sleep, and play for health, and not for useless, hurtful pleasure.

Direct. V. 'Subdue your own wills and desires to the will of God and your superiors, and be not eagerly set upon any thing, which God or your parents do deny you.' Be not like those self-willed, fleshly children, that are importunate for any thing which their fancy or appetite would have, and cry or are discontent if they have it not. Say not that I must have this or that, but be contented with any thing which is the will of God and your superiors. It is the greatest misery and danger in the world, to have all your own wills, and to be given up to your hearts' desire.

Direct. VI. 'Take heed of a custom of foolish, filthy, railing, lying, or any other sinful words' You think it is a small matter, but God thinketh not so; it is not a jesting matter to sin against the God that made you: it is fools that make a sport with sin. One lie, one curse, one oath, one ribbald, or railing, or deriding word, is worse than all the pain that ever your flesh endured.

Direct. VII. 'Take heed of such company and play-fellows, as would entice and tempt you to any of these sins, and choose such company as will help you in the fear of God.' And if others mock at you, care no more for it, than for the shaking of a leaf, or the barking of a dog. Take heed of lewd and wicked company, as ever you care for the saving of your souls. If you hear them rail, or lie, or swear, or talk filthily, be not ashamed to tell them, that God forbiddeth you to keep company with such as they.

Direct. VIII. 'Take heed of pride and covetousness' Desire not to be fine, nor to get all to yourselves; but be humble, and meek, and love

one another, and be as glad that others are pleased as yourselves.

Direct. IX. 'Love the Word of God, and all good books which would make you wiser and better; and read not play-books, nor tale-books, nor love-books, nor any idle stories.' When idle children are at play and fooleries, let it be your pleasure to read and learn the mysteries of your salvation.

Direct. X. 'Remember that you keep holy the Lord's day.' Spend not any of it in play or idleness: reverence the ministers of Christ, and mark what they teach you, and remember it as a message from God about the saving of your souls. Ask your parents when you come home, to help your understandings and memories in any thing which you understood not or forgot. Love all the holy exercises of the Lord's day, and let them be more pleasant to you than your meat or play.

Direct. XI. 'Be as careful to practise all, as to hear and read it.' Remember all is but to make you holy, to love God, and obey him: take heed of sinning against your knowledge, and against the warnings that are given you.

Direct. XII. 'When you grow up, by the direction of your parents choose such a trade or calling, as alloweth you the greatest helps for heaven, and hath the fewest hindrances, and in which you may be most serviceable to God before you die.' If you will but practise these few Directions (which your own hearts must say, have no harm in any of them) what happy persons will you be for ever.

CHAPTER XIII

The Duties of Servants to their Masters

IF servants would have comfortable lives, they must approve themselves and their service unto God, because from him they must have their comforts; which may be done by following these Directions.

Direct. I. 'Reverence the providence of God which calleth you to a servant's life, and murmur not at your labour, or your low condition; but know your mercies, and be thankful for them.' Though perhaps you have more labour than your masters, yet, have you not less care than they? Most servants may have quieter lives, if it were not for their unthankful, discontented hearts. You are not troubled with the care of providing your landlord's rent, or meat, and drink, and wages for your servants, nor with the wants and desires of wives and children, nor with the faults and naughtiness of such as you must use or trust; nor with the losses and crosses which your masters are liable to. Be thankful to God, who for a little bodily labour, doth free you from the burden of all these cares.

Direct. II. 'Take your condition as chosen for you by God, and take yourselves as his servants, and your work as his, and do all as to the Lord, and not only for man; and expect from God your chief reward.' You will be else but eye-servants and hypocrites, if the fear of God do not awe your consciences: and if you were the best servants to your masters in the world, and did not all in obedience to God, it were but a low, unprofitable service: if you believe that there is an infinite distance between God and man, you may conceive what a difference there is between serving God and man: your wages is all your reward from man, but eternal life is God's reward: and the very same work and labour which one man hath but his years' wages for, another hath everlasting life for (though not of merit, yet of the bounty of our Lord). Because he doth it in love and obedience to that God who hath promised this reward. "Servants, obey in all things your masters

according to the flesh: not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ: but he that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of personsb." The like is in Ephes. 6:5–8. So much doth God respect the heart, that the very same action hath such different successes and rewards, as it is done to different ends, and from different principles: your lowest service may be thus sanctified and acceptable to God.

Direct. III. 'Be conscionable and faithful in performing all the labour and duty of a servant.' Neglect not such business as you are to do: neither do it lazily, and deceitfully, and by the halves. As it is thievery or deceit for a man in the market to sell another the whole of his commodity, and when he hath done, to keep back and defraud him of a part; so is it no less for a servant that selleth his time and labour to another, to defraud him of part of that time and service which you sold him. Think not therefore that it is no sin, to idle away an hour which is not your own, or to slubber over the work which you undertake to do. Slothfulness and unconscionableness make servants deceitful: such care not how they do their work, if they can but make their masters believe that it is done well: they are hypocrites in their service, that take more care to seem painful, trusty servants, than to be so; and to hide their faults and slothfulness, than to avoid them. As if it were as easy to hide them also from God, who hath resolved to punish all the wrong they do their masters. If they can but loiter and take their ease, and their masters know it not, they are never troubled at it as a sin against God: laziness and fleshlymindedness do so blind them, that they think it is no sin to take as much ease as they can, so they carry it fair and smoothly with their masters, and to slubber over their business any how, so that it will but serve the turn:

whereas if their masters should keep back any of their wages, or put more work upon them than is meet, they would easily be persuaded that this were a sin. If your labour be such as would hurt your health (as by wet or cold, &c.) you may foresee it, and avoid it in your choice of places: but if it is only the labour that you grudge at, it is a sign of a fleshly and unfaithful person; as long as it is not excessive to wrong your health, nor hurt your souls, by denying you leisure for your duty to God. The Lord himself commandeth you to "be obedient in singleness of heart, as unto Christ, not as eye-servants; and whatever you do, to do it heartily, knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lordd."

Direct. IV. 'Be more careful about your duty to your masters, than about their duty or carriage to you.' Be much more careful what to do, than what to receive; and to be good servants, than to be used as good servants. Not but you may modestly expect your due, and to be used as servants should be used; but your duty is much more to be regarded; for if your master wrong you, that is his sin, and none of yours: God will not be offended with you for another's faults, but for your own; not for being wronged, but for doing wrong: and it is better suffer the greatest wrong, than offend God by committing the smallest sin.

Direct. V. 'Be true and faithful in all that is committed to your trust: dispose not of any thing that is your master's without his consent:' though you may think it ever so reasonable, or well done, yet remember that it is none of your own; if you would relieve the poor, or please a fellow-servant, or do a kindness to a neighbour, do it of your own, and not of another's, unless you have his allowance. Be as thrifty for your masters, as you would be for yourselves. Waste no more of his goods, than you would do if it were your own. Say not as false servants do, my master is rich enough, and it will do him no

harm, and therefore we may make bold, and not be so sparing and niggardly. The question is not, what he should do, but what you should do? If you take any of your rich neighbours' goods or money, to give to the poor, you may be hanged as thieves, as well as if you stole it for yourselves. To take any thing of another's against his will, is to rob or steal: let the value be never so small, if it be but the worth of a penny that you steal or defraud another of, the sin is not small: nay, it aggravateth the sin, that you will presume to break God's law for such a trifle, and venture your soul for so small a thing; though it be taken from one that may never so well spare it, that is no excuse to you; it is none of yours. Especially let those servants look to this, that are trusted with buying and selling, or with provisions. If you defraud your masters, because you can conceal it; believe it, God that knoweth it will reveal it; and if you repent of it, you must make restitution of all that ever you thus robbed them of, if you have any thing to do it with; and if you have nothing, you must with sorrow and shame confess it to them, and ask forgiveness; but if you repent not, you must pay dearer for it in hell, than this comes to. Object. 'But did not the Lord commend the unjust steward?' Answ. Yes, for his wit in providing for himself, but not for his unjustness. He only teacheth you there, that if the wicked worldlings have wit to provide for this life, much more should you have the wit to make provision for the life to come. It is faithfulness that is a steward's duty.

Direct. VI. 'Honour your masters, and behave yourselves towards them with that respect and reverence as your place requireth.' Behave not yourselves rudely or contemptuously towards them, in word or deed. Be not so proud as to disdain to keep the distance and reverence which is due. You should scorn to be servants, if you scorn to behave yourselves as servants. Give them not saucy, provoking or contemptuous language; not wording it out with them in bold contending, and justifying yourselves when your faults are

reprehended. Mark the apostle's words, Tit. 2:9, 10. "Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again; not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." And 1 Tim. 6:1–4. "Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honour;" (yea, though they were infidels or poor) "that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed." (For wicked men will say, 'Is this your religion?' when servants professing religion, are disobedient, unreverent, and unfaithful.) "And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort: if any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words—he is proud, knowing nothing."

Direct. VII. 'Go not unwillingly or murmuringly about your business, but take it as your delight.' An unwilling mind doth lose God's reward, and man's acceptance. Grudging and unwillingness maketh your work of little value, be it never so well done. "Do service heartily, and with good will as to the Lord."

Direct. VIII. 'Obey your masters in all things' (which God forbiddeth not, and which their place enableth them to command you;) 'and set not your own conceits and wills against their commands.' It is not obedience, if you will do no more of their commands, than what agreeth with your own opinions and wills. What if you think another way best, or another work best, or another time best; are you to govern or obey? If the work be not your's, but another's, let his will and not your's be fulfilled, and do his service in his own way. It is God's command, "Servants obey your masters in all thingsk."

Direct. IX. 'Reveal not any of the secrets of your masters', or of the family.' Talk not to others of what is said or done at home; be not over familiar at other men's houses, where you may be tempted to talk of your masters' businesses; many words may have mischievous effects, which were well intended. That servant is unfit for a wise man's family, that hath some familiar abroad, to whom he must tell all that he heareth or seeth at home; for his familiar hath another familiar, and so a man shall be betrayed by those of his own householdm, as Christ by Judas.

Direct. X 'Grudge not at the meanness of the provisions of the family.' If you have not that which is needful to your health, remove to another place as soon as you can, without reproaching the place where you are. But if you have your daily bread, that is, your necessary, wholesome food, how coarse soever, your murmuring for want of more delicious fare, is but your shame, and sheweth that your hearts are sunk into your bellies, and that you are fleshly-minded persons.

Direct. XI. 'Pray daily for a blessing on your labours and on the family, both privately and with the rest.' A praying servant may prevail with God, for more than all their labour cometh to; and their labours are liker to be blessed, than the labours of a prayerless, ungodly person. You are not worthy to partake of the mercies of the family, if you will not join in prayers for those mercies.

Direct. XII. 'Willingly submit to the teaching and government of your masters about the right worshipping of God, and for the good of your own souls.' Bless God, if you live with religious masters that will instruct you and catechise you, and pray with you, and restrain you from breaking the Lord's day, and other sins, and will examine you of your profiting, and watch over your souls, and sharply rebuke you

when you do that which is evil. Be glad of their instructions, and murmur not at them, as ignorant, ungodly servants do. These few Directions carefully followed will make your service better to you, than lordships and kingdoms are to the ungodly.

CHAPTER XIV

Tit. 1. The Duties of Masters towards their Servants

IF you would have good servants, see that you be good masters, and do your own duty, and then either your servants will do theirs, or else all their failings shall turn to your greater good.

Direct. I. 'Remember that in Christ they are your brethren and fellow-servants; and therefore rule them not tyrannically, but in tenderness and love; and command them nothing that is against the laws of God, or the good of their souls.' Use not wrath and unmanlike fury with them; nor any over-severe or unnecessary rebukes or chastisements. Find fault in season, with prudence and sobriety, when your passions are down, and when it is most likely to do good. If it be too little, it will embolden them in doing ill; if it be too much, or frequent, or passionate, it will make them slight it and despise it, and utterly hinder their repentance: they will be taken up in blaming you for your rashness and violence, instead of blaming themselves for the fault.

Direct. II. 'Provide them work convenient for them, and such as they are fit for; not such or so much as to wrong them in their health, or hinder them from the necessary means of their salvation; nor yet so little as may cherish their idleness, or occasion them to lose their precious time.' It is cruelty to lay more on your horse than he can carry; or to work your oxen to skin and bones. "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast," much more of his servant. Especially put not your servants on any labour which hazardeth their health or life, without true necessity to some greater end. Pity and spare them more in their health than in their bare labour. Labour maketh the

body sound, but to take deep colds, or go wet of their feet, do tend to their sickness and death. And should another man's life be cast away for your commodity? Do as you would be done by, if you were servants yourselves and in their case; and let not their labours be so great, as shall allow them no time to pray before they go about it, or as shall so tire them as to unfit them for prayer, or instruction, or the worship of the Lord's day, and shall lay them like blocks, as fitter to lie to sleep or rest themselves, than to pray, or hear, or mind any thing that is good. And yet take heed that you suffer them not to be idle, as many great men use their serving men, to the undoing of their souls and bodies. Idlensss is no small sin itself, and it breedeth and cherisheth many others: their time is lost by it; and they are made unfit for any honest employment or course of life, to help themselves or any others.

Direct. III. 'Provide them such wholesome food and lodging, and such wages as their service doth deserve, or as you have promised them.' Whether it be pleasant or unpleasant, let their food and lodging be healthful. It is so odious an oppression and injustice to defraud a servant or, labourer of his wages, (yea, or to give him less than he deserveth,) that methinks I should not need to speak much against it among Christians. Read James 5:1–5. and I hope it will be enough.

Direct. IV. 'Use not your servants to be so bold and familiar with you, as may tempt them to despise you; nor yet so strange and distant, as may deprive you of opportunity of speaking to them for their spiritual good, or justly lay you open to be censured as too magisterial and proud.' Both these extremes have ill effects; but the first is commonest, and is the disquiet of many families.

Direct. V. 'Remember that you have a charge of the souls in your family, and are as a priest and teacher in your own house, and therefore see that you keep them to the constant worshipping of God, especially on the Lord's day, in public and private; and that you teach, them the things that concern their salvation,' (as is afterward directed.) And pray for them daily, as well as for yourselves.

Direct. VI. 'Watch over them that they offend not God:' bear not with ungodliness or gross sin in your family. Read Psal. 101. Be not like those ungodly masters, that look only that their own work be done, and bid God look after his work himself, and care not for their servants' souls, because they care not for their own; and mind not whether God be served by others, because they serve him not (unless with hypocritical lip-service) themselves.

Direct. VII. 'Keep your servants from evil company, and from being temptations to each other, as far as you can.' If you suffer them to frequent alehouses, or riotous assemblies, or wanton or malignant company, when they are infected themselves, they will bring home the infection, and all the house may fare the worse for it. And when Judas groweth familian with the Pharisees, he will be seduced by them to betray his Master. You cannot be accountable for your servants if you suffer them to be much abroad.

Direct. VIII. 'Go before them as examples of holiness and wisdom, and all those virtues and duties which you would teach them.' An ignorant or a swearing, cursing, railing, ungodly master, doth actually teach his servants to be such; and if his words teach them the contrary he can expect but little reverence or success.

Direct. IX. 'Patiently bear with those tolerable frailties which their unskilfulness, or bodily temperature, or other infirmity make them liable to against their wills.' A willing mind is an excuse for many

frailties; much must be put up with, when it is not from wilfulness or gross neglect: make not a greater matter of every infirmity or fault, than there is cause. Look not that any should be perfect upon earth; reckon upon it, that you must have servants of the progeny of Adam, that have corrupted natures, and bodily weaknesses; and many things that must be borne with. Consider how faultily you serve your heavenly Master, and how much he daily beareth with that which is amiss in you, and how many faults and oversights you are guilty of in your own employment, and how many you should be overtaken with if you were in their stead. "And ye masters, do the same things to them, forbearing threatening, knowing that your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him." "Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equale," &c.

Direct. X. 'See that they behave themselves well to their fellow-servants: of which I shall speak anon.'

Tit. 2. Directions to those Masters in foreign Plantations who have Negroes and other Slaves; being a solution of several cases about them

Direct. I. 'Understand well how far your power over your slaves extendeth, and what limits God hath set thereto.'

As, 1. Sufficiently difference between men and brutes. Remember that they are of as good a kind as you; that is, they are reasonable creatures as well as you, and born to as much natural liberty. If their sin have enslaved them to you, yet nature made them your equals. Remember that they have immortal souls, and are equally capable of salvation with yourselves. And therefore you have no power to do any thing which shall hinder their salvation. No pretence of your business, necessity; commodity or power, can warrant you to hold

them so hard to work, as not to allow them due time and seasons for that which God hath made their duty.

2. Remember that God is their absolute Owner, and that you have none but a derived and limited propriety in them. They can be no further yours; than you have God's consent, who is the Lord of them and you; and therefore God's interest in them and by them must be served first.

3. Remember that they and you are equally under the government and laws of God. And therefore all God's laws must be first obeyed by them, and you have no power to command them to omit any duty which God commandeth them, nor to commit any sin which God forbiddeth them; nor can you without rebellion or impiety expect, that your work or commands should be preferred before God's.

4. Remember that God is their reconciled, tender Father, and if they be as good, doth love them as well as you. And therefore you must use the meanest of them no otherwise, than beseemeth the beloved of God to be used; and no otherwise than may stand with the due signification of your love to God, by loving those that are his.

5. Remember that they are the redeemed ones of Christ, and that he hath not sold you his title to them. As he bought their souls at a price invaluable, so he hath not given the purchase of his blood to be absolutely at your disposal. Therefore so use them, as to preserve Christ's right and interest in them.

Direct. II. 'Remember that you are Christ's trustees, or the guardians of their souls; and that the greater your power is over them, the greater your charge is of them, and your duty for them.' As you owe more to a child than to a day-labourer, or a hired servant, because being more your own; he is more intrusted to your care; so also by

the same reason, you owe more to a slave, because he is more your own; and power and obligation go together. As Abraham was to circumcise all his servant that were bought with money, and the fourth commandment requireth masters to see that all within their gates observe the sabbath day; so must you exercise both your power and love to bring them to the knowledge and the faith of Christ, and to the just obedience of God's commands.

Those therefore that keep their negroes and slaves from hearing God's Word, and from becoming Christians, because by the law they shall then be either made free, or they shall lose part of their service, do openly profess rebellion against God, and contempt of Christ the Redeemer of souls, and a contempt of the souls of men, and indeed they declare, that their worldly profit is their treasure and their God.

If this come to the hands of any of our natives in Barbadoes, or other islands or plantations, who are said to be commonly guilty of this most heinous sin, yea and to live upon it, I entreat them further to consider as followeth, 1. How cursed a crime is it to equal men and beasts! Is not this your practice? Do you not buy them and use them merely to the same end, as you do your horses? to labour for your commodity, as if they were baser than you, and made to serve you?

2. Do you not see how you reproach and condemn yourselves, while you vilify them as savages and barbarous wretches! Did they ever do any thing more savage, than to use not only men's bodies as beasts, but their souls as if they were made for nothing, but to actuate their bodies in your worldly drudgery? Did the veriest cannibals ever do any thing more cruel or odious, than to sell so many souls to the devil for a little worldly gain? Did ever the cursedest miscreants on earth, do any thing more rebellious, and contrary to the will of the most merciful God, than to keep those souls from Christ, and holiness, and

heaven, for a little money, who were made and redeemed for the same ends, and at the same precious price as yours? Did your poor slaves ever commit such villanies as these? Is not he the basest wretch and the most barbarous savage, who committeth the greatest and most inhuman wickedness? And are theirs comparable to these of yours?

3. Doth not the very example of such cruelty, besides your keeping them from Christianity, directly tend to teach them and all others, to hate christianity, as if it taught men to be so much worse than dogs and tigers?

4. Do you not mark how God hath followed you with plagues? and may not conscience tell you that it is for your inhumanity to the souls and bodies of so many? Remember the late fire at the bridge in Barbados: remember the drowning of your governor and ships at sea, and the many judgments that have overtaken you; and at the present the terrible mortality that is among you.

5. Will not the example and warning of neighbour countries rise up in judgment against you and condemn you? You cannot but hear how odious the Spanish name is made (and thereby alas the Christian name also, among the West Indians!) for their most inhuman cruelties in Hispaniola, Jamaica, Cuba, Peru, Mexico, and other places, which is described by Josep. a Costa, a Jesuit of their own; and though I know that their cruelty who murdered millions, exceedeth yours, who kill not men's bodies, yet yours is of the same kind, in the merchandize which you make with the devil for their souls, whilst you that should help them with all your power, do hinder them from the means of their salvation. And on the contrary, what an honour is it to those of New England, that they take not so much as the native soil from them, but by purchase! that they

enslave none of them, nor use them cruelly, but shew them mercy, and are at a great deal of care, and, cost, and labour for their salvation! O how much difference between holy Mr. Elliot's life and yours! His, who hath laboured so many years to save them, and hath translated the whole Bible into their language, with other books; and those good men's in London who are a corporation for the furtherance of his work; and theirs that have contributed so largely towards it; and yours that sell men's souls for your commodity!

6. And what comfort are you like to have at last, in that money that is purchased at such a price? Will not your money and you perish together? will you not have worse than Gehazi's leprosy with it; yea worse than Achan's death by stoning; and as bad as Judas his hanging himself, unless repentance shall prevent it? Do you not remember the terrible words in Jude 2. "Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the errors of Balaam." And 2 Pet. 2:3. 14, 15. "Through covetousness—they make merchandize of you—An heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children (or children of a curse) which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but was rebuked for his iniquity; the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet." When you shall every one hear, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee, and then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" Will it not then cut deep in your perpetual torments, to remember that you got that little pelf, by betraying so many souls to hell? What men in the world doth James speak to, if not to you? "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten: your gold and silver are cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire: ye have heaped

treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaothg." How much more the cry of betrayed souls!

And here we may seasonably answer these cases. Quest. 1. 'Is it lawful for a Christian to buy and use a man as a slave?' Quest. 2. 'Is it lawful to use a Christian as a slave?' Quest. 3. 'What difference must we make between a free servant and a slave?'

To Quest. 1. I answer, There is a slavery to which some men may be lawfully put, and there is a slavery to which none may be put; and there is a slavery to which only the criminal may be put, by way of penalty.

1. No man may be put to such a slavery as under the first Direction is denied, that is, such as shall injure God's interest and service, or the man's salvation. 2. No man, but as a just punishment for his crimes, may be so enslaved, as to be deprived of those liberties, benefits and comforts, which brotherly love obligeth every man to grant to another for his good, as far as is within our power, all things considered. That is, the same man is a servant and a brother, and therefore must at once be used as both. 3. Though poverty or necessity do make a man consent to sell himself to a life of lesser misery, to escape a greater, or death itself; yet is it not lawful for any other so to take advantage by his necessity, as to bring him into a condition that shall make him miserable, or in which we shall not exercise so much love, as may tend to his sanctification, comfort and salvation. Because no justice is beseeming a Christian or a man, which is not conjoined with a due measure of charity.

But 1. He that deserveth it by way of penalty may be penally used. 2. He that stole and cannot restore may be forced to work it out as a servant; and in both these cases more may be done against another's ease or liberty, than by mere contract or consent. He that may hang a flagitious offender doth him no wrong if he put him to a slavery, which is less penal than death. 3. More also may be done against enemies taken in a lawful war, than could be done against the innocent by necessitated consent. 4. A certain degree of servitude or slavery is lawful by the necessitated consent of the innocent. That is so much, (1.) As wrongeth no interest of God. (2.) Nor of mankind by breaking the laws of nations. (3.) Nor the person himself, by hindering his salvation, or the needful means thereof; nor those comforts of life, which nature giveth to man as man. (4.) Nor the commonwealth or society where we live.

Quest. 2. To the second Question, I answer, 1. As men must be variously loved according to the various degrees of amiableness in them; so various degrees of love must be exercised towards them: therefore good and real Christians must be used with more love and brotherly tenderness than others. 2. It is meet also, that infidels have so much mercy shewed them in order to the saving of their souls, as that they should be invited to Christianity by fit encouragements: and so, that they should know that if they will turn Christians, they shall have more privileges and emoluments than the enemies of truth and piety shall have. It is therefore well done of princes who make laws that infidel-slaves shall be freemen, when they are duly Christened. 3. But yet a nominal Christian, who by wickedness forfeiteth his life or freedom, may penally be made a slave as well as infidels. 4. And a poor and needy Christian may sell himself into a harder state of servitude than he would choose, or we could otherwise put him into. But 5. To go as pirates and catch up poor negroes or people of another land, that never forfeited life or liberty,

and to make them slaves, and sell them, is one of the worst kinds of thievery in the world; and such persons are to be taken for the common enemies of mankind; and they that buy them and use them as beasts, for their mere commodity, and betray, or destroy, or neglect their souls, are fitter to be called incarnate devils than Christians, though they be no Christians whom they so abuse.

Quest. 3. To the third Question, I answer, That the solution of this case is to be gathered from what is said already. A servant and a voluntary-slave were both freemen, till they sold or hired themselves; and a criminal person was a freeman till he forfeited his life or liberty. But afterwards the difference is this; that 1. A free servant is my servant, no further than his own covenant made him so; which is supposed to be, (1.) To a certain kind, and measure of labour according to the meaning of his contract. (2.) For a limited time, expressed in the contract, whether a year, or two, or three, or seven.

2. A slave by mere contract is one that, (1.) Usually selleth himself absolutely to the will of another as to his labour both for kind and measure; where yet the limitations of God and nature after (and before) named, are supposed among Christians to take place. (2.) He is one that selleth himself to such labour, during life.

3. A slave by just penalty; is liable to so much servitude as the magistrate doth judge him to, which may be, (1.) Not Only such labour, as aforesaid, as pleaseth his master to impose. (2.) And that for life. (3.) But it may be also to stripes and severities which might not lawfully be inflicted on another.

1. The limitations of a necessitated-slavery by contract or consent through poverty are these, (1.) Such a one's soul must be cared for and preserved, though he should consent to the contrary. He must have time to learn the Word of God, and time to pray; and he must

rest on the Lord's day, and employ it in God's service; he must be instructed, and exhorted, and kept from sin. (2.) He may not be forced to commit any sin against God. (3.) He may not (though he forcedly consent) be denied such comforts of this life, as are needful to his cheerful Serving of God in love and thankfulness, according to the peace of the Gospel state; and which are called by the name of our daily bread. No man may deny a slave any of this, that is not a criminal, punished slave.

2. And the most criminal slave may not be forced to sin, nor denied necessary helps to his salvation. But he may penally be beaten and denied part of his daily bread; so it be not done more rigorously than true justice doth require.

Quest. 'But what if men buy Negroes or other slaves of such as we have just cause to believe did steal them by piracy, or buy them of those that have no power to sell them, and not hire or buy them by their own consent, or by the consent of those that had power to sell them, nor take them captives in a lawful war, what must they do with them afterwards?'

Answ. 1. It is their heinous sin to buy them, unless it be in charity to deliver them. 2. Having done it, undoubtedly they are presently bound to deliver them: because by right the man is his own, and therefore no man else can have just title to him.

Quest. 'But may I not sell him again and make my money of him, seeing I leave him but as I found him?'

Answ. No; because when you have taken possession of him, and a pretended propriety, then the injury that is done him is by you; which before was only by another. And though the wrong be no

greater than the other did him, yet being now done by you, it is your sin.

Quest. 'But may I not return him to him that I bought him of?'

Answ. No: for that is but injuring him by delivering him to another to continue the injury. To say as Pilate, "I am innocent of the blood of this just man," will be no proof of your innocency, yea, God's law bindeth you to love, and works of love, and therefore you should do your best to free him: he that is bound to help to save a man, that is fallen into the hands of thieves by the highway, if he should buy that man as a slave of the thieves, may not after give him up to the thieves again. But to proceed in the Directions.

Direct. III. 'So serve your own necessities by your slaves as to prefer God's interest, and their spiritual and everlasting happiness.' Teach them the way to heaven, and do all for their souls which I have before directed you to do for all your other servants. Though you may make some difference in their labour, and diet, and clothing, yet none as to the furthering of their salvation. If they be infidels, use them so as tendeth to win them to Christ, and the love of religion, by shewing them that Christians are less worldly, less cruel and passionate, and more wise, and charitable, and holy, and meek, than any other persons are. Woe to them that by their cruelty and covetousness do scandalize even slaves, and hinder their conversion and salvation.

Direct. IV. 'By how much the hardness of their condition doth make their lives uncomfortable, and God hath cast them lower than yourselves, by so much the more let your charity pity them, and labour to abate their burden, and sweeten their lives to them, as much as your condition will allow.' And remember that even a slave may be one of those neighbours that you are bound to love as

yourselves, and to do to as you would be done by, if your case were his. Which if you do, you will need no more direction for his relief.

Direct. V. "Remember that you may require no more of an innocent slave, than you would or might do of an ordinary servant, if he were at your will, and did not by contract except something as to labour or usage, which else you would think just and meet to have required of him.'

Direct. VI. 'If they are infidels, neither be too hasty in baptizing them, when they desire it, nor too slow.' Not so hasty as to put them on it, before they understand what the baptismal covenant is; or before you see any likelihood that they should be serious in making such a covenant. Nor yet so slow as to let them alone to linger out their lives in the state of those without the church. But hasten them to learn, and stir up their desires, and look after them, as the ancient churches did after their catechumens; and when you see them fit by knowledge, belief, desire, and resolution, to vow themselves to God on the terms of the holy covenant, then put them on to be baptized. But if you should feel an abatement of your desires of their conversion, because you shall lose their service (much more if ever you had a wish that they might not be converted, which is plain devilism), let it be the matter of your deep humiliation and repentance.

Direct. VII. Make it your chief end in buying and using slaves, to win them to Christ, and save their souls. Do not only endeavour it on the by, when you have first consulted your own commodity, but make this more of your end, than your commodity itself; and let their salvation be far more valued by you than their service: and carry yourselves to them, as those that are sensible that they are redeemed

with them by Christ from the slavery of satan, and may live with them in the liberty of the saints in glory.

CHAPTER XV

The Duties of Children and Fellow-servants to one another

IT is not easy to resolve, Whether good governors, or good fellow-servants, in a family, be the greater help and benefit, to each of the inferiors. For servants are so much together, and so free and familiar with each other, that they have the more opportunity to be useful to each other, if they have but abilities and hearts. It is needful therefore, that you know your duty to one another, both for doing and getting that good which otherwise will be lost.

Direct. I. 'Love one another unfeignedly as yourselves: avoid all contention and falling out with one another, or any thing that would weaken your love to one another; especially differences about your personal interests, in point of profit, provision, or reputation.' Take heed of the spirit of envy, which will make your hearts rise against those that are preferred before you, or that are used better than you. Remember the sin and misery of Cain, and take warning by him. Give place to others, and in honour prefer others, and seek not to be preferred before them. God delighteth to exalt the humble that abase themselves, and to cast down those that exalt themselves. When the interest of your flesh can make you hate or fall out with each other, what a fearful sign is it of a fleshly mindb!

Direct. II. 'Take heed of using provoking words against each other.' For these are the bellows to blow up that which the apostle calleth

"the fire of hell." A foul tongue setteth on fire the course of nature; and therefore it may set a family on fired. "Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil worke." "If ye be angry, refrain your tongues and sin not, and let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devilf." "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." "Revilers shall not inherit the kingdom of Godh."

Direct. III. 'Help one another with love and willingness in your labours; and do not grudge at one another, and say such a one doth less than I: but be as ready to help another, as you would be helped yourselves.' It is very amiable to see a family of such children and servants, that all take one another's concernments as their own; and are not selfish against each other. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Direct. IV. 'Take heed that you prove not tempters to draw each other to sin and misery.' Either by joining together in riotousness, or wronging your masters, or secret revelling, and then in lying to conceal it: or lest immodest familiarity draw those of different sexes into a snare. Abundance of sin and misery hath followed such tempting familiarity of men and maids that were fellow servants. Their nearness giveth them opportunity, and the devil provoketh them to take their opportunity; and from immodest, wanton dalliance, and unchaste words, they proceed at last to more lasciviousness to their own undoing. Bring not the straw to the fire, if you would not have it burn.

Direct. V. 'Watch over one another for mutual preservation against the sin and temptations which you are most in danger of.' Agree to

tell each other of your faults, not proudly or passionately, but in love; and resolve to take it thankfully from each others. If any one talk foolishly or idly, or wantonly and immodestly, or tell a lie, or take God's name in vain, or, neglect their duty to God or man, or deal unfaithfully in their trust or labour, let the other seriously tell him of his sin, and call him to repentance. And let not him that is guilty take it ill, and angrily snap at the reprover, or justify or excuse the fault, or hit him presently in the teeth with his own; but humbly thank, him and promise amendment. O how happy might servants be, if they would faithfully watch over one another!

Direct. VI. 'When you are together, and your work will allow it, let your discourse be such as tendeth to edification, and to the spiritual good of the speaker or the hearers.' Some work there is that must be thought on, and talked of while it is doing, and will not allow you leisure to think or speak of other things, till it is done: but very much of the work of most servants may be as well done, though they think and speak together of heavenly things; besides all other times when their work is over. O take this time to be speaking of good to one another: it is like, that some one of you hath more knowledge than the rest; let the rest be asking his counsel and instructions, and let him bend himself to do them good; or if you are equal in knowledge, yet stir up the grace that is in you, if you have any; or stir up your desires after it, if you have none. Waste not your precious time in vanity; multiply not the sin of idle words. O what a load doth lie on many a soul that feeleth it not, in the guilt of these two sins, loss of time, and idle words! To be guilty of the same sins over and over, every day, and make a constant practice of them, and this against your own knowledge and conscience, is a more grievous case than many think of; whereas, if you would live together as the heirs of heaven, and provoke one another to the love of God, and holy duty, and delightfully talk of the. Word of God, and the life to come, what

blessings might you be to one another? and your service and labour would be a sanctified and comfortable life to you all. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, and may minister grace to the hearers, and grieve not the holy Spirit of God." "But fornication and all uncleannesss, or covetousness (or rather, inordinate, fleshly desire); let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanksk." Of this more anon.

Direct. VII. 'Patiently bear with the failings, of one another towards yourselves, and hide those faults, the opening of which will do no good, but stir up strife: but conceal, not those faults which will be cherished by concealment, or whose concealment tendeth to the wrong of your master, or any other.' For it is in your power to forgive a fault against yourselves, but not against God, or another. And to know when you should reveal it, and when not, you must wisely foreknow which way is like to do more good or harm. And if yet you be in doubt, open it first to some secret friend, that is wise to advise you, whether it should be further opened or not.

Direct. VIII. 'If weakness, or sickness, or want afflict a brother, or sister, or fellow-servant, be kind and helpful to them according to your power. "Love not in word only, but in deed and truth."

CHAPTER XVI

Directions for Holy Conference of Fellow-servants or others

BECAUSE this is a duty so frequently to be performed; and therefore the peace and edification of Christians is very much concerned in it, I

shall give a few brief Directions about it.

Direct. I. 'Labour most for a full and lively heart, which hath the feeling of those things which your tongues should speak of.' For 1. Such a heart will be like a spring which is always running, and will continually feed the streams. Forced and feigned things are of short continuance; the hypocrites affected, forced speech, is exercised but among those where it may serve his pride and carnal ends: at other times, and in other company, he hath another tongue like other men. It is like a land-flood that is quickly gone! or like the bending of a bow, which returneth to its place, as soon as it is loosed. 2. And that which cometh from your hearts, will be serious and hearty, and likeliest to do good to others: for words do their work upon us, not only by signifying the matter which is spoken, but also by signifying the affections of the speaker. And that which will work affections, must express affection ordinarily. If it come not from the heart of the speaker, it is not so like to go to the hearts of the hearers. A hearty preacher, and a hearty, feeling discourse of holy things, do pierce heart-deep, and do that good, which better composed words that are heartless do not.

Direct. II. 'Yet for all that, when your hearts are cold, and dull, and barren, do not think that your tongues must therefore neglect their duty, and be silent from all good, till your hearts be better, but force your tongues to do their duty, if they will not do it freely without constraint.' For 1. Duty is duty whether you be well-disposed to it or not: if all duty should cease when men are ill-disposed to it, no wicked man would be bound to any thing that is truly holy. 2. And if heart and tongue be both obliged, it is worse to omit both than one. 3. And there may be sincerity in a duty, when the heart is cold and dull. 4. And beginning to do your duty as well as you can, is the way to overcome your dullness and unfitness; when you force your

tongues at first to speak of that which is good, the words which you speak or hear, may help to bring you into a better frame. Many a man hath begun to pray with coldness, that hath got him heat before he had done; and many a man hath gone unwillingly to hear a sermon, that hath come home a converted soul. 5. And when you set yourselves in the way of duty, you are in the way of promised grace.

Object. 'But is not this to play the hypocrite, to let my tongue go before my heart? And speak the things which my heart is not affected with?'

Answ. If you speak falsely and dissemblingly, you play the hypocrite: but you may force yourselves to speak of good, without any falsehood or hypocrisy. Words signify as I told you, the matter spoken, and the speaker's mind. Now your speaking of the things of God doth tell no more of your mind but this, that you take them to be true, and that you desire those that you speak to, to regard them: and all this is so; and therefore there is no hypocrisy in it. Indeed if you told the hearers, that you are deeply affected with these things yourselves, when it is not so, this were hypocrisy. But a man may exhort another to be good, without professing himself to be good; yea, though he confess himself to be bad. Therefore all the good discourses of a wicked man are not hypocrisy: much less the good discourse of a sincere Christian, that is dull and cold in that discourse. And if a duty had some hypocrisy in it, it is not the duty but the hypocrisy that God disliketh, and you must forsake: as if there be coldness in a duty, it is the coldness, and not the duty that is to be blamed and forborne. And wholly to omit the duty, is worse than to do it with some coldness or hypocrisy, which is not the predominate complexion of the duty.

Object. 'But if it be not the fruit of the Spirit, it is not acceptable to God; and that which I force my tongue to, is none of the fruits of the

Spirit. Therefore I must stay till the Spirit move me.'

Answ. 1. There are many duties done by reason, and the common assistances of God, that are better than the total omission of them is. Else no unsanctified man should hear the Word, or pray, or relieve the poor, or obey his prince or governors, or do any duty towards children or neighbours, because whatsoever is not the fruit of the special grace of the Spirit, is sin; and without faith it is impossible to please God; and all men have not faith. 2. It is a distracted conceit of the Quakers and other fanatics, to think that reason and the Spirit of God are not conjunct principles in the same act. Doth the Spirit work on a man as on a beast or a stone? and cause you to speak as a clock that striketh it knoweth not what; or play on man's soul, as on an instrument of music that hath neither knowledge of the melody, nor any pleasure in it? No, the Spirit of God supposeth nature, and worketh on man as man; by exciting your own understanding and will to do their parts. So that when, against all the remnant of dullness and backwardness that is in you, you can force yourselves to do your duty, it is because the Spirit of God assisteth you to take that resolution, and use that force. For thus the Spirit striveth against the fleshb. Though it is confessed, that there is more of the Spirit, where there is no backwardness, or resistance, or need of forcing.

Direct. III. 'By all means labour to be furnished with understanding in the matters of God.' For, 1. An understanding person hath a mine of holy matter in himself, and never is quite void of matter for good discourse: he is the good scribe, that is "instructed to the kingdom of God, that bringeth out of his treasury things new and old." 2. And an understanding person will speak discreetly, and so will much further the success of his discourse, and not make it ridiculous, contemptuous or ineffectual through his indiscretion. But yet if you are ignorant and wanting in understanding, do not therefore be

silent: for though your ability is least, your necessity is greatest. Let necessity therefore constrain you to ask instruction, as it constraineth the needy to beg for what they want. But spare no pains to increase your knowledge.

Direct. IV. 'If your own understandings and hearts do not furnish you with matter, have recourse to those manifold helps that God vouchsafeth you.' As 1. You may discourse of the last sermon that you heard, or some one lately preached that nearly touched you. 2. Or of something in the last book you read. 3. Or of some text of Scripture obvious to your thoughts. 4. Or of some notable (yea, or ordinary) providence which did lately occur. 5. Or of some examples of good or evil that are fresh before you. 6. Or of the right doing of the duty that you are about, or any such like helps.

Direct. V. 'Talk not of vain, unprofitable controversies, nor often of small circumstantial matters that make but little to edification.' For there may be idle talking about matters of religion, as well as about other smaller things. Especially see that the quarrels of the times engage not your thoughts and speeches too far, into a course of unprofitableness and contention.

Direct. VI. 'Furnish yourselves beforehand with matter for the most edifying discourse, and never go abroad empty.' And let the matter be usually, 1. Things of weight, and not small matters. 2. Things of certainty, and not uncertain things. Particularly the fittest subjects for your ordinary discourse are these: 1. God himself, with his attributes, relations and works. 2. The great mystery of man's redemption by Christ; his person, office, sufferings, doctrine, example and work; his resurrection, ascension, glory, intercession and all the privileges of his saints. 3. The covenant of grace, the promises, the duties, the conditions and the threatenings. 4. The

workings of the Spirit of Christ upon the soul, and every grace of the Spirit in us; with all the signs, and helps, and hindrances of it. 5. The ways and wiles of satan, and all our spiritual enemies; the particular temptations which we are in danger of; what they are, and how to avoid them, and what are the most powerful helps against them. 6. The corruption and deceitfulness of the heart; the nature and workings, effects and signs of ignorance, unbelief, hypocrisy, pride, sensuality, worldliness, impiety, injustice, intemperance, uncharitableness and every other sin; with all the helps against them all. 7. The many duties to God and man which we have to perform; both internal and external, and how to do them, and what are the chiefest hindrances and helps. (As in reading, hearing, meditating, prayer, giving alms, &c.) And the duties of our relations, and several places, with the contrary sins. 8. The vanity of the world, and deceitfulness of all earthly things. 9. The powerful reasons used by Christ to draw us to holiness, and the unreasonable madness of all that is brought against it, by the devil or by wicked men. 10. Of the sufferings which we must expect and be prepared for. 11. Of death, and the preparations that will then be found necessary; and how to make ready for so great a change. 12. Of the day of judgment, and who will be then justified, and who condemned. 13. Of the joys of heaven, the employment, the company, the nature and duration. 14. Of the miseries of the damned, and the thoughts that then they will have of their former life on earth. 15. Of the state of the church on earth, and what we ought to do in our places for its welfare. Is there not matter enough in all these great and weighty points, for your hourly meditation and conference?

Direct. VII. 'Take heed of proud self-conceitedness in your conference.' Speak not with supercilious, censorious confidence. Let not the weak take on them to be wiser than they are. Be readier to speak by way of question as learners, than as teachers of others,

unless you are sure that they have much more need to be taught by you, than you by them. It is ordinary for novices in religion to cast all their discourse into a teaching strain, or to make themselves preachers before they understand. It is a most loathsome and pitiful hearing (and yet too ordinary) to hear a raw, self-conceited, ungrounded, unexperienced person, to prate magisterially, and censure confidently the doctrine, or practices, or persons of those that are much better and wiser than themselves. If you meet with this proud, censorious spirit, rebuke it first, and read to them James 3; and if they go on, turn away from them, and avoid them, for they know not what manner of spirit they are of: they serve not the Lord Jesus, whatever they pretend to think themselves, but are proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions, and making divisions in the church of God, and ready to fall into the condemnation of the devil.

Direct. VIII. 'Let the wisest in the company, and not the weakest, have most of the discourse: but yet if any one that is of an abler tongue than the rest, do make any determinations in doubtful, controverted points, take heed of a hasty receiving his judgment, let his reasons seem never so plausible or probable; but put down all such opinions as doubts, and move them to your teachers, or some other impartial, able men, before you entertain them.' Otherwise, he that hath most wit and tongue in the company, might carry away all the rest into what error or heresy he please, and subvert their faith when he stops their mouths.

Direct. IX. 'Let the matter of your speech be suitable to your end, even to the good of yourselves or others, which you seek.' The same subject that is fit for one company is very unfit for others. Learned men and ignorant men, pious men and profane men, are not fit for

the same kind of discourse. The medicine must be carefully fitted to the disease.

Direct. X. 'Let your speech be seasonable, when prudence telleth you it is not like to do more harm than good.' There is a season for the prudent to be silent, and refrain even from good talk. "Cast not pearls before swine, and give not holy things to dogs, that you know will turn again and rend youe." Yea, and among good people themselves, there is a time to speak, and a time to be silent. There may possibly be such excess as tendeth to the tiring of the hearers; and more may be crammed in than they can digest; and surfeiting may make them loathe it afterwards. You must give none more than they can bear; and also the matters of your business and callings, must be talked of in their time and place.

Direct. XI. 'Let all your speech of holy things be with the greatest seriousness and reverence that you are able.' Let the words be never so good, yet levity and rudeness may make them to be profane. God and holy things should not be talked of in a common manner: but the gravity of your speech should tell the hearers, that you take them not for small or common matters. If servants and others that live near together would converse, and speak as the oracles of God, how holy, and heavenly, and happy would such families or societies be?

CHAPTER XVII

Directions for each particular Member of the Family how to spend every ordinary day of the Week

IT somewhat tendeth to make a holy life more easy to us, when we know the ordinary course and method of our duties, and every thing falleth into its proper place. As it helpeth the husbandman or

tradesman to know the ordinary course of his work, that he need not go out of it, unless in extraordinary cases. Therefore I shall here give you some brief Directions for the holy spending of every day.

Direct. I. 'Proportion the time of your sleep aright (if it be in your power) that you waste not your precious morning hours sluggishly in your bed.' Let the time of your sleep be rationally fitted to your health and labour, and not sensually to your slothful pleasure. About six hours is meet for healthful people, and seven hours for the less healthful, and eight for the more weak and aged, ordinarily. The morning hours are to most, the most precious of all the day, for all our duties; especially servants that are scanted of time, must take it then for prayer, if possible, lest they have none at all.

Direct. II. 'Let God have your first awaking thoughts: lift up your hearts to him reverently and thankfully for the rest of the night past, and briefly cast yourselves upon him for the following day; and use yourselves so constantly to this, that your consciences may check you, when common thoughts shall first intrude.' And if you have a bed-fellow to speak to, let your first speech be agreeable to your thoughts. It will be a great help against the temptations that may else surprise you, and a holy engagement of your hearts to God, for all the day.

Direct. III. 'Resolve, that pride and the fashions of the times shall never tempt you into such a garb of attire, as will make you long in dressing you in the morning; but wear such clothing as is soon put on.' It is dear-bought bravery (or decency as they will needs call it) which must cost every day an hour's or a quarter of an hour's time extraordinary: I had rather go as the wild Indians, than have those morning hours to answer for, as too many ladies and other gallants have.

Direct. IV. 'If you are persons of quality you may employ a child or servant to read a chapter in the Bible, while you are dressing you, and eating your breakfast (if you eat any). Else you may employ that time in some fruitful meditation, or conference with those about you, as far as your necessary occasions do give leave.' As to think or speak of the mercy of a night's rest, and of your renewed time; and how many spent that night in hell, and how many in prison, and how many in a colder, harder lodging, and how many in grievous pain and sickness, weary of their beds and of their lives, and how many in distracting terrors of their minds; and how many souls that night were called from their bodies, to appear before the dreadful God: and think how fast days and nights roll on! and how speedily your last night and day will come! And observe what is wanting in the readiness of your soul, for such a time, and seek it presently without delay.

Direct. V. 'If more necessary duties call you not away, let secret prayer by yourself alone, or with your chamber-fellow, or both, go before the common prayers of the family; and delay it not causelessly, but if it may be, let it be first, before any other work of the day.' Yet be not formal and superstitious to your hours, as if God had absolutely tied you to such a time: nor think it not your duty to pray once in secret, and once with your chamber-fellow, and once with the family every morning, when more necessary duties call you off. That hour is best for one, which is worst for another: to most, private prayer is most seasonable as soon as they are up and clothed; to others some other hour may be more free and fit. And those persons that have not more necessary duties, may do well to pray at all the opportunities before-mentioned; but reading and meditation must be allowed their time also; and the labours of your callings must be painfully followed; and servants and poor people that are not at liberty, or that have a necessity of providing for their families,

may not lawfully take so much time for prayer, as some others may; especially the aged and weak that cannot follow a calling, may take longer time. And ministers, that have many souls to look after, and public work to do, must take heed of neglecting any of this, that they may be longer and oftener in private prayer. Always remember that when two duties are at once before you, and one must be omitted, that you prefer that which, all things considered, is the greatest; and understand what maketh a duty greatest. Usually that is greatest which tendeth to the greatest good; yet sometimes that is greatest at that time, which cannot be done at another time, when others may. Praying, in itself considered, is better than ploughing, or marketting, or conference; and yet these may be greater than it in their proper seasons; because prayer may be done at another time, when these cannot.

Direct. VI. 'Let family worship be performed constantly and seasonably, twice a day, at that hour which is freest in regard of interruptions; not delaying it without just cause. But whenever it is performed, be sure it be reverently, seriously, and spiritually done.' If greater duty hinder not, begin with a brief invocation of God's name, and craving of his help and blessing through Christ; and then read some part of the holy Scripture in order; and either help the hearers to understand it and apply it, or if you are unable for that, then read some profitable book to them for such ends; and sing a psalm (if there be enough to do it fitly,) and earnestly pour out your souls in prayer. But if unavoidable occasions will not give way to all this, do what you can, especially in prayer, and do the rest another time; but pretend not necessity against any duty, when it is but unwillingness or negligence. The lively performance of family-duties, is a principal means to keep up the power and interest of godliness in the world; which all decays when these grow dead, and slight, and formal.

Direct. VII. 'Renew the actual intention and remembrance of your ultimate end, when you set yourselves to your day's work, or set upon any notable business in the world. Let HOLINESS TO THE LORD be written upon your hearts in all that you do.' Do no work which you cannot entitle God to, and truly say he set you about; and do nothing in the world for any other ultimate end, than to please, and glorify, and enjoy him. And remember that whatever you do, must be done as a means to these, and as by one that is that way going on to heaven. All your labour must be as the labour of a traveller, which is all for his journey's end; and all your respect or affection to any place or thing in your way, must be in respect to your attainment of the end; as a traveller loveth a good way, a good horse, a good inn, a dry cloak, or good company; but nothing must be loved here as your end or home. Lift up your hearts to heaven and say, 'If this work and way did not tend thither directly or indirectly, it were no work or way for me.' Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Direct. VIII. 'Follow the labours of your calling painfully and diligently.' From hence will follow many commodities. 1. You will shew that you are not sluggish, and servants to your flesh, as those that cannot deny its ease; and you will further the mortification of all fleshly lusts and desires, which are fed by ease and idleness. 2. You will keep out idle thoughts from your mind, which swarm in the minds of idle persons. 3. You will escape the loss of precious time, which idle persons are daily guilty of. 4. You will be in a course of obedience to God, when the slothful are in a constant sin of omission. 5. You may have the more time to spare for holy exercises, if you follow your labour close when you are at it; when idle persons can have no time for prayer or reading, because they lose it by loitering at their work, and leave their business still behind-hand. 6. You may expect God's blessing for the comfortable provision for yourselves and families, and to have to give to them that need, when

the slothful are in want themselves, and cast by their want into abundance of temptations, and have nothing to do good with. 7. And it will also tend to the health of your bodies, which will make them the fitter for the service of your souls. When slothfulness wasteth time, and health, and estate, and wit, and grace, and all.

Direct. IX. 'Be throughly acquainted with your corruptions and temptations, and watch against them all the day; especially the most dangerous sort of your corruptions, and those temptations which your company or business will unavoidably lay before you Be still watching and working against the master, radical sins of unbelief, hypocrisy, selfishness, pride, sensuality, or fleshpleasing, and the inordinate love of earthly things. Take heed, lest under pretence of diligence in your calling, you be drawn to earthly-mindedness, and excessive cares or covetous designs for rising in the world. If you are to trade or deal with others, take heed of selfishness, which desireth to draw or save from others, as much as you can for yourselves and your own advantage; take heed of all that savoureth of injustice or uncharitableness in all your dealings with others. If you converse with vain-talkers, be still provided against the temptation of vanity of talk. If you converse with angry persons, be still fortified against their provocations. If you converse with wanton persons, or such as are tempting those of the other sex, maintain that modesty and necessary distance and cleanness of speech which the laws of chastity require. If you have servants that are still faulty, be so provided against the temptation, that their faults may not make you faulty, and you may do nothing that is unseemly or unjust, but only that which tendeth to their amendment. If you are poor, be still provided against the temptations of poverty, that it bring not upon you an evil far greater than itself. If you are rich, be most diligent in fortifying your hearts against those more dangerous temptations of riches, which very few escape. If you converse with flatterers or those that

much admire you, be fortified against swelling pride. If you converse with those that despise and injure you, be fortified against impatient, revengeful pride. These works at first will be very difficult, while sin is in any strength; but when you have got an habitual apprehension of the poisonous danger of every one of these sins, and of the tendency of all temptations, your hearts will readily and easily avoid them, without much tiring, thoughtfulness, and care; even as a man will pass by a house infected with the plague, or go out of the way if he meet a cart or any thing that would hurt him.

Direct. X. 'When you are alone in your labours, improve the time in practical, fruitful (not speculative and barren) meditations: especially in heart-work and heaven-work:' let your chiefest meditations be on the infinite goodness and perfections of God, and the life of glory, which in the love and praise of him, you must live for ever: and next let Christ and the mysteries of grace in man's redemption, be the matter of your thoughts: and next that your own hearts and lives, and the rest before expressed, Chap. xvi. Direct. 6. If you are able to manage meditations methodically it will be best; but if you cannot do that, without so much striving as will confound you, and distract you, and cast you into melancholy, it is better let your meditations be more short and easy, like ejaculatory prayers; but let them usually be operative to do some good upon your hearts.

Direct. XI. 'If you labour in company with others, be provided with matter, skill, resolution, and zeal, to improve the time in profitable conference, and to avoid diversions,' as is directed, Chap. xvi.

Direct. XII. 'Whatever you are doing, in company or alone, let the day be spent in the inward excitation and exercise of the graces of the soul, as well as in external bodily duties.' And to that end know, that there is no external duty, but must have some internal grace to

animate it, or else it is but an image or carcase, and unacceptable to God. When you are praying and reading, there are the graces of faith, desire, love, repentance, &c. to be exercised there: when you are alone, meditation may help to actuate any grace as you find most needful: when you are conferring with others, you must exercise love to them, and love to that truth about which you do confer, and other graces as the subject shall require: when you are provoked or under suffering, you have patience to exercise. But especially it must be your principal daily business, by the exercise of faith, to keep your hearts warm in the love of God and your dear Redeemer, and in the hopes and delightful thoughts of heaven. As the means are various and admit of deliberation and choice, because they are to be used but as means, and not all at once, but sometimes one and sometimes another, when the end is still the same and past deliberation or choice; so all those graces which are but means must be used thus variously, and with deliberation and choice; when the love of God and of eternal life must be the constant tenor and constitution of the mind, as being the final grace, which consisteth with the exercise of every other mediate grace. Never take up with lip-labour or bodily exercise alone, nor barren thoughts, unless your hearts be also employed in a course of duty, and holy breathings after God, or motion towards him, or in the sincere internal part of the duty which you perform to men: Justice and Love are graces which you must still exercise towards all that you have to deal with in the world. Love is called the fulfilling of the law, because the Love of God and man is the soul of every outward duty, and a cause that will bring forth these as its effects.

Direct. XIII. 'Keep up a high esteem of time; and be every day more careful that you lose none of your time, than you are that you lose none of your gold or silver: and if vain recreations, dressings, feastings, idle talk, unprofitable company, or sleep, be any of them

temptations to rob you of any of your time, accordingly heighten your watchfulness and firm resolutions against them.' Be not more careful to escape thieves and robbers, than to escape that person or action, or course of life, that would rob you of any of your time. And for the redeeming of time, especially see, not only that you be never idle, but also that you be doing the greatest good that you can do, and prefer not a less before a greater.

Direct. XIV. 'Eat and drink with temperance, and thankfulness: for health and not for unprofitable pleasure.' For quantity, most carefully avoid excess; for many exceed, for one that taketh too little. Never please your appetite in meat or drink, when it tendeth to the detriment of your health. "It is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes strong drink.—Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts." "Woe to thee, O land when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning. Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength and not for drunkennesse." Then must poorer men also take heed of intemperance and excess. Let your diet incline rather to the coarser than the finer sort, and to the cheaper than the costly sort, and to sparing abstinence than to fulness. I would advise rich men especially, to write in great letters on the walls of their dining rooms or parlours these two sentences: "BEHOLD THIS WAS THE INIQUITY OF SODOM; PRIDE, FULNESS OF BREAD, AND ABUNDANCE OF IDLENESS WAS IN HER, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." "There was a certain rich man which was CLOTHED IN PURPLE AND SILK AND FARED SUMPTUOUSLY every day.—Son remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good thingsg." Paul wept when he mentioned them, "whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind

earthly things, being enemies to the cross." O live not after the flesh, lest ye diei."

Direct. XV. 'If any temptation prevail against you, and you fall into any sins besides common infirmities, presently lament it, and confess not only to God, but to men, when confession conduceth more to good than harm; and rise by a true and thorough repentance, immediately without delay.' Spare not the flesh, and daub not over the breach, and do not by excuses palliate the sore, but speedily rise whatever it cost: for it will certainly cost you more to go on or to remain impenitent. And for your ordinary infirmities, make not too light of them, but confess them, and daily strive against them; and examine what strength you get against them, and do not aggravate them by impenitence and contempt.

Direct. XVI. 'Every day look to the special duties of your several relations:' whether you are husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, servants, pastors, people, magistrates, subjects, remember that every relation hath its special duty, and its advantage for the doing of some good; and that God requireth your faithfulness in these, as well as in any other duty. And that in these a man's sincerity or hypocrisy is usually more tried, than in any other parts of our lives.

Direct. XVII. 'In the evening return to the worshipping of God, in the family and in secret as was directed for the morning.' And do all with seriousness as in the sight of God, and in the sense of your necessities; and make it your delight to receive instructions from the holy Scripture, and praise God, and call upon his name through Christ.

Direct. XVIII. 'If you have any extraordinary impediments one day to hinder you in your duty to God and man, make it up by diligence the

next; and if you have any extraordinary helps, make use of them, and let them not overslip you.' As, if it be a lecture-day, or a funeral sermon, or you have opportunity of converse with men of extraordinary worth; or if it be a day of humiliation or thanksgiving; it may be expected that you get a double measure of strength by such extraordinary helps.

Direct. XIX. 'Before you betake yourselves to sleep, it is ordinarily a safe and needful course, to take a review of the actions and mercies of the past day; that you may be specially thankful for all special mercies, and humbled for your sins, and may renew your repentance and resolutions for obedience, and may examine yourselves, whether your souls grow better or worse, and whether sin go down, and grace increase, and whether you are any better prepared for sufferings and death.' But yet waste not too much time in the ordinary accounts of your life, as those that neglect their duty while they are examining themselves how they perform it, and perplexing themselves with the long perusal of their ordinary infirmities. But by a general (yet sincere) repentance, bewail your unavoidable daily failings, and have recourse to Christ for a daily pardon and renewed grace; and in case of extraordinary sins or mercies, be sure to be extraordinarily humbled or thankful. Some think it best to keep a daily catalogue or diurnal of their sins and mercies. If you do so, be not too particular in the enumeration of those that are the matter of every day's return; for it will be but a temptation to waste your time, and neglect greater duty, and to make you grow customary and senseless of such sins and mercies, when the same come to be recited over and over from day to day. But let the common mercies be more generally recorded, and the common sins generally confessed (yet neither of them therefore slighted): and let the extraordinary mercies, and greater sins, have a more particular observation. And yet remember, that sins and mercies, which it is not fit that others be acquainted with,

are more safely committed to memory than to writing: and methinks, a well humbled and a thankful heart, should not easily let the memory of them slip.

Direct. XX. 'When you compose yourselves to sleep, again commit yourselves to God through Christ, and crave his protection, and close up the day with some holy exercise of faith and love.' And if you are persons that must needs lie waking in the night, let your meditations be holy, and exercised upon that subject that is most profitable to your souls. But I cannot give this as an ordinary direction, because that the body must have sleep, or else it will be unfit for labour, and all thoughts of holy things must be serious; and all serious thoughts will hinder sleep, and those that wake in the night, do wake unwillingly, and would not put themselves out of hopes of sleep, which such serious meditations would do. Nor can I advise you (ordinarily) to rise in the night to prayer, as the papists' votaries do. For this is but to serve God with irrational and hurtful ceremony and it is a wonder how far such men will go in ceremony, that will not be drawn to a life of love and spiritual worship: unless men did irrationally place the service of God in praying this hour rather than another, they might see how improvidently and sinfully they lose their time, in twice dressing and undressing, and in the intervals of their sleep, when they might spare all that time, by sitting up the longer, or rising the earlier, for the same employment. Besides what tendency it hath to the destruction of health, by cold and interruption of necessary rest; when God approveth not of the disabling of the body, or destroying our health, or shortening life (no more than of murder or cruelty to others); but only calleth us to deny our unnecessary, sensual delights, and use the body so as it may be most serviceable to the soul and him.

I have briefly laid together these twenty Directions for the right spending of every day, that those that need them, and cannot remember the larger more particular Directions, may at least get these few engraven on their minds, and make them the daily practice of their lives; which if you will sincerely do, you cannot conceive how much it will conduce to the holiness, fruitfulness, and quietness of your lives, and to your peaceful and comfortable death.

CHAPTER XVIII

Tit. 1. Directions for the holy spending of the Lord's Day in Families

Direct. I. 'BE well resolved against the cavils of those carnal men, that would make you believe that the holy spending of the Lord's day is a needless thing.' For the name whether it shall be called the Christian sabbath, is not much worth contending about: undoubtedly the name of 'The Lord's Day,' is that which was given it by the Spirit of Godb, and the ancient Christians, who sometimes called it, 'The Sabbath,' by allusion, as they used the names, Sacrifice and Altar: the question is not so much of the name as the thing; whether we ought to spend the day in holy exercises, without unnecessary divertisements? And to settle your consciences in this, you have all these evidences at hand.

1. By the confession of all, you have the law of nature to tell you, that God must be openly worshipped, and that some set time should be appointed for his worship. And, whether the fourth commandment be formally in force or abrogated, yet it is commonly agreed on that the parity of reason, and general equity of it, serveth to acquaint us, that it is the will of God that one day in seven be the least that we destinate to this use; this being then judged a meet proportion by

God himself, (even from the creation, and on the account of commemorating the creation,) and Christians being no less obliged to take as large a space of time, who have both the creation and redemption to commemorate, and a more excellent manner of worship to perform.

2. It is confessed by all Christians that Christ rose on the first day of the week, and appeared to his congregated disciples on that day, and poured out the Holy Ghost on them on that day, and that the apostles appointed, and the Christian churches observed, their assemblies and communion ordinarily on that day; and that these apostles were filled with the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, that they might infallibly acquaint the church with the doctrine and will of Jesus Christ; and leave it on record for succeeding ages; and so were intrusted by office, and enabled by gifts, to settle the orders of the Gospel-church, as Moses did the matters of the tabernacle and worship then; and so that their laws or orders thus settled, were the laws or orders of the Holy Ghostd.

3. It is also confessed, that the universal church from the days of the apostles down till now, hath constantly kept holy the Lord's day in the memorial of Christ's resurrection, and that as by the will of Christ delivered to them by or from the apostles: insomuch that I remember not either any orthodox Christian, or heretic, that ever opposed, questioned, or scrupled it, till of late ages. And as a historical discovery of the matter of fact, this is a good evidence that indeed it was settled by the apostles; and consequently by Christ who gave them their commission, and inspired them by the Holy Ghost.

4. It is confessed, that it is still the practice of the universal church; and those that take it to be but of ecclesiastical appointment, some of them mean it of such extraordinary ecclesiastics as inspired apostles,

and all of them take the appointment as obligatory to all the members of the church.

5. The laws of the land where we live command it, and the king by proclamation urgeth the execution; and the canons, and homilies, and liturgy shew that the holy observation of the Lord's day, is the judgment and will of the governors of the church. Read the homilies for the time and place of worship. Yea, they require the people to say when the fourth commandment is read, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law." And the command of authority is not a contemptible obligation.

6. It is granted by all, that more than this is due to God, and the life that is in every Christian telleth him, that it is a very great mercy to us; not only to servants, but even to all men, that one day in seven they may disburden themselves of all the cares and business of the world, which may hinder their holy communion with God and one another, and wholly apply themselves to learn the will of God. And nature teacheth us to accept of mercy when it is offered to us, and not dispute against our happiness.

7. Common experience telleth us, that where the Lord's day is more holily and carefully observed, knowledge and religion prosper best; and that more souls are converted on those days, than on all the other days besides; and that the people are accordingly more edified; and that wherever the Lord's day is ordinarily neglected or misspent, religion and civility decay, and there is a visible, lamentable difference between those places and families, and the other.

8. Reason and experience tell us, that if men were left to themselves, what time they should appoint for God's public worship, in most places it would be so little, and disordered, and uncertain, that religion would be for the most part banished out of the now Christian

world. Therefore there being need of a universal law for it, it is probable that such a law there is; and if so, it can be by none but God, the Creator, Redeemer, and Holy Ghost, there being no other universal Governor and Lawgiver to impose it.

9. All must confess, that it is more desirable for unity and concord sake, that all Christians hold their holy assemblies on one and the same day, and that all at once through-all the world, do worship God and seek his grace, than that they do it some on one day, and some on another.

10. And all that ever I have conversed with, confess, that if the holy spending of the Lord's day be not necessary it is lawful; and therefore when there is so much to be said for the necessity of it too, to keep it holy is the safest way, seeing this cannot be a sin, but the contrary may; and licence is encouragement enough to accept of so great a mercy. All this set together will satisfy a man, that hath any 'spiritual sense of the concernments of his own and others' souls.

Object. But you will say, 'That besides the name, it is yet a controversy whether the whole day should be spent in holy exercises, or only so much as is meet for public communion, it being not found in antiquity, that the churches used any further to observe it.'

Answ. No sober man denieth that works of necessity for the preservation of our own or other men's lives, or health, or goods, may be done on the Lord's day: so that when we say, that the whole day is to be spent holily, we exclude not eating and sleeping, nor the necessary actions about worship; as the priests in the temple are said to break the sabbath, (that is, the external rest,) and to be blameless. But otherwise, that it is the whole day, is evident in the arguments produced: the ancient histories and canons of the church speak not of one part of the day only, but the whole: all confess, that when

labour or sinful sports are forbidden, it is on the whole day, and not only on a part. And for what is alleged of the custom of the ancient church, I answer, 1. The ancientest churches spent almost all the day in public worship and communion: they begun in the morning, and continued without parting till the evening. The first part of the day being spent in teaching the catechumens, they were then dismissed, and the church continued together in preaching and praying, but especially in those laudatory, eucharistical offices, which accompany the celebration of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ. They did not then, (as gluttons do now,) account it fasting to forbear a dinner, when they supped, yea, feasted at night; it being not usual among the Romans to eat any dinners at all. And they that spent all the day together in public worship and communion, you may be sure spent not part of it in dancing, nor stage-plays, nor worldly businesses. 2. And church history giveth us but little account what particular persons did in private, nor can it be expected. 3. Who hath brought us any proof that ever the church approved of spending any part of the day in sports, of idleness, or unnecessary, worldly business? Or that any churches (or persons regardable) did actually so spend it? 4. Unless their proof be from those many canons of our own and other churches, that command the holy observation of it, and forbid these plays and labours on it; which I confess doth intimate, that some there were that needed laws to restrain them from the violation of it. 5. Again I say, that seeing few men will have the face to say that plays and games, or idleness are a duty on that day, it will suffice a holy, thankful Christian, if he have but leave, to spend all the day for the good of his soul and those about him; and if he may be reading and meditating on the Word of God, and praying and praising him, and instructing his family, while others waste that time in vanity; especially to servants and poor men that have but little other leisure all the year, to seek for knowledge, or use any such helps for their salvation. As to a poor man that is kept hungry all the

week, a bare liberty of feasting with his landlord on the Lord's day, would satisfy him without a law to constrain him to it; so is it here with a hungry soul.

Direct. II. 'Remember that the work of the day is, in general, to keep up knowledge and religion in the world, and to own and honour our Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator openly before all; and to have communion with God through Christ in the Spirit, by receiving and exercising his grace, in order to our communion with him in glory. Let these therefore (well understood) be your ends, and in these be you exercised all the day, and stick not hypocritically in bodily rest and outward duties.' Remember that it is a day for heart-work, as well as for the exercise of the tongue, and ear, and knees; and that your principal business is with heaven: follow your hearts therefore all the day, and see that they be not idle while your bodies are exercised: nothing is done if the heart do nothing.

Direct. III. 'Remember that the special work of the day is to celebrate the memorial of Christ's resurrection, and of the whole work of man's redemption by him. Labour therefore with all diligence in the sense of your natural sin and misery, to stir up the lively sense of the wonderful love of God and our Redeemer, and to spend all the day in the special exercises of faith and love. And seeing it is the Christian weekly festival, or day of thanksgiving for the greatest mercy in the world, spend it as a day of thanksgiving should be spent, especially in joyful praises of our Lord; and let the humbling and instructing exercises of the day, be all subordinate to these laudatory exercises.' I know that much time must be spent in teaching and warning the ignorant and ungodly, because their poverty and labours hinder them from other such opportunities, and we must speak to them then or not all. But if it were not for their mere necessity, and if we could as well speak to them other days of the week, the churches

should spend all the the Lord's day in such praises and thanksgivings as are suitable to the ends of the institution. But seeing that cannot be expected, methinks it is desirable that the ancient custom of the churches were more imitated, and the morning sermon being suited to the state of the more ignorant and unconverted, that the rest of the day were spent in the exercises of thanksgiving to the joy and encouragement of believers, and in doctrine suited to their state. And yet I must add, that a skilful preacher will do both together, and so declare the love and grace of our Redeemer, as by a meet application may both draw in the ungodly, and comfort those that are already sanctified, and raise their hearts in praise to God.

Direct. IV. 'Remember that the Lord's day is appointed specially for public worship and personal communion of the churches therein: see therefore that you spend as much of the day as you can in this public worship and church-communion; especially in the celebration of that sacrament which is appointed for the memorial of the death of Christ until his coming.' This sacrament in the primitive church was celebrated every Lord's day; yea, and ofter, even ordinarily on every other day of the week when the churches assembled for communion. And it might be so now without any hindrance to preaching or prayer, if all things were ordered as they should be; for those prayers, and instructions, and exhortations which are most suited to this eucharistical action, would be the most suitable prayers and sermons for the church on the Lord's days. In the mean time see that so much of the day as is spent in church-communion and public worship, be accordingly improved by you; and be not at that time about your secret or family services, but take only those hours for such private duties, in which the church is not assembled; and remember how much the love of saints is to be exercised in this communion, and therefore labour to keep alive that love, without which no man can celebrate the Lord's day according to the end of the institution.

Direct. V. 'Understand how great a mercy it is, that you have leave thus to wait upon God for the receiving and exercise of grace, and to cast off the distracting thoughts and businesses of the world, and what an opportunity is put into your hand, to get move in one day, than this world can afford you all your lives. And therefore come with gladness as to the receiving of so great a mercy, and with desire after it, and with hope to speed, and not with unwillingness as to an unpleasant task, as carnal hearts that love not God, or his grace or service, and are weary of all they do, and glad when it is done, as the ox that is unyoked.' "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." The affection that you have to the Lord's day, much sheweth the temper of the heart: a holy person is glad when it cometh, as loving it for the holy exercises of the day; a wicked, carnal heart is glad of it only for his carnal ease, but weary of the spiritual duties.

Direct. VI. 'Avoid both the extremes of profaneness and superstition in the point of your external rest:' and to that end, observe 1. That the work is not for the day, but the day for the holy work: as Christ saith, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man, for the sabbath." It is appointed for our good, and not for our hurt. 2. The outward rest is not appointed for itself, but as a means to the freedom of the mind for inward and spiritual employments: and therefore all those outward and common labours and discourses are unlawful, which any way distract the mind, and hinder either our outward or inward attendance upon God, and our edification. 3. And (whatever it was to the Jews) no common words or actions are unlawful, which are no hindrance to this communion, and worship, and spiritual edification. 4. Yea, those things that are necessary to the support of nature, and

the saving of the life, or health, or estate and goods of ourselves or our neighbours, are needful duties on that day: not all those works that are truly charitable, (for it may be a work of mercy to build hospitals, or make garments for the poor, or till their ground) but such works of mercy as cannot be put off to another day, and such as hinder not the duties of the day. 5. The same word or action on the Lord's day which is unlawful to one man may be lawful to another; as being no hindrance, yea, a duty to him: as Christ saith, "The priests in the temple break or profane the sabbath, (that is, the outward rest, but not the command) and are blameless." And the cook may be lawfully employed in dressing meat, when it were a sin in another to do it voluntarily without need. 6. The Lord's day being to be kept as a day of thanksgiving, the dressing of such meat as is fit for a day of thanksgiving is not to be scrupled: the primitive Christians in the apostles' time, had their love-feasts constantly (with the Lord's supper, or after) on the evening of the day; and they could not feast without dressing meat. 7. Yet that which is lawful in itself, must be so done as consisteth with care and compassion of the souls of servants that are employed about it, that they may be deprived of no more of their spiritual benefit than needs. 8. Also that which is lawful must sometimes be forborne, when it may by scandal tempt others that are loose or weak, to do that which is unlawful: not that the mere displeasing of the erroneous should put us out of the right way; but the scandal which is spoken against in Scripture, is the laying a temptation before men that are weak to make them sin. 9. Take heed of that hypocritical and censorious temper which turneth the holy observation of the day, into a ceremonious abstinence from lawful things; and censureth those as ungodly that are not of the same mind, and forbear not such things as well as they. Mark the difference between Christ and the Pharisees in this point: much of their contention with him was about the outward observation of the sabbath; because his disciples rubbed out corn to eat on the sabbath-

day; and because he healed on the sabbath, and bid the healed man, "Take up his bed and walk:" and they said, "There are six days in which men ought to work; they might come and be healed on themi." And a man that is of their spirit will think that the Pharisees were in the right: no doubt Christ might have chosen another day to heal on; but he knew that the works which most declared the power of God, and honoured him before all, and confirmed the Gospel, were fittest for the sabbath day. Take heed therefore of the Pharisees' ceremoniousness and censoriousness. If you see a man walking abroad on the Lord's day, censure him not till you know that he' doth it from profaneness or negligence: you know not but it may be necessary to his health, and he may improve it in holy meditation? If you hear some speak a word more than you think needful, of common things, or do more about meat and clothing than you think meet; censure them not till you hear their reason. A scrupulousness about such outward observances, when the holy duties of the day are no whit hindered by that thing, and a censoriousness toward those that are not as scrupulous, is too Pharisaical and ceremonious a religion for spiritual, charitable Christians. And the extremes of some godly people in this kind, have occasioned the Quakers and Seekers to take and use all days alike, and the profane to contemn the sanctifying of the Lord's day.

Tit. 2. More Particular Directions for the Order of Holy Duties

Direct. I. 'Remember the Lord's day before it cometh, and prepare for it, and prevent those disturbances that would hinder you, and deprive you of the benefit.' For preparation: 1. "Six days you must labour, and do all that you have to do." Dispatch all your business, that you may not have it then to hinder and disturb you; and see that your servants do the same. 2. Shake off the thoughts of worldly

things, and clear your minds of worldly delights and cares. 3. Call to mind the doctrine taught you the last Lord's day, (and if you have servants, cause them to remember it) that you may be prepared to receive the next. 4. Go seasonably to bed, that you and your servants may not be constrained to lie long the next morning, or be sleepy on the Lord's day. 5. Let your meditations be preparatory for the day. Repent of the sins of the week past as particularly and seriously as you can; and seek for pardon and peace through Christ, that you come not with guilt or trouble upon your consciences before the Lord.

Direct. II. 'Let your first thoughts be not only holy, but suitable to the occasions of the day.' With gladness remember what a day of mercies you awake to, and how early your Redeemer rose from the dead that day, and what excellent work you are to be employed in.

Direct. III. 'Rise full as early that day as you do on other days.' Be not like the carnal generation, that sanctify the Lord's day but as a swine doth, by sleeping, and idleness, and fulness. Think not your worldly business more worthy of your early rising, than your spiritual employment is.

Direct. IV. 'Let your dressing time be spent in some fruitful meditation, or conference, or hearing some one read a chapter:' and let it not be long, to detain you from your duty.

Direct. V. 'If you can have leisure, go first to secret prayer:' and if you are servants, and have any necessary business to do, dispatch it quickly, that you may be free for better work.

Direct. VI. 'Let family-worhip come next, and not be slubbered over slightly, but be serious and reverent, and suit all to the nature or end of the day.' Especially awaken yourselves and servants to consider

what you have to do in public, and to go with prepared, sanctified hearts.

Direct. VII. 'Enter the holy assembly with reverence and joy, and compose yourselves as those that come thither to treat with the living God, about the matters of eternal life.' And watch your hearts that they wander not, or sleep not, nor slight the sacred matters which you are about. And guard your eyes, that they carry not away your hearts; and let not your hearts be a moment idle, but seriously employed all the time: and when hypocrites and distempered Christians are quarrelling with the imperfections of the speaker, or congregation, or mode of worship, do you rather make it your diligent endeavour, to watch your hearts, and improve what you hear.

Direct. VIII. 'As soon as you come home, while dinner is preparing; it will be a seasonable time, either for secret prayer or meditation; to call over what you heard, and urge it on your hearts, and beg God's help for the improvement of it, and pardon for your public failings.

Direct. IX. 'Let your time at meat be spent in the cheerful remembrance or mention of the love of your Redeemer; or somewhat suitable to the company and the day.'

Direct. X. 'After dinner call your families together, and sing a psalm of praise, and by examination or repetition, or both, cause them to remember what was publicly taught them.'

Direct. XI. 'Then go again to the congregation (to the beginning) and behave yourselves as before.'

Direct. XII. 'When you come home call your families together, and first crave God's assistance and acceptance; and then sing a psalm of

praise; and then repeat the sermon which you heard;' or if there was none, read one out of some lively, profitable book; and then pray and praise God; and all with the holy seriousness and joy which is suitable to the work and day.

Direct. XIII. 'Then while supper is preparing, betake yourselves to secret prayer and meditation; either in your chambers or walking, as you find most profitable:' and let your servants, have no more to hinder them from the same privilege, than what is of necessity.

Direct. XIV. 'At supper spend the time as is aforesaid (at dinner):' always remembering that though it be a day of thanksgiving, it is not a day of gluttony, and that you must not use too full a diet, lest it make you heavy, and drowsy, and unfit for holy duty.

Direct. XV. 'After supper examine your children and servants what they have learnt all day, and sing a psalm of praise, and conclude with prayer and thanksgiving.'

Direct. XVI. 'If there be time after, both you and they may in secret review the duties, and mercies, and failings of the day, and recommend yourselves by prayer into the hands of God for the night following:' and so betake yourselves to your rest.

Direct. XVII. 'And to shut up all, let your last thoughts be holy, in the thankful sense of the mercy you have received, and the goodness of God revealed by our Mediator, and comfortably trusting your souls and bodies into his hands, and longing for your nearer approach unto his glory, and the beholding; and full enjoying of him for ever.'

I have briefly named this order of duties, for the memory of those that have opportunity to observe it: but if any man's place and condition deny him opportunity for some of these, he must do what

he can: but see, that carnal negligence cause not his omission. And now I appeal to reason, conscience and experience, whether this employment be not more suitable to the principles, ends and hopes of a Christian, than idleness, or vain talk, or cards, or dice, or dancing, or ale-house haunting, or worldly business or discourse? And whether this would not exceedingly conduce to the increase of knowledge, holiness and honesty? And whether there be ever a worldling or voluptuous sensualist of them all, that had not rather be found thus at death; or look back when time is past and gone, upon the Lord's day thus spent, than as the idle, fleshly and ungodly spend them?

CHAPTER XIX

Directions for profitable Hearing the Word Preached

OMITTING those Directions which concern the external modes of worship (for the reasons mentioned Part. iii. and known to all that know me, and the time and place I live in) I shall give you such Directions about the personal, internal management of your duty, as I think most necessary to your edification. And seeing that your duty and benefit lieth in these four general points: 1. That you hear with understanding. 2. That you remember what you hear. 3. That you be duly affected with it. 4. And that you sincerely practise it, I shall more particularly direct you in order to all these ends and duties.

Tit. 1. Directions for the Understanding the Word which you Hear

Direct. I. 'Read and meditate on the Holy Scriptures much in private, and then you will be the better able to understand what is preached on it in public, and to try the doctrine, whether it be of God.'

Whereas if you are unacquainted with the Scriptures, all that is treated of or alleged from them, will be so strange to you, that you will be but little edified by it.

Direct. II. 'Live under the clearest, distinct, convincing teaching that possibly you can procure.' There is an unspeakable difference as to the edification of the hearers, between a judicious, clear, distinct and useful preacher, and one that is ignorant, confused, general, dry, and only scrapeth together a cento or mingle-mangle of some undigested sayings to fill up the hour with. If in philosophy, physic, grammar, law, and every art and science, there be so great a difference between one teacher and another, it must needs be so in divinity also. Ignorant teachers that understand not what they say themselves, are unlike to make you men of understanding: as erroneous teachers are unlike to make you orthodox and sound.

Direct. III. 'Come not to hear with a careless heart, as if you were to hear a matter that little concerned you, but come with a sense of the unspeakable weight, necessity and consequence of the holy Word which you are to hear: and when you understand how much you are concerned in it, and truly love it, as the Word of life, it will greatly help your understanding of every particular truth.' That which a man loveth not, and perceiveth no necessity of, he will hear with so little regard and heed, that it will make no considerable impression on his mind. But a good understanding of the excellency and necessity, exciting love and serious attention, would make the particulars easy to be understood; when else you will be like a stopped or narrow mouthed bottle, that keepeth out that which you desire to put in. I know that understanding must go before affections; but yet the understanding of the concernments and worth of your own souls, must first procure such a serious care of your salvation, and a general regard to the Word of God, as is needful to your further

understanding of the particular instructions, which you shall after hear.

Direct. IV. 'Suffer not vain thoughts or drowsy negligence to hinder your attention.' If you mark not what is taught you, how should you understand and learn? Set yourselves to it, as for your lives: be as earnest and diligent in attending and learning, as you would have the preacher be in teaching. If a drowsy, careless preacher be bad, a drowsy, careless hearer is not good. Saith Moses, "Set your hearts to all the, words which I testify among you this day."—"For it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your lifeb." You would have God attentive to your prayers in your distresses, and why will you not then be attentive to his words; when "the prayers of him are abominable to God, that turneth away his ear from hearing the law?" "All the people were very attentive to hear Christ." When Ezra read the law "from morning till mid-day, the ears of all the people were attentive to itd." When Paul continued his Lord's day exercise, and speech until midnight, one young man that fell asleep, did fall down dead as a warning to them, that will sleep when they should hear the message of Christ. Therefore you are excused that day from worldly business, "that you may attend on the Lord without distractionf." Lydia's attending to the words of Paul, accompanied the opening of her heart and her conversion.

Direct. V. 'Mark especially the design and drift, and principal doctrine of the sermon.' Both because that is the chief thing that the preacher would have marked; and because the understanding of that will much help you to understand all the rest which dependeth on it, and relateth to it.

Direct. VI. 'Mark most those things which are of greatest weight and concernment to your souls.' And do not fix upon some little sayings,

and by-discourses, or witty sentences; like children that bring home some scraps and words which they do but play with.

Direct. VII. 'Learn first your catechisms at home, and the great essential points of religion, contained in the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments. And in your hearing, first labour to get a clearer understanding of these; and then the lesser branches which grow out of these, will be the better understood.' You can scarce bestow too much care and pains in learning these great essential points. It is the fruitfullest of all your studies. Two things further I here advise you to avoid. 1. The hasty climbing up to smaller points (which some call higher) before you have well received these, and the receiving of those higher points, independently, without their due respect, to these which they depend upon. 2. The feeding upon dry and barren controversies, and delighting in the chaff of jingling words, and impertinent, unedifying things, or discourses about formalities and circumstances.

Direct. VIII. 'Meditate on what you hear when you come home, till you better understand it.

Direct. IX. 'Inquire where you doubt, of those that can resolve and teach you.' It sheweth a careless mind, and a contempt of the Word of God, in most people and servants, that never come to ask the resolution of one doubt, from one week's or year's end to another, though they have pastors or masters that have ability, and leisure, and willingness to help them. "When Christ was alone, they that were about him with the twelve, asked him the meaning of his parable."

Direct. X. 'Read much those holy books which treat best of the doctrine which you would understand.'

Direct. XI. 'Pray earnestly for wisdom, and the illumination of the Spirit.'

Direct. XII. 'Conscionable practising what you know, is an excellent help to understanding.'

Tit. 2. Directions for Remembering what you Hear

That want of memory, which cometh from age and decay of nature, is not to be cured: nor should any servant of Christ be overmuch troubled at it; seeing Christ will no more cast off his servants for that, than he will for age or any sickness: but for that want of memory which is curable, and is a fault, I shall give you these Directions following.

Direct. I. 'It greatly helpeth memory to have a full understanding of the matter spoken, which you would remember.' And ignorance is one of the greatest hindrances to memory. Common experience telleth you this, how easily you can remember any discourse which you thoroughly understand (for your very knowledge by invention will revive your memory); and how hard it is to remember any words which are insignificant, or which we understand not. Therefore labour most for a clear understanding according to the last Directions.

Direct. II. 'A deep, awakened affection is a very powerful help to memory.' We easily remember any thing which our estates or lives lie on, when trifles are neglected and soon forgotten. Therefore labour to get all to your hearts, according to the next following Directions.

Direct. III. 'Method is a very great help to memory.' Therefore be acquainted with the preacher's method; and then you are put into a path or tract, which you cannot easily go out of. And therefore it is,

that ministers must not only be methodical, and avoid prolix, confused, and involved discourses, and that malicious pride of hiding their method, but must be as oft in the use of the same method, as the subject will bear, and choose that method which is most easy to the hearers to understand and remember, and labour to make them perceive your tract.

Direct. IV. 'Numbers are a great help to memory.' As if the reasons, the uses, the motives, the signs, the directions, be six, or seven, or eight; when you know just the number, it helpeth you much to remember, which was the first, second, third, &c.

Direct. V. 'Names also and signal words are a great help to memory.' He may remember one word, that cannot remember all the sentence; and that one word may help him to remember much of the rest. Therefore preachers should contrive the force of every reason, use, direction, &c. as much as may be into some one emphatical word. (And some do very profitably contrive each of those words to begin with the same letter, which is good for memory, so it be not too much strained, and put them not upon greater inconveniences); as if I were to direct you to the chiefest helps to your salvation, and should name, 1. Powerful preaching. 2. Prayer. 3. Prudence. 4. Piety. 5. Painfulness. 6. Patience. 7. Perseverance. Though I opened every one of these at large, the very names would help the hearers' memory. It is this that maketh ministers that care more for their people's souls, than the pleasing of curious ears, to go in the common road of doctrine, reason, uses, motives, helps, &c. and to give their uses the same titles of information, reproof, exhortation, &c. And yet when the subject shall direct us to some other method, the hearers must not be offended with us: for one method will not serve exactly for every subject, and we must be loath to wrong the text or matter.

Direct. VI. 'It is a great help to memory, often in the time of hearing to call over and repeat to yourselves the names or heads that have been spoken.' The mind of man can do two things at once: You may both hear what is said, and recal and repeat to yourselves what is past: not to stand long upon it, but oft and quickly to name over, e.g. The reasons, uses, motives, &c. To me, this hath been (next to understanding and affection) the greatest help of any that I have used; for otherwise to hear a head but once, and think of it no more till the sermon is done, would never serve my turn to keep it.

Direct. VII. 'Grasp not at more than you are able to hold, lest thereby you lose all.' If there be more particulars than you can possibly remember, lay hold on some which most concern you, and let go the rest; perhaps another may rather take up those, which you leave behind. Yet say not that it is the preacher's fault to name more than you can carry away: for, 1. Then he must leave out his enlargement much more, and the most of his sermon; for it is like you leave the most behind. 2. Another may remember more than you. 3. All is not lost when the words are forgotten: for it may breed a habit of understanding, and promote resolution, affection, and practice.

Direct. VIII. 'Writing is an easy help for memory, to those that can use it.' Some question whether they should use it, because it hindereth their affection. But that must be differently determined according to the difference of subjects, and of hearers. Some sermons are all to work upon the affections at present, and the present advantage is to be preferred before the after perusal: but some must more profit us in after digestion and review. And some hearers can write much with ease, and little hinder their affection; and some write so little and are hindered so much, that it recompenseth not their loss. Some know so fully all that is said, that they need no notes; and some that are ignorant need them for perusal.

Direct. IX. 'Peruse what you remember, or write down, when you come home; and fix it speedily before it is lost; and hear others that can repeat it better.' Pray it over, and confer of it with others.

Direct. X. 'If you forget the very words, yet remember the main drift of all; and get those resolutions and affections which they drive at.' And then you have not lost the sermon, though you have lost the words; as he hath not lost his food, that hath digested it, and turned it into flesh and blood.

Tit. 3. Directions for holy Resolutions and Affections in Hearing

The understanding and memory are but the passage to the heart, and the practice is but the expression of the heart: therefore how to work upon the heart is the principal business.

Direct. I. 'Live under the most convincing, lively, serious preacher that possibly you can.' It is a matter of great concernment to all, but especially to dull and senseless hearts. Hearken not to that earthly generation, that tell you, because God can bless the weakest, and because it is your own fault if you profit not by the weakest; that therefore you should make no difference, but sit down under an ignorant, dumb, or senseless man. Try first whether they had as willingly have a bad servant, or a bad physician as a good one, because God can bless the labours of the weakest? Try whether they would not have their children duly reproved or corrected, because it is their own faults that they need it? And whether they would not take physic after a surfeit? though it be their own fault that made them sick. It is true, that all our sin is our own fault; but the question is, What is the most effectual cure? What man that is alive and awake, doth not feel a very great difference between a dead and a lively preacher?

Direct. II. 'Remember that ministers are the messengers of Christ, and come to you on his business and in his name. Hear them therefore as his officers, and as men that have more to do with God himself, than with the speaker.' It is the phrase of the Holy Ghost, "All things, are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to don." It is God with whom you have to do: and therefore accordingly behave yourselves.

Direct. III. 'Remember that this God is instructing you, and warning you, and treating with you, about no less than the saving of your souls. Come therefore to hear as for your salvation.' Can that heart be dull that well considereth, that it is heaven and hell that is the matter that God is treating with him about?

Direct. IV. 'Remember that you have but a little time to hear in; and you know not, whether ever you shall hear again. Hear therefore as if it were your last.' Think when you hear the calls of God, and the offers of Grace, I know not but this may be my last: how would I hear if I were sure to die to-morrow? I am sure it will be ere long, and may be to-day for aught I know.

Direct. V. 'Remember that all these days and sermons must be reviewed, and you must answer for all that you have heard, whether you heard it with love, or with unwillingness and weariness; with diligent attention or with carelessness; and the Word which you hear shall judge you at the last day. Hear therefore as those that are going to judgment, to give account of their hearing and obeying.

Direct. VI. 'Make it your work with diligence to apply the Word as you are hearing it, and to work your own hearts to those suitable resolutions and affections which it bespeaketh.' Cast not all upon the minister, as those that will go no further than they are carried as by force: this is fitter for the dead than for the living. You have work to

do as well as the preacher, and should all the while; be as busy as he; as helpless as the infant is, he must suck when the mother offereth him the breast: if you must be fed, yet you must open your mouths, and digest it, for another cannot digest it for you; nor can the holiest, wisest, powerful minister, convert or save you without yourselves, nor deliver a people from sin and hell, that will not stir for their own deliverance. Therefore be all the while at work, and abhor an idle heart in hearing, as well as an idle, minister.

Direct. VII. 'Chew the cud, and call up all when you come home in secret, and by meditation preach it over to yourselves.' If it were coldly delivered by the preacher, do you consider of the great weight of the matter, and preach it more earnestly over to your own hearts. You should love yourselves best, and best be acquainted with your own condition and necessities.

Direct. VIII. 'Pray it over all to God, and there lament a stupid heart, and put up your complaints to heaven against it.' The name and presence of God hath a quickening and awaking power.

Direct. IX. 'Go to Christ by faith, for the quickenings of his Spirit.' Your life is hid in him, your root and head; and from him all must be conveyed: he that hath the Son hath life; and because he liveth, we shall live also. Entreat him to glorify the power of his resurrection, by raising the dead; and to open your hearts, and speak to you by his Spirit, that you may be taught of God, and your hearts may be his epistles, and the tables where the everlasting law is written.

Direct. X. 'Make conscience of teaching and provoking others.' Pity the souls of the ignorant about you. God often blesseth the grace that is most improved in doing him service; and our stock is like the woman's oil, which increased as long as she poured out, and was gone when she stopped. Doing good is the best way for receiving

good: he that in pity to a poor man that is almost starved, will but fall to rubbing him, shall get himself heat, and both be gainers.

Tit. 4. Directions to bring what we Hear into Practice

Without this the rest is vain or counterfeit, and therefore somewhat must be said to this.

Direct. I. 'Be acquainted with the failings of your hearts and lives, and come on purpose to get directions, and helps against those particular failings.' You will not know what medicine you need, much less how to use it, if you know not what aileth you. Know what duties you omit or carelessly perform, and know what sins you are most guilty of, and say when you go out of doors, I go to Christ for physic for my own disease. I hope to hear something before I come back, which may help me more against this sin, and fit me better for my duty, or provoke me more effectually. Are those men like to practise Christ's directions, that either know not their disease, or love it and would not have it cured?

Direct. II. 'The three forementioned are still presupposed, viz. That the Word have first done its part upon your understandings, memory and hearts.' For that Word cannot be practised, which is not understood, nor at all remembered, nor hath procured resolutions and affections. It is the due work upon the heart that must prevail for the reformation of the life.

Direct. III. 'When you understand what it is in point of practice that the preacher driveth at, observe especially the uses and the moving reasons, and plead them with your own hearts; and let conscience be preaching over all that the minister preacheth to you.' You take them to be soul-murderers that silence able, faithful preachers, and also those preachers that silence themselves, and feed not the flock

committed to their care: and do you think it a small matter to silence your own conscience, which must be the preacher that must set home all, before it can come to resolution or practice? Keep conscience all the while at work, preaching over all that to your hearts, which you hear with your ears; and urge yourselves to a speedy resolution. Remember that the whole body of divinity is practical in its end and tendency, and therefore be not a mere notional hearer; but consider of every word you hear, what practice it is that it tendeth to, and place that deepest in your memory. If you forget all the words of the reasons and motives which you hear, be sure to remember what practice they were brought to urge you to. As if you heard a sermon against uncharitableness, censoriousness, or hurting others, though you should forget all the reasons and motives in particular, yet still remember that you were convinced in the hearing, that censorious and hurtful uncharitableness is a great sin, and that you heard reason enough to make you resolve it. And let conscience preach out the sermon to the end, and not let it die in bare conviction; but resolve, and be past wavering before you stir: and above all the sermon, remember the directions and helps for practice, with which the truest method usually shuts up the sermon.

Direct. IV. 'When you come home, let conscience in secret also repeat the sermon to you.' Between God and yourselves, consider what there was delivered to you in the Lord's message, that your souls were most concerned in. What sin reproved which you are guilty of? What duty pressed which you omit? And there meditate seriously on the weight and reasons of the thing; and resist not the light, but yet bring all to a fixed resolution, if till then you were unresolved: not ensnaring yourselves with dangerous vows about things doubtful, or peremptory vows without dependence on Christ for strength: but firmly resolving and cautelously engaging yourselves to duty; not

with carnal evasions and reserves, but with humble dependence upon grace, without which of yourselves you are able to do nothing.

Direct. V. 'Hear the most practical preachers you can well get.' Not those that have the finest notions, or the cleanest style, or neatest words; but those that are still urging you to holiness of heart and life, and driving home every truth to practice: not that false doctrine will at all bear up a holy life, but true doctrine must not be left in the porch, or at the doors, but be brought home and used to its proper end, and seated in the heart, and placed as the poise upon the clock, where it may set all the wheels in motion.

Direct. VI. 'Take heed especially of two sorts of false teachers. Antinomian libertines, and autonomian pharisees.' The first would build their sins on Christ; not pleading for sin itself, but taking down many of the chief helps against it, and disarming us of the weapons by which it should be destroyed, and reproaching the true preachers of obedience as legalists, that preach up works and call men to doing, when they preach up obedience to Christ their King, upon the terms and by the motives which are used by Christ himself, and his apostles. Not understanding aright the true doctrine of faith in Christ, and justification, and free-grace (which they think none else understand but they), they pervert it and make it an enemy to the kingly office of Christ, and to sanctification, and the necessary duties of obedience.

The other sort do make void the commandments of God by their traditions, and instead of the holy practice of the laws of Christ, they would drive the world with fire and sword to practise all their superstitious fopperies; so that the few plain and necessary precepts of the law of the universal King, are drowned in the greater body of their canon law, and the ceremonies of the pope's imposing are so

many in comparison of the institutions of Christ, that the worship of God, and work of Christianity is corrupted by it, and made, as another thing. The wheat is lost in a heap of chaff, by them that will be law-givers to themselves, and all the church of Christ.

Direct. VII. 'Associate yourselves with the most holy, serious, practical Christians.' Not with the ungodly, nor with barren opinionists, that talk of nothing but their controversies, and the way or interest of their sects (which they call the church), nor with outside formal ceremonious pharisees, that are pleading for the washing of cups, and tithing of mint, and the tradition of their fathers, while they hate and persecute Christ and his disciples. But walk with the most holy, and blameless, and charitable, that live upon that truth which others talk of; and are seeking to please God by the "wisdom which is first pure, and then peaceable and gentle," when others are contending for their several sects, or seeking to please Christ, by killing him, or censuring him, or slandering him in his servantss.

Direct. VIII. 'Keep a just account of your practice; examine yourselves in the end of every day and week, how you have spent your time, and practised what you were taught; and judge yourselves before God according as you find it,' Yea, you must call yourselves to account every hour, what you are doing, and how you do it; whether you are upon God's work, or not;, and your hearts must be watched and followed like unfaithful servants, and like loitering scholars, and driven on to every duty, like a dull or tired horse.

Direct. IX. 'Above all set your hearts to the deepest contemplations of the wonderful love of God in Christ, and the sweetness and excellency of a holy life, and the certain incomprehensible glory which it tendeth to, that your souls may be in love with your dear

Redeemer, and all that is holy, and love and obedience may be as natural to you.' And then the practice of holy doctrine, will be easy to you, when it is your delight.

Direct. X. Take heed that you receive not ungrounded, or unnecessary prejudices against the person of the preacher.' For that will turn your heart, and lock it up against the doctrine. And therefore abhor the spirit of uncharitableness, cruelty, and faction, which always bendeth to the suppressing, or vilifying and disgracing all those, that are not of their way and for their interest: and be not so blind as not to observe, that the very design of the devil, in raising up divisions among Christians is, that he may use the tongues or hands of one another to vilify them all, and make them odious to one another, and to disable one another from hindering his kingdom, and doing any considerable service to Christ. So that when a minister of Christ should be winning souls, either he is forbidden, or he is despised, and the hearers are saying, 'O, he is such, or such a one,' according to the names of reproach which the enemy of Christ and love hath taught them.

CHAPTER XX

Directions for profitable Reading the Holy Scriptures

SEEING the diversity of men's tempers and understandings is so exceedingly great, that it is impossible that any thing should be pleasing and suitable to some, which shall not be disliked and quarrelled with by others; and seeing in the Scriptures there are many things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction. And the word is to some the

savour of death unto deathb. You have therefore need to be careful in reading it. And as Christ saith, "Take heed how you hear;" so I say, Take heed how you read.

Direct. I. 'Bring not an evil heart of unbelief. Open the Bible with holy reverence as the book of God, indited by the Holy Ghost. Remember that the doctrine of the New Testament was revealed by the Son of God, who was purposely sent from heaven to be the light of the world, and to make known to men the will of God, and the matters of their salvation.' Bethink you well, if God should but send a book or letter to you by an angel, how reverently you would receive it? How carefully you would peruse it; and regard it above all the books in the world? And how much rather should you do so, by that book which is indited by the Holy Ghost, and recordeth the doctrine of Christ himself, whose authority is greater than all the angels? Read it not therefore as a common book, with a common and unreverent heart; but in the dread and love of God the author.

Direct. II. 'Remember that it is the very law of God which you must live by, and be judged by at last. And therefore read with a full resolution to obey whatever it commandeth, though flesh, and men, and devils contradict it'. Let there be no secret exceptions in your heart, to baulk any of its precepts, and shift off that part of obedience, which the flesh accounteth difficult or dear.

Direct. III. 'Remember that it is the will and testament of your Lord, and the covenant of most full and gracious promises; which all your comforts, and all your hopes of pardon and everlasting life are built upon. Read it therefore with love and great delight.' Value it a thousand fold more than you would do the letters of your dearest friend, or the deeds by which you hold your lands; or any thing else of low concernment. If the law was sweeter to David than honey, and

better than thousands of gold and silver, and was his delight and meditation all the day, O what should the sweet and precious Gospel be to us!

Direct. IV. 'Remember that it is a doctrine of unseen things, and of the greatest mysteries; and therefore come not to it with arrogance as a judge, but with humility as a learner or disciple: and if any thing seem difficult or improbable to you, suspect your own unfurnished understanding, and not the sacred Word of God.' If a learner in any art or science, will suspect his teacher and his books, whenever he is stalled, or meeteth with that which seemeth unlikely to him, his pride would keep possession for his ignorance, and his folly were like to be uncurable.

Direct. V. 'Remember that it is an universal law and doctrine, written for the most ignorant as well as for the curious; and therefore must be suited in plainness to the capacity of the simple, and yet have matter to exercise the most subtle wits; and that God would have the style, to savour more of the innocent weakness of the instruments, than the matter.' Therefore be not offended or troubled when the style doth seem less polite than you might think beseemed the Holy Ghost; nor at the plainness of some parts, or the mysteriousness of others: but adore the wisdom and tender condescension of God to his poor creatures.

Direct. VI. 'Bring not a carnal mind, which savoureth only fleshly things, and is enslaved to those sins which the Scripture doth condemn:' "For the carnal mind is enmity against God, and neither is, nor can be subject to his law." "And the things of God are not discerned by the mere natural man, for they are foolishness to him, and they must be spiritually discernedf:" and enmity is an ill expositor. It will be quarrelling with all, and making faults in the

Word which findeth so many faults in you. It will hate that Word which cometh to deprive you of your most sweet and dearly beloved sin. Or, if you have such a carnal mind and enmity, believe it not, any more than a partial and wicked enemy should be believed against God himself; who better understandeth what he hath written, than any of his foolish enemies.

Direct. VII. 'Compare one place of Scripture with another, and expound the darkest by the help of the plainest, and the fewer expressions by the more frequent and ordinary, and the more doubtful points by those which are most certain;' and not on the contrary.

Direct. VIII. 'Presume not on the strength of your own understanding, but humbly pray to God for light; and before and after you read the Scripture, pray earnestly that the Spirit which did indite it, may expound it to you, and keep you from unbelief and error, and lead you into the truth.'

Direct. IX. 'Read some of the best annotations or expositors;' who being better acquainted with the phrase of the Scripture than yourselves, may help to clear your understanding. When Philip asked the eunuch that read Isa. 53. "Understandest thou what thou readest? he said, How can I except some man should guide me?" Make use of your guides, if you would not err.

Direct. X. 'When you are stalled by any difficulty which over-matcheth you, note it down, and propound it to your pastor, and crave his help, or (if the minister of the place be ignorant, and unable) go to some one that God hath furnished for such work.' And if after all, some things remain still dark and difficult, remember your imperfection, and wait on God for further light, and thankfully make use of all the rest of the Scripture which is plain. And do not

think: as the papists, that men must forbear reading it for fear of erring, any more than that men must forbear eating for fear of poison, or than subjects must be kept ignorant of the laws of the king, for fear of misunderstanding or abusing them.

CHAPTER XXI

Directions for Reading other Books

BECAUSE God hath made the excellent, holy writings of his servants, the singular blessing of this land and age; and many an one may have a good book, even any day or hour of the week, that cannot at all have a good preacher; I advise all God's servants to be thankful for so great a mercy, and to make use of it, and be much in reading; for reading with most doth more conduce to knowledge than hearing doth; because you may choose what subjects and the most excellent treatises you please; and may be often at it, and may peruse again and again what you forget, and may take time as you go to fix it on your mind: and with very many it doth more than hearing also to move the heart, though hearing of itself, in this hath the advantage; because lively books may be more easily had, than lively preachers: especially these sorts of men should be much in reading. 1. Masters of families, that have more souls to care for than their own. 2. People that live where there is no preaching, or as bad or worse than none. 3. Poor people, and servants, and children, that are forced on many Lord's days to stay at home, whilst others have the opportunity to hear. 4. And vacant persons that have more leisure than others have. To all these, but especially masters of families, I shall here give a few Directions.

Direct. I. 'I presuppose that you keep the devil's books out of your hands and house.' I mean cards, and idle tales, and play-books, and

romances or love-books, and false, bewitching stories, and the seducing books of all false teachers, and the railing or scorning books which the men of several sects and factions write against each other, on purpose to teach men to hate one another, and banish love: for where these are suffered to corrupt the mind, all grave and useful writings are forestalled. And it is a wonder to see, how powerfully these poison the minds of children, and many other empty heads: also books that are written by the sons of Corah, to breed distastes and discontents in the minds of the people against their governors, both magistrates and ministers. For there is something in the best rulers, for the tongues of seditious men to fasten on, and to aggravate in the people's ears; and there is something even in godly people, which tempteth them too easily to take fire and be distempered before they are aware; and they foresee not the evil to which it tendeth.

Direct. II. 'When you read to your family, or others, let it be seasonably and gravely, when silence and attendance encourage you to expect success; and not when children are crying or talking, or servants bustling to disturb you.' Distraction is worst in the greatest businesses.

Direct. III. 'Choose such books as are most suitable to your state, or to those you read to,' It is worse than unprofitable to read books for comforting troubled minds, to those that are blockishly secure, and have hardened, obstinate, unhumbled hearts. It is as bad as to give medicines or plasters contrary to the patient's need, and such as cherish the disease. So is it to read books of too high a style or subject, to dull and ignorant hearers. 'We use to say, That which is one man's meat, is another man's poison.' It is not enough that the matter be good, but it must be agreeable to the case for which it is used.

Direct. IV. 'To a common family, begin with those books, which at once inform the judgment about the fundamentals, and awaken the affections to entertain them and improve them.' Such as are treatises of regeneration, conversion, or repentance: to which purpose I have written myself, The Call to the Unconverted;—The Treatise of Conversion;—Directions for a Sound Conversion;—A Treatise of Judgment;—A Sermon against making Light of Christ;—True Christianity;—A Sermon of Repentance;—Now or Never;—A Saint or a Brute; with others; which I mention, not as equalling them with others, but as those which I am more accountable for. On this subject these are very excellent, Mr. R. Allen's Works;—Mr. Whateley on the New Birth;—Mr. Swinnock of Regeneration;—Mr. Pinks's five Sermons;—most of Mr. Hooker's Sermons;—Mr. J. Rogers's Doctrine of Faith;—Mr. Dent's Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven;—most of Mr. Perkins', and Mr. Bolton's Works, and many the like.

Direct. V. 'Next these, read over those books which are more suited to the state of young Christians for their growth in grace, and for their exercise of faith, and love, and obedience, and for the mortifying of selfishness, pride, sensuality, worldliness, and other the most dangerous sins.' My own on this subject are, my Directions for Weak Christians;—my Saints' Rest;—A Treatise of Self-denial;—another of The Mischiefs of Self-ignorance;—Life of Faith;—Of Crucifying the World;—The Unreasonableness of Infidelity;—Of Right Rejoicing, &c. To this use these are excellent, Mr. Hildersham's Works;—Dr. Preston's;—Mr. Perkins';—Mr. Bolton's;—Mr. Fenner's;—Mr. Gurnall's;—Mr. Anthony Burgess's Sermons;—Mr. Lockier on the Colossians, with abundance more that God hath blessed us with.

Direct. VI. 'At the same time labour to methodise your knowledge, and to that end read first and learn some short catechism, and then some larger (as Mr. Ball's, or the Assemblies, larger); and next some

body of divinity, (as Amesius's Marrow of Divinity, and Cases of Conscience, which are Englished).' And let the catechism be kept in memory while you live, and the rest be throughly understood.

Direct. VII. 'Next read (to yourselves or families) the larger expositions of the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments.' Such as Perkins, Bishop Andrews on the Commandments, and Dod, &c. That your understanding may be more full, particular, and distinct; and your families may not stop in generals, which are not understood.

Direct. VIII. 'Read much those books which direct you in a course of daily communion with God, and ordering all your conversations.' As Mr. Reyner's Directions;—The Practice of Piety;—Mr. Palmer's;—Mr. Scudder's;—Mr. Bolton's Directions;—and my Divine Life.

Direct. IX. 'For peace, and comfort, and increase of the love of God, read Mr. Symmond's Deserted Soul, &c.;—and his Life of Faith:—all Dr. Sibbs's Works;—Mr. Harsnet's Cordials;—Bishop Hall's, Works, &c.: my Method for Peace, and Saints' Rest, &c.

Direct. X. 'For the understanding of the text of Scripture, keep at hand either Deodate's, or the Assembly of Divines, or the Dutch Annotations; with Dr. Hammond's, or Dickson's and Hutchinson's brief observations.

Direct. XI. 'For securing, you against the fever of uncharitable zeal and schism, and contentious wranglings and cruelties for religion sake. Read diligently Bishop Hall's Peacemaker (and other of his books);—Mr. Burrough's Irenicon;—Acontius's Stratagems of Satan;—and my Catholic Unity;—Catholic Church;—Universal Concord, &c.'

Direct. XII. 'For establishing you against Popery, on the soundest grounds, not running in the contrary extreme; read Dr. Challoner's Credo Ecclesiam, &c.;—Chilling-worth;—Dr. Field of the Church, &c.;—and my True Catholic;—and my Key for Catholics;—and my Safe Religion;—and Winding-sheet for Popery;—and Disputation with Mr. Johnson.'

Direct. XIII. 'For especial, preparation for affliction, sufferings, sickness, death: read Mr. Hughes's Rod;—Mr. Lawrence's Christ's Power over Sicknesses;—Mr. S. Rutherford's Letters, &c.;—my Treatise of Self-denial;—the Believer's Last, Work;—the Last Enemy Death;—and the Fourth Part of my Saints' Rest. I will add no more, lest they seem too many.'

CHAPTER XXII

Directions for the Right Teaching of Children and Servants, so as may be most likely to have Success

I HERE suppose them utterly untaught that you have to do with, and therefore shall direct you what to do, from the very first beginning of your teaching, and their learning. And I beseech you study this Chapter more than many of the rest; for it is an unspeakable loss that befalls the church, and the souls of men, for want of skill, and will, and diligence, in parents and masters in this matter.

Direct. I. 'Cause your younger children to learn the words, though they be not yet capable of understanding the matter.' And do not think as some do, that this is but to make them hypocrites, and to teach them to take God's name in vain: for it is neither vanity nor hypocrisy td help them first to understand the words and signs, in order to their early understanding of the matter arid signification.

Otherwise no man might teach them any language, nor teach them to read any words that be good, because they must first understand the words before the meaning. If a child learn to read in a Bible; it is not taking God's name or Word in vain, though he understand it not: for it is in order to his learning to understand it; and it is not vain which is to so good a use: if you leave them untaught till they come to be twenty years of age, they must then learn the words before they can understand the matter. Do not therefore leave them the children of darkness; for fear of making them hypocrites. It will be an excellent way to redeem their time, to teach them first that which they are capable of learning: a child of five or six years old can learn the words of a catechism or Scripture, before they are capable of understanding them. And then when they come to years of understanding, that part of their work is done, and they have nothing to do but to study the meaning and use of those words which they have learned already. Whereas if you leave them utterly untaught till them they must then be wasting a long time to learn the same words which they might have learned before; and the loss of so much time is no small loss or sin.

Direct. II. 'The most natural way of teaching children the meaning of God's Word, and the matters of their salvation, is by familiar talk with them suited to their capacities: begin this betimes with them while they are on their mother's laps, and use it frequently. For they are quickly capable of some understanding about greater matters as well as about less; and knowledge must come in by slow degrees: stay not till their minds are possessed with vanity and toys.

Direct. III. 'By all means let your children learn to read, though you be never so poor, whatever shift you make.' And if you have servants that cannot read, let them learn yet, (at spare hours,) if they be of any capacity and willingness. For it is a very great mercy to be able to

read the Holy Scripture, and any good books themselves, and a very great misery to know nothing but what they hear from others. They may read almost at any time, when they cannot hear.

Direct. IV. 'Let your children when they are little ones read much the history of the Scriptures.' For though this, of itself, is not sufficient to breed in them any saving knowledge, yet it enticeth them to delight in reading the Bible, and then they will be often at it when they love it; so that all these benefits will follow. 1. It will make them love the book (though it be but with a common love). 2. It will make them spend their time in it, when else they would rather be at play. 3. It will acquaint them with Scripture history, which will afterwards be very useful to them. 4. It will lead them up by degrees to the knowledge of the doctrine, which is all along interwoven with the history.

Direct. V. 'Take heed that you turn not all your family instructions into a customary, formal course, by bare readings and repeating sermons from day to day, without familiar personal application. For it is ordinarily seen that they will grow as sleepy, and senseless, and customary, under such a dull and distant course of duty, (though the matter be good,) almost as if you had said nothing to them. Your business therefore must be to get within them, and awaken their consciences to know that the matter doth most nearly concern them, and to force them to make application of it to themselves.

Direct. VI. 'Let none affect a formal, preaching way to their families, except they be preachers themselves, or men that are able for the ministry: but rather spend the time in reading to them the most powerful books, and speaking to them more familiarly about the state and matters of their souls.' Not that I think it unlawful for a man to preach to his family, in the same method that a minister doth

to his people; for no doubt but he may teach them in the profitablest manner he can. And that which is the best method for a set speech in the pulpit, is usually the best method in a family. But my reasons against this preaching-way ordinarily, are these:—1. Because it is very few masters of families that are able for it, (even among them that think they are;) and then they ignorantly abuse the Scripture, so as tends much to God's dishonour. 2. Because there is scarce any of them all, but may read at the same time, such lively, profitable books to their families, as handle those things which they have most need to hear of, in a far more edifying manner than they themselves are able, (except they be so poor that they can get no such books.) 3. Because the familiar way is most edifying: and to talk seriously with children and servants about the great concernments of their souls, doth commonly more move them than sermons or set speeches. Yet because there is a season for both, you may sometimes read some powerful book to them, and sometimes talk familiarly to them. 4. Because it often comes from pride, when men put their speech into a preaching method to shew their parts, and as often nourisheth pride.

Direct. VII. 'Let the manner of your teaching them be very often interlocutory, or by way of questions.' Though when you have so many or such persons present, as that such familiarity is not seasonable, then reading, repeating, or set speeches may do best; but at other times, when the number or quality of the company hindereth not, you will find that questions and familiar discourse are best. For, 1. It keepeth them awake and attentive, when they know they must make some answer to your questions; which set Speeches, with the dull and sluggish, will hardly do. 2. And it mightily helpeth them in the application; so that they much more easily take it home, and perceive themselves concerned in it.

Direct. VIII. 'Yet prudently take heed that you speak nothing to any in the presence of others, that tends to open their ignorance or sin, or the secrets of their hearts, or that any way tendeth to shame them' (except in the necessary reproof of the obstinate). If it be their common ignorance that will be opened by questioning them, you may do it before your servants or children themselves, that are familiar with each other, but not when any strangers are present. But if it be about the secret state of their souls that you examine them, you must do it singly, when the person is alone. Lest shaming and troubling make them hate instruction, and deprive them of all the benefit of it.

Direct. IX. 'When you come to teach them the doc trine of religion begin with the baptismal covenant, as the sum of all that is essential to Christianity: and here teach them briefly all the substance of this at once.' For though such general knowledge will be obscure, and not distinct and satisfactory, yet it is necessary at first; because they must see truths set together: for they will understand nothing truly, if they understand it but independently by broken parts. Therefore open to them the sum of the covenant or Christian religion all at once, though you say but little at first of the several parts. Help them to understand what it is to be baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And here you must open it to them in this order. You must help them to know who are the covenanters, God and Man: and first the nature of man is to be opened, because he is first known, and God in him who is his image. Familiarly tell them, "That man is not like a beast that hath no reason, nor freewill, nor any knowledge of another world, nor any other life to live but this: but he hath an understanding to know God, and a will to choose good and refuse evil, and an immortal soul that must live for ever: and that all inferior creatures were made for his service, as he was made for the service of his Creator. Tell them that neither man, nor any

thing that we see, could make itself; but God is the Maker, Preserver, and Disposer of all the world. That this God is infinite in power, and wisdom, and goodness, and is the Owner, and Ruler, and Benefactor, Felicity, and End of man. That man was made to be wholly devoted and resigned to God as his Owner, and to be wholly ruled by him as his Governor, and to be wholly given up to his love and praise as his Father, his Felicity, and End. That the tempter having drawn man from this blessed state of life, in Adam's fall the world fell under the wrath of God, and had been lost for ever, but that God of his mercy provided us a Redeemer, even the eternal Son of God; who being one with the Father, was pleased to take the nature of man, and so is both God and man in one person; who being born of a virgin, lived among men, and fulfilled the law of God, and overcame the tempter and the world, and died as a sacrifice for our sins, to reconcile us unto God. That all men being born with corrupted natures, and living in sin till Christ recover them, there is now no hope of salvation but by him. That he hath paid our debt, and made satisfaction for our sins, and risen from the dead, and conquered death and satan, and is ascended and glorified in heaven; and that he is the King, and Teacher, and High-priest of the church. That he hath made a new covenant of grace and pardon, and offered it in his Scriptures, and by his ministers to the world; and that those that are sincere and faithful in this covenant shall be saved, and those that are not shall remedilessly be damned, because they reject this Christ and grace, which is the last and only remedy. And here open to them the nature of this covenant: that God doth offer to be our reconciled God, and Father, and Felicity, and Christ to be our Saviour, to forgive our sins, and reconcile us to God, and renew us by his Spirit, and the Holy Spirit to be our Sanctifier, to illuminate, and regenerate, and confirm us; and that all that is required on our part, is such an unfeigned consent, as will appear in the performance in our serious endeavours. Even that we wholly give up ourselves to be renewed by the Holy Spirit, to be

justified, taught, and governed by Christ, and by him to be brought again to the Father, to love him as our God and End, and to live to him, and with him for ever. But whereas the temptations of the devil, and the allurements of this deceitful world, and the desires of the flesh, are the great enemies and hindrances in our way, we must also consent to renounce all these, and let them go, and deny ourselves, and take up with God alone, and what he seeth meet to give us, and to take him in heaven for all our portion. And he that consenteth unfeignedly to this covenant, is a member of Christ, a justified, reconciled child of God, and an heir of heaven, and so continuing, shall be saved; and he that doth not shall be damned. This is the covenant, that in baptism we solemnly entered into with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as our Father and Felicity, our Saviour, and our Sanctifier." This in some such brief explication, you must familiarly open to them again and again.

Direct. X. 'When you have opened the baptismal covenant to them, and the essentials of Christianity, cause them to learn the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments.' And tell them the uses of them; that man having three powers of soul, his understanding, his will, and his obediential or executive power, all these must be sanctified, and therefore there must be a rule for each; and that accordingly the creed is the summary rule to tell us what our understandings must believe; and the Lord's prayer is the summary rule to direct us what our wills must desire and our tongues must ask; and the ten commandments are the summary rules of our practice: and that the Holy Scripture, in general, is the more large and perfect rule of all; and that all that will be taken for true Christians, must have a general, implicit belief of all the Holy Scriptures, and a particular, explicit belief, desire, and sincere practice, according to the creeds, Lord's prayer, and ten commandments.

Direct. XI. 'Next teach them a short catechism (by memory), which openeth these a little more fully, and then a larger catechism.' The shorter and larger catechisms of the Assembly are very well fitted to this use. I have published a very brief one myself, which in eight articles or answers containeth all the essential points of belief, and in one answer, the covenant-consent, and in four articles or answers more, containeth all the substantial parts of Christian duty: The answers are some of them long for children; but if I knew of any other that had so much in so few words, I would not offer this to you, because I am conscious of its imperfections. But there are very few catechisms that differ in the substance; whichever they learn, let them as they go have your help to understand it, and let them keep it in memory to the last.

Direct. XII. 'Next open to them more distinctly the particular part of the covenant and catechism.' And here I think this method most profitable for a family; 1. Read over to them the best expositions that you can get on the creed, the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, which are not too large to confound them, nor too brief, so as to be hardly understood. For a summary, "Mr. Brinsley's True Watch" is good; but thus to read to them, such as "Mr. Perkins on the Creed," and "Dr. King on the Lord's Prayer," and "Dodd on the Commandments," are fit; so that you may read one article, one petition, and one commandment at a time; and read these over to them divers times. 2. Besides this in your familiar discourse with them, open to them plainly one head or article of religion at a time, and another the next time, and so on till you come to the end. And here (1.) Open in one discourse the nature of man and the creation. (2.) In another (or before it) the nature and attributes of God. (3.) In another the fall of man, and especially the corruption of our nature, as it consisteth in an in ordinate inclination to earthly and fleshly things, and a backwardness, or averseness, or enmity to God and

holiness, and the life to come; and the nature of sin; and the impossibility of being saved till this sin be pardoned, and these natures renewed, and restored to the love of God and holiness, from this love of the world and fleshly pleasures. (4.) In the next discourse, open to them the doctrine of redemption in general, and the incarnation, and natures, and person of Christ, particularly. (5.) In the next, open the life o Christ, his fulfilling the law, and his overcoming the tempter, his humble life, and contempt of the world, and the end of all, and how he is exemplary and imitable unto us. (6.) In the next, open the whole humiliation and suffering of Christ, and the pretences of his persecutors, and the ends and uses of his suffering, death, and burial. (7.) In the next, open his resurrection, the proofs, and the uses of it. (8.) In the next, open his ascension, glory, and intercession for us, and the uses of all. (9.) In the next, open his kingly, and prophetical offices in general, and his making the covenant of grace with man, and the nature of that covenant, and its effects. (10.) In the next, open the works or office of the Holy Ghost in general, as given by Christ to be his agent in men on earth, and his great witness to the world; and particularly open the extraordinary gift of the Spirit to the prophets and apostles, to plant the churches, and indite, and seal the Holy Scriptures; and shew them the authority and use of the Holy Scriptures. (11.) In the next, open to them the ordinary works of the Holy Ghost, as the illuminator, renewer, and sanctifier of souls, and in what order he doth all this, by the ministry of the Word. (12.) In the next, open to them the office, and use, and duty of the ordinary ministry, and their duty toward them, especially as hearers, and the nature and use of public worship, and the nature and communion of saints and churches. (13.) In the next, open to them the nature and use of baptism, and the Lord's supper. (14.) In the next, open to them the shortness of life, and the state of souls at death, and after death, and the day of judgment, and the justification of the righteous, and the

condemnation of the wicked at that day. (15.) In the next, open to them the joys of heaven, and the miseries of the damned. (16.) In the next, open to them the vanity of all the pleasure, and profits, and honour of this world, and the method of temptations, and how to overcome them, (17.) In the next, open to them the reason and use of suffering for Christ, and of self-denial, and how to prepare for sickness and death. And after this, go over also the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments.

Direct. XIII. 'After all your instructions make them briefly give you an account in their own words of what they understand and remember of all; or else the next time to give an account of the former.' And encourage them for all that is well done in their endeavours.

Direct. XIV. 'Labour in all to keep up a wakened, serious attention, and still to print upon their hearts the greatest things.' And to that end, for the matter of your teaching and discourse, let nothing be so much in your mouths, as 1. The nature and relations of God. 2. A crucified and a glorified Christ, with all his grace and privileges. 3. The operations of the Spirit on the soul. 4. The madness of sinners, and the vanity of the world. 5. And endless glory and joy of saints, and misery of the ungodly after death. Let these five points be frequently urged, and be the life of all the rest of your discourse. And then for the manner of your speaking to them, let it be always with such a mixture of familiarity and seriousness that may carry along their serious attentions, whether they will or no. Speak to them as if they or you were dying, and as if you saw God, and heaven, and hell.

Direct. XV. 'Take each of them sometimes by themselves, and there describe to them the work of renovation, and ask them, whether ever such a work was wrought upon them.' Shew them the true marks of

grace, and help them to try themselves: urge them to tell you truly, whether their love to God or the creature, to heaven or earth, to holiness or flesh-pleasing be more: and what it is that hath their hearts, and care, and chief endeavour; and if you find them regenerate, help to strengthen them. If you find them too much dejected, help to comfort them; and if you find them unregenerate, help to convince them, and then to humble them, and then to shew them the remedy in Christ, and then shew them their duty that they may have part in Christ, and drive all home to the end that you desire to see: but do all this with love, and gentleness, and privacy.

Direct. XVI. 'Some pertinent questions which by the answer will engage them to teach themselves, or to judge themselves, will be sometimes of very great use.' As such as these; "Do you not know that you must shortly die? Do you not believe that immediately your souls must enter upon an endless life of joy or misery? Will worldly wealth and honours, or fleshly pleasures, be pleasant to you then? Had you then rather be a saint, or an ungodly sinner? Had you not then rather be one of the holiest that the world despised and abused, than one of the greatest and richest of the wicked? When time is past, and you must give account of it, had you not then rather it had been spent in holiness, and obedience, and diligent preparation for the life to come, than in pride, and pleasure, and pampering the flesh? How could you make shift to forget your endless life so long? Or to sleep quietly in an unregenerate state? What if you had died before conversion, what think you had become of you, and where had you now been? Do you think that any of those in hell are glad that they were ungodly? Or have now any pleasure in their former merriments and sin? What think you they would do, if it were all to do again? Do you think, if an angel or saint from heaven should come to decide the controversy between the godly and the wicked, that he would speak against a holy and heavenly life, or plead for a loose and

fleshly life? Or which side think you he would take? Did not God know what he did when he made the Scriptures? Is he, or an ungodly scorner to be more regarded? Do you think every man in the world, will not wish at last that he had been a saint, whatever it had cost him?" Such kind of questions urge the conscience, and much convince.

Direct. XVII. 'Cause them to learn some one most plain and pertinent text, for every great and necessary duty, and against every great and dangerous sin; and often to repeat them to you.' As Luke 13:3. 5. "Except ye repent, ye shall all perish." John 3:5. "Except a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. So Matt. 18:3. Rom. 8:9. Heb. 12:14. John 3:16. Luke 18:1. &c. So against lying, swearing, taking God's name in vain, flesh-pleasing, gluttony, pride, and the rest.

Direct. XVIII. 'Drive all your convictions to a resolution of endeavour and amendment, and make them sometimes promise you to do that which you convinced them of;' and sometimes before witnesses. But let it be done with these necessary cautions. 1. That you urge not a promise in any doubtful point, or such as you have not first convinced them of. 2. That you urge not a promise in things beyond their present strength: as you must not bid them promise you to believe, or to love God, or to be tenderhearted, or heavenlyminded; but to do those duties which tend to these, as to hear the Word, or read, or pray, or meditate, or keep good company, or avoid temptations, &c. 3. That you be not too often upon this, (or upon one and the same strain in the other methods) lest they take them but for words of course, and custom teach them to contemn them. But seasonably and prudently done their promises will lay a great engagement on them.

Direct. XIX. 'Teach them how to pray, by forms or without, as is most suitable to their case and parts: and either yourself, or some that may inform you, should hear them pray sometimes, that you may know their spirit, and how they profit.'

Direct. XX. 'Put such books into their hands as are meetest for them, and engage them to read them when they are alone; and ask them what they understand or remember of them.' And hold them not without necessity so hard to work, as to allow them no time for reading by themselves: but drive them on to work the harder, that they may have some time when their work is done.

Direct. XXI. 'Cause them to teach one another when they are together.' Let their talk be profitable. Let those that read best, be reading sometimes to the rest, and instructing them, and furthering their edification. Their familiarity might make them very useful to one another.

Direct. XXII. 'Tire them not out with too much at once; but give it them as they can receive it.' Narrow-mouthed bottles, must not be filled as wider vessels.

Direct. XXIII. 'Labour to make all sweet and pleasant to them: and to that end sometimes mix the reading of some profitable history:' as the "Book of Martyrs," and "Clarke's Martyrology," and his "Lives."

Direct. XXIV. 'Lastly, entice them with kindnesses and rewards.' Be kind to your children when they do well, and be as liberal to your servants as your condition will allow you. For this maketh your persons acceptable first, and then your instructions will be much more acceptable. Nature teacheth them to love those that love them, and do them good, and to hearken willingly to those they love. A

small gift now and then, might signify much to the further benefit of their souls.

Direct. XXV. If any shall say, that here is so much ado in all these Directions, as that few can follow them; I entreat them to consult with Christ that died for them, whether souls be not precious, and worth all this ado? And to consider how small a labour all this is, in comparison of the everlasting end; and to remember, that all is gain and pleasure, and a delight to those that have holy hearts; and to remember, that the effects to the church and kingdom, of such holy government of families, would quite over-compensate all the pains.

CHAPTER XXIII

Tit. 1. Directions for Prayer in General

HE that handleth this duty of prayer as it deserveth, must make it the second part in the body of divinity, and allow it a larger and more exact tractate than I here intend: for I have before told you, that as we have three natural faculties, an understanding, will, and executive power, so these are qualified in the godly, with faith, love, and obedience; and have three particular rules: the creed, to shew us what we must believe, and in what order: the Lord's prayer, to shew us what, and in what order, we must desire and love: and the decalogue, to tell us what, and in what order we must do; (though yet these are so near kin to one another, that the same actions in several respects belong to each of the rules). As the commandments must be believed and loved, as well as obeyed, and the matter of the Lord's prayer must be believed to be good and necessary, as well as loved and desired; and belief, and love, and desire, are commanded, and are part of our obedience; yet for all this, they are not formally the same, but divers. And as we say, that the heart or will is the man, as being the commanding faculty; so morally the will, the love or desire is the Christian; and therefore the rule of desire or prayer, is a principal part of true religion: the internal part of this duty, I partly touched before Part i. chap. 3. And the church part I told you, why I passed by Part ii. it being not left by the government where we live, to private ministers' discussion (save only to persuade men to obey what is established and commanded). Therefore because I have omitted the latter, and but a little touched upon the former, I shall be the larger on it in this place, to which (for several reasons) I have reserved it.

Direct. I. 'See that you understand what prayer is. Even the expressing or acting of our desires before another, to move, or some way procure him to grant them. True Christian prayer is, the believing and serious expressing or acting of our lawful desires before God, through Jesus our Mediator, by the help of the Holy Spirit, as a means to procure of him, the grant of these desires.' Here note, 1. That inward desire is the soul of prayer. 2. The expressions or inward actings of them, is as the body of prayer. 3. To men it must be desire so expressed, as they may understand it; but to God the inward acting of desires is a prayer, because he understandeth it. 4. But it is not the acting of desire, simply in itself that is any prayer: for he may have desires, that offereth them not up to God with heart or voice, but it is desires, as some way offered up to God, or represented, or acted towards him, as a means to procure his blessing, that is prayer indeed.

Direct. II. 'See that you understand the ends and use of prayer.' Some think that it is of no use, but only to move God to be willing of that which he was before unwilling of; and therefore because that God is immutable, they think that prayer is a useless thing. But prayer is useful, 1. As an act of obedience to God's command. 2. As the performance of a condition, without which he hath not promised us his mercy, and to which he hath promised it. 3. As a means to actuate, and express, and increase our own humility, dependance, desire, trust and hope in God, and so to make us capable and fit for mercy, who else should be incapable and unfit. 4. And so, though God be not changed by it in himself, yet the real change that is made by it on ourselves, doth infer a change in God by mere relation or extrinsical denomination; he being one that is, according to the tenour of his own established law and covenant, engaged to disown or punish the unbelieving prayerless and disobedient, and after engaged to own or pardon them that are faithfully desirous and

obedient: and so this is a relative, or at least a denominative change. So that in prayer, faith and fervency, are so far from being useless, that they as much prevail for the thing desired by qualifying ourselves for it, as if indeed they moved the mind of God, to a real change: even as he that is in a boat, and by his hook layeth hold of the bank, doth as truly by his labour get nearer the bank, as if he drew the bank to him.

Direct. III. 'Labour above all to know that God to whom you pray.' To know him as your Maker, your Redeemer, and your Regenerator; as your Owner, your Ruler, and your Father, Felicity and End; as all-sufficient for your relief, in the infiniteness of his power, his wisdom and his goodness; and to know your own dependance on him; and to understand his covenant or promises, upon what terms he is engaged and resolved either to give his mercies, or to deny them. "He that cometh to God, must believe that He is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." "He that calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved: but how shall they call on him, on whom they have not believedd."

Direct. IV. 'Labour when you are about to pray, to stir up in your souls the most lively and serious belief of those unseen things that your prayers have respect to; and to pray as if you saw them all the while: even as if you saw God in his glory, and saw heaven and hell, the glorified and the damned, and Jesus Christ your Mediator interceding for you in the heavens.' As you would pray if your eyes beheld all these, so strive to pray while you believe them: and say to yourselves, Are they not as sure as if I saw them? Are they not made known by the Son and Spirit of God?

Direct. V. 'Labour for a constant acquaintance with yourselves, your sins and manifold wants and necessities; and also to take an actual,

special notice of your case, when you go to prayer.' If you get not a former constant acquaintance with your own case, you cannot expect to know it aright upon a sudden as you go to pray: and yet if you do not actually survey your hearts and lives when you go to prayer, your souls will be unhumbled, and want that lively sense of your necessities, which must put life into your prayers. Know well what sin is, and what God's wrath, and hell, and judgment are, and what sin you have committed, and what duty you have omitted, and failed in, and what wants and corruptions are yet within you, and what mercy and grace you stand in need of, and then all this will make you pray, and pray to purpose with all your hearts. But when men are wilful strangers to themselves, and never seriously look backwards or inwards to see what is amiss and wanting; nor look forwards, to see the danger that is before them, no wonder if their hearts be dead and dull, and if they are as unfit to pray, as a sleeping man to work.

Direct. VI. 'See that you hate hypocrisy, and let not your lips go against or without your hearts; but that your hearts be the spring of all your words: that you love not sin, and be not loath to leave it, when you seem to pray against it; and that you truly desire the grace which you ask, and ask not for that which you would not have: and that you be ready to use the lawful means to get the mercies which you ask;' and be not like those lazy wishers, that will pray God to give them increase at harvest, when they lie in bed, and will neither plough or sow; or that pray him to save them from fire, or water, or danger, while they run into it, or will not be at the pains to go out of the way. O what abundance of wretches do offer up hypocritical, mock prayers to God! blaspheming him thereby, as if he were an idol, and knew not their hypocrisy, and searched not the hearts? Alas, how commonly do men pray in public, "that the rest of their lives hereafter may be pure and holy," that hate purity and holiness at the heart, and deride and oppose that which they seem to pray for? As

Austin confesseth of himself before he was converted, that he prayed against his filthy sin, and yet was afraid lest God should grant his prayers. So many pray against the sins which they would not be delivered from, or would not use the means that is necessary to their conquest and deliverance." "Let him that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity." "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear meg." Alas, how easy is it for an ungodly person to learn to say a few words by rote, and to run them over, without any sense of what he speaketh; while the tongue is a stranger to the heart, and speaketh not according to its desires.

Direct. VII. 'Search your hearts and watch them carefully, lest some beloved vanity alienate them from the work in hand, and turn away your thoughts, or prepossess your affections, so that you want them when you should use them.' If the mind be set on other matters, prayer will be a heartless, lifeless thing. Alas, what a dead and pitiful work, is the prayer of one that hath his heart ensnared in the love of money, or in any ambitious or covetous design? The thoughts will easily follow the affections.

Direct. VIII. 'Be sure that you pray for nothing that is disagreeable to the will of God, and that is not for the good of yourselves or others, or for the honour of God: and therefore take heed, lest an erring judgment, or carnal desires, or passions should corrupt your prayers, and turn them into sin.' If men will ignorantly pray to God to do them hurt, it is a mercy to them if God will but pardon and deny such prayers, and a judgment to grant them. And it is an easy thing for fleshly interest, or partiality, or passion to blind the judgment, and consequently to corrupt men's prayers. An ambitious or covetous man will easily be drawn to pray for the grant of his sinful desires, and think it would be for his good. And there is scarce an heretical or erroneous person, but thinketh that it would be good that the world

were all reduced to his opinion, and all the opposers of it were borne down: there are few zealous Antinomians, Anabaptists, or any other dividers of the church, but they put their opinions usually into their prayers, and plead with God for the interest of their sects and errors: and it is like that the Jews that had a persecuting zeal for God, did pray according to that zeal, as well as persecute: as it is like that Paul himself prayed against the Christians, while he ignorantly persecuted them. And they that think they do God service by killing his servants, no doubt would pray against them, as the Papists and others do at this day. Be especially careful therefore that your judgments and desires be sound and holy, before you offer them up to God in prayer. For it is a most vile abuse of God, to beg of him to do the devil's work; and, as most malicious and erroneous persons do, to call him to their help against himself, his servants and his cause.

Direct. IX. 'Come always to God in the humility that beseemeth a condemned sinner, and in the faith and boldness that beseemeth a son, and a member of Christ: do nothing in the least conceit and confidence of a worthiness in yourselves; but be as confident in every lawful request, as if you saw your glorified Mediator interceding for you with his Father.' Hope is the life of prayer and all endeavour, and Christ is the life of hope. If you pray and think you shall be never the better for it, your prayers will have little life. And there is no hope of success, but through our powerful Intercessor. Therefore let both a crucified and glorified Christ, be always before your eyes in prayer; not in a picture, but in the thoughts of a believing mind. Instead of a crucifix, let some such sentence of Holy Scripture, be written before you, where you use to pray, as John 20:17. "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Or Heb. 4:14. "We have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God:" ver. 15, 16. "that was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin: let us therefore come

boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy," &c. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and stedfast, and that entereth into that within the vail; whither the fore-runner is for us entered," "He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for themi." "If ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it:" Christ and the promise must be the ground of all your confidence and hope.

Direct. X. 'Labour hard with your hearts all the while to keep them in a reverent, serious, fervent frame, and suffer them not to grow remiss and cold, to turn prayer into liplabour, and lifeless formality, or into hypocritical, affected, seeming fervency, when the heart is senseless, though the voice be earnest.' The heart will easily grow dull, and customary, and hypocritical if it be not carefully watched, and diligently followed and stirred up. "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." A cold prayer sheweth a heart that is cold in desiring that which is prayed for, and therefore is unfit to receive the mercy; God will make you know that his mercy is not contemptible, but worthy your most earnest prayers.

Direct. XI. 'For the matter and order of your desires and prayers, take the Lord's prayer as your special rule; and labour to understand it well.'

So that it is apparent that the method of the Lord's prayer is circular, partly analytical, and partly synthetical: beginning with God, and ending in God: beginning with such acknowledgments as are prerequisite to petition, and ending in those praises which petition and grace bestowed tend to: beginning our petitions for God's interest and the public good, according to the order of estimation and intention, till we come to the mere means, and then beginning at the lowest, and ascending according to the order of execution. As the

blood passing from the greater to the smaller numerous vessels, is there received by the like, and repasseth to its fountain; such a circular method hath mercy and duty, and consequently our desires.

Tit. 2. Some Questions about Prayer answered

The rest of the general questions about prayer, I think will be best contrived into the resolving of these following doubts.

Quest. I. 'Is the Lord's prayer a directory only, or a form of words to be used by us in prayer?'

Answ. 1. It is principally the rule to guide our inward desires, and outward expressions of them; both for the matter, what we must desire, and for the order, which we must desire first and most. 2. But this rule is given in a form of words, most apt to express the said matter and order. 3. And this form may fitly be used in due season by all, and more necessarily by some. 4. But it was never intended to be the only words which we must use, no more than the creed is the only words that we must use to express the doctrine of faith, or the decalogue the only words to express our duty by.

Quest. II. 'What need is there of any other form of prayer, if the Lord's prayer be perfect?'

Answ. Because it is only a perfect summary, containing but the general heads: and it is needful to be more particular in our desires; for universals exist in particulars; and he that only nameth the general, and then another and another general, doth remember but few of the particulars. He that shall say, "I have sinned, and broken all thy commandments," doth generally confess every sin; but it is not true repentance, if it be not particular, for this, and that, and the other sin; at least as to the greater which may be remembered. He

that shall say, "I believe all the Word of God, or I believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," may know little what is in the Word of God, or what these generals signify, and therefore our faith must be more particular. So must desires after grace be particular also: otherwise it were enough to ask for mercy in the general. If you say, that God knoweth what those general words signify, though we do not; I answer, this is the Papists' silly argument for Latin prayers, God knoweth our desires without any expressions or prayers at all, and he knoweth our wants without our desires. But it followeth not that prayers or desires are unnecessary. The exercise of our own repentance and desire doth make us persons fit to receive forgiveness, and the grace desired; when the impenitent and those that desire it not are unfit. And it is no true repentance, when you say, "I am sorry that I have sinned," but you know not, or remember not, wherein you have sinned, nor what your sin is; and so repent not indeed of any one sin at all. And so it is no true desire, that reacheth not to the particular, necessary graces, which we must desire; though I know some few very quick, comprehensive minds can in a moment think of many particulars, when they use but general words: and I know that some smaller, less necessary things, may be generally passed over; and greater matters in a time of haste, or when we, besides those generals, do also use particular requests.

Quest. III. 'Is it lawful to pray in a set form of words?

Answ. Nothing but very great ignorance can make you really doubt of it. Hath God any where forbid it? You will say, that it is enough that he hath not commanded it. I answer, That in general he hath commanded it to all whose edification it tendeth to, when he commandeth you, that all be done to edification; but he hath given no particular command, nor prohibition. No more he hath commanded you to pray in English, French, or Latin; nor to sing

psalms in this tune or that; nor after this or that version or translation; nor to preach in this method particularly or that; nor always to preach upon a text; nor to use written notes; nor to compose a form of words, and learn them, and preach them after they are composed, with a hundred suchlike, which are undoubtedly lawful; yea, and needful to some, though not to others. If you make up all your prayer of Scripture sentences, this is to pray in a form of prescribed words, and yet as lawful and fit as any of your own. The psalms are most of them forms of prayer or praise, which the Spirit of God indited for the use of the church, and of particular persons. It would be easy to fill many pages with larger reasonings, and answers to all the fallacious objections that are brought against this; but I will not so far weary the reader and myself.

Quest. IV. 'But are those forms lawful which are prescribed by others, and not by God?'

Answ. Yea; or else it would be unlawful for a child or scholar to use a form prescribed by his parents or master. And to think that a thing lawful doth presently become unlawful, because a parent, master, pastor, or prince doth prescribe it or command it, is a conceit that I will not wrong my reader so far, as to suppose him guilty of. Indeed if an usurper, that hath no authority over us in such matters, do prescribe it, we are not bound to formal obedience, that is, to do it therefore because he commandeth it; but yet I may be bound to it on some other accounts; and though his command do not bind me, yet it maketh not the thing itself unlawful.

Quest. V. 'But is it lawful to pray extempore without a premeditated form of words?'

Answ. No Christian of competent understanding doubteth of it. We must premeditate on our wants, and sins, and the graces and mercies

we desire, and the God we speak to; and we must be able to express these things without any loathsome and unfit expressions. But whether the words are fore-contrived or not, is a thing that God hath no more bound you to by any law, than whether the speaker or hearers shall use sermon-notes, or whether your Bibles shall be written or in print.

Quest. VI. 'If both ways be lawful, which is better?'

Answ. If you are to join with others in the church, that is better to you which the pastor then useth: for it is his office and not yours to word the prayers which he puts up to God. And if he choose a form, (whether it be as most agreeable to his parts, or to his people, or for concord with other churches, or for obedience to governors, or to avoid some greater inconvenience,) you must join with him, or not join there at all. But if it be in private, where you are the speaker yourself, you must take that way that is most to your own edification, (and to others, if you have auditors joining with you). One man is so unused to prayer (being ignorantly bred,) or of such unready memory or expression, that he cannot remember the tenth part so much of his particular wants, without the help of a form, as with it; nor can he express it so affectingly for himself or others: nay, perhaps not in tolerable words. And a form to such a man may be a duty; as to a dim-sighted man to read by spectacles, or to an unready preacher to use prepared words and notes. And another man may have need of no such helps; nay, when he is habituated in the understanding and feeling of his sins and wants, and hath a tongue that is used to express his mind even in these matters, with readiness and facility, it will greatly hinder the fervor of such a man's affections, to tie himself to premeditated words: to say the contrary, is to speak against the common sense and experience of such speakers and their hearers. And let them that yet deride this as

uncertain and inconsiderate praying, but mark themselves, whether they cannot if they be hungry beg for bread, or ask help of their physician, or lawyer, or landlord, or any other, as well without a learned or studied form, as with it? Who knoweth not that it is true which the new philosopher saith; Cartes. de Passion. part i. art. 44. 'Et cum inter loquendum solum cogitamus de sensu illius rei, quam dicere volumus, id facit ut moveamus linguam et labra celerius et melius, quam si cogitaremus ea movere omnibus modis requisitis ad proferenda eadem verba; quia habitus quem acquisivimus cum disceremus loqui,' &c. Turning the thoughts too solicitously from the matter to the words, doth not only mortify the prayers of many, and turn them into a dead form, but also maketh them more dry and barren even as to the words themselves. The heavy charge and bitter, scornful words which have been too common in this age, against praying without a set form by some, and against praying with a book or form by others, is so dishonourable a symptom or diagnostic of the church's sickness, as must needs be matter of shame and sorrow to the sounder, understanding part. For it cannot be denied, but it proveth men's understandings and charity to be both extremely low.

Quest. VII. 'Must we always pray according to the method of the Lord's prayer, and is it a sin to do otherwise?'

Answ. 1. The Lord's prayer is first a rule for your desires: and it is a sin, if your desires follow not that method. If you do not begin in your desires with God, as your ultimate end, and if you first desire not his glory, and then the flourishing of his kingdom, and then the obeying of his laws, and herein the public welfare of the world, before and above your particular benefit. And it is a sin if you desire not your daily bread (or necessary support of nature), as a lower mercy in order to your higher spiritual mercies; and if you desire not pardon of sin, as a means to your future sanctity, duty, and felicity;

and if you desire not these, as a means to the glory of God, and take not his praises as the highest part of your prayers. But for the expressing of these desires, particular occasions may warrant you ofttimes to begin in another order: as when you pray for the sick, or pray for directions, or a blessing before a sermon or some particular work, you may begin and end with the subject that is before you, as the prayers of holy men in all ages have done. 2. You must distinguish also, as between desires and expressions, so between an universal and a particular prayer. The one containeth all the parts of prayer, and the other is but about some one subject or part, or but some few; this last being but one or few, particular petitions cannot possibly be uttered in the method of an universal prayer which hath all the parts. There is no one petition in the Lord's prayer, but may be made a prayer itself; and then it cannot have the other petitions as parts. 3. And you must distinguish between the even and ordinary case of a Christian, and his extraordinary case, when some special reason, affection, or accident calleth him to look most to some one particular. In his even and ordinary case, every universal prayer should be expressed in the method of the Lord's prayer; but in cases of special reason and inducement it may be otherwise.

Quest. VIII. 'Must we pray always when the Spirit moveth us, and only then, or as reason guideth us?'

Answ. There are two sorts of the Spirit's motions; the one is by extraordinary inspiration or impulse, as he moved the prophets and apostles, to reveal new laws, or precepts, or events, or to do some actions without respect to any other command than the inspiration itself. This Christians are not now to expect, because experience telleth us that it is ceased; or if any should pretend to it as not yet ceased, in the prediction of events, and direction in some things otherwise indifferent, yet it is most certain that it is ceased as to

legislation; for the Spirit itself hath already given us those laws, which he hath declared to be perfect, and unchangeable till the end of the world. The other sort of the Spirit's working, is not to make new laws or duties, but to guide and quicken us in the doing of that which is our duty before by the laws already made. And these are the motions that all true Christians must now expect. By which you may see, that the Spirit and reason are not to be here disjoined, much less opposed. As reason sufficeth not without the Spirit, being dark and alseep; so the Spirit worketh not on the will but by the reason: he moveth not a man as a beast or stone, to do a thing he knoweth not why, but by illumination, giveth him the soundest reason, for the doing of it. And duty is first duty before we do it; and when by our own sin we forfeit the special motions or help of the Spirit, duty doth not thereby cease to be duty, nor our omission to be sin. If the Spirit of God teach you to discern the meetest season for prayer, by considering your affairs, and when you are most free, this is not to be denied to be the work of the Spirit, because it is rational, (as fanatic enthusiasts imagine). And if you are moved to pray in a crowd of business, or at any time when reason can prove that it is not your duty but your sin, the same reason proveth that it was not the Spirit of God that moved you to it: for the Spirit in the heart is not contrary to the Spirit in the Scripture. Set upon the duty which the Spirit in the Scripture commandeth you, and then you may be sure that you obey the Spirit: otherwise you disobey it. Yea, if your hearts becold, prayer is a more likely means to warm them, than the omission of it. To ask whether you may pray while your hearts are cold and backward, is as to ask whether you may labour or come to the fire before you are warm. God's Spirit is more likely to help you in duty, than in the neglect of it.

Quest. IX. 'May a man pray that hath no desire at all of the grace which he prayeth for?'

Answ. No; because it is no prayer but dissembling; and dissembling is no duty. He that asketh for that which he would not have, doth lie to God in his hypocrisy. But if a man have but cold and common desires (though they reach not to that which will prove them evidences of true grace), he may pray and express those desires which he hath.

Quest. X. 'May a man pray that doubteth of his interest in God, and dare not call him father as his child?'

Answ. 1. There is a common interest in God, which all mankind have, as he is good to all, and as his mercy through Christ is offered to all: and thus those that are not regenerate are his children by creation, and by participation of his mercy; and they may both call him father and pray to himself, though yet they are unregenerate. 2. God hath an interest in you, when you have no special interest in him: therefore his command must be obeyed, which bids you pray. 3. Groundless doubts will not disoblige you from your duty; else men might free themselves from almost all their obedience.

Quest. XI. 'May a wicked or unregenerate man pray, and is he accepted? Or is not his prayer abominable to God?'

Answ. 1. A wicked man as a wicked man, can pray no how but wickedly, that is, he asketh only for things unlawful to be asked, or for lawful things to unlawful ends; and this is still abominable to God. 2. A wicked man may have in him some good that proceedeth from common grace, and this he may be obliged to exercise; and so by prayer to express his desires so far as they are good. 3. A wicked man's wicked prayers are never accepted; but a wicked man's prayers which are for good things, from common grace, are so far accepted as that they are some means conducing to his reformation, and though his person be still unjustified, and these prayers sinful, yet the total

omission of them is a greater sin. 4. A wicked man is bound at once to repent and prayr. And whenever God bids him ask for grace, he bids him desire grace; and to bid him pray, is to bid him repent and be of a better mind: therefore those that reprove ministers for persuading wicked men to pray, reprove them for persuading them to repentance and good desires. But if they pray without that repentance which God and man exhort them to, the sin is theirs: but all their labour is not lost if their desires fall short of saving sincerity; they are under obligations to many duties, which tend to bring them nearer Christ, and which they may do without special, saving grace.

Quest. XII. 'May a wicked man pray the Lord's prayer, or be exhorted to use it?'

Answ. 1. The Lord's prayer in its full and proper sense, must be spoken by a penitent, believing, justified person; for in the full sense no one else can call him 'Our Father,' (though in a limited sense the wicked may): and they cannot desire the glory of God, and the coming of his kingdom, nor the doing of his will on earth as it is in heaven, and this sincerely, without true grace: (especially those enemies of holiness, that think it too much strictness to do God's will on earth, ten thousand degrees lower than it is done in heaven). Nor can they put up one petition of that prayer sincerely according to the proper sense; no not to pray for their daily bread, as a means of their support while they are doing the will of God, and seeking first his glory and his kingdom. But yet it is possible for them to speak these words from such common desires as are not so bad as none at all.

Quest. XIII. 'Is it idolatry to pray to saints or angels? or is it always sinful?'

Answ. I love not to be too quarrelsome with other men's devotions; but 1. I see not how praying to an angel or a departed saint can be

excused from sin. Because it supposeth them to be every where present, or to be omniscient, and to know the heart, yea to know at once the hearts of all men; or else the speaker pretendeth to know when the saint or angel is present and heareth him, and when not: and because the Scripture doth no where signify that God would have us pray to any such saints or angels; but signifieth enough to satisfy us to the contrary. 2. But all prayer to them is not idolatry, but some is, and therefore we must distinguish, if we will judge righteously. (1.) To pray to saints or angels as supposed omnipresent, omniscient, or omnipotent, is flat idolatry. (2.) To pray to them to forgive us our sins against God, or to justify, or sanctify, or redeem, or save us from hell, or any thing which belongeth to God only to do, is no better than idolatry. (3.) But to pray to them only to do that which belongeth to the guardian, or charitable office that is committed to them, and to think that though they are not omnipresent nor omniscient, nor you know not whether they hear you at this time or not, yet you will venture your prayers at uncertainty, it being but so much labour lost; this I take to be sinfully superstitious, but not idolatry. (4.) But to pray to living saints or sinners, for that which belongeth to them to give, is no sin at all.

Quest. XIV. 'Is a man bound to pray ordinarily in his family?'

Answ. I have answered this affirmatively before, and proved it; one grain of grace would answer it better than arguments can do.

Quest. xv. 'Must the same man pray secretly that hath prayed with his family or with others?'

Answ. 1. Distinguish between those that were the speakers, and those that were not; and 2. Between those that have leisure from greater or more urgent duties, and those that have not. And so, (1.) Those that are free from the urgency of all other duties, which at that time are

greater, should pray both in the family and in secret; especially if they were not themselves the speakers, usually they will have the more need of secret prayer; because their hearts in public may more easily flag, and much of their case may be omitted. (2.) But those that have more urgent, greater duties, may take up at that time with family-prayer alone (with, secret ejaculations; especially if they were the speakers): having there put up the same requests as they would do in secret.

Quest. XVI. 'Is it best to keep set hours for prayer, or to take the time which is fittest at present?'

Answ. Ordinarily set times will prove the fittest times; and to leave the time undetermined and uncertain, will put all out of order, and multiply impediments, and hinder duty. But yet when extraordinary cases make the ordinary time unfit, a fitter time must be taken.

Quest. XVII. 'Is it lawful to join in family (or church) prayers with ungodly men?'

Answ. I join both together, because the cases little differ; for the pastor hath the government of the people in church-worship as the master of the family hath in family-worship: you may choose at first whether you will be a member of the church, or family (if you were not born to it as your privilege). But when you are a member of either, you must be governed as members. And to the case, 1. You must distinguish between professed wicked men, and those that sin against the profession. 2. And between a family (or church) that is totally wicked, and that which is mixed of good and bad. 3. And between those wicked men whose presence is your sin, because you have power to remove them, and those whose presence is not your sin, nor the matter in your power. 4. And between one that may yet choose of what family he will be, and one that may not. And so I

answer, (1.) If it be the fault of the master of the family (or the pastors of the church) that such wicked men are there, and not cast out, then it is their sin to join with them, because it is their duty to remove them; but that is not the case of the fellow-servants (or people), that have no power. (2.) If that wicked men profess their wickedness, after sufficient admonition, you must professedly disown communion with them; and then you are morally separated and discharged, when you have no power locally to separate. (3.) It is your sin to fly from your duty, because a wicked man is there, whom you have no power to remove. (4.) There are many prayers that a wicked man is bound to put up to God; and you must not omit your duty, because he performeth his, though faultily: methinks you should more scruple joining or conversing with one that forsaketh prayer (which is the greater sin) than with one that prayeth. (5.) But if you are free to choose, you are to be blamed if you will not choose a better family (or church) (other things being equal): especially if all the company be wicked.

Quest. XVIII. 'But what if the master of a family (or pastor) be a heretic or ungodly?'

Anws. You must distinguish between his personal faults, and the faults of his performance or worship. His personal faults (such as swearing or drunkenness, &c.) you must disown, and must not choose a master (or pastor) that is such, while you have your choice, and may have better: but otherwise it is lawful to join with him in doing good, though not in evil. But if the fault of his duty itself be intolerable you must not join with him: now it is intolerable in these cases. 1. In case he be utterly unable to express a prayer, and so make it no prayer. 2. In case he bend his prayers against godliness, and known truth, and charity, and peace, and so make his prayers but the

instruments of mischief, to vent heresy, or malice, and do more hurt than good to others.

Quest. XIX. 'May we pray absolutely for outward mercies, or only conditionally?'

Anws. You must distinguish, 1. Between a condition spoken of the subject, when we are uncertain whether it be a mercy or not, and an extrinsic condition of the grant. 2. Between a condition of prayer, and a condition of expectation. 3. Between submission to God's will, and a conditional desire or prayer. And so I answer, (1.) It is necessary when we are uncertain whether the thing itself be good or not, that we pray with a subjective conditionality. 'Grant this if it be good:' or 'If it be not good I do not pray for it.' For it is presupposed in prayer that we know the thing prayed for to be good. (2.) But when we know the thing to be a mercy and good, we may pray for it absolutely. (3.) But we may not believe that we shall receive all with an absolute expectation, which we absolutely pray for. For prayer being the expression of desire, that which may be absolutely desired, though not absolutely promised, may be absolutely prayed for. (As our increase or strength of grace, or the conversion of our relations, &c.) (4.) But yet all such must be asked with a submission to the will of God: but that maketh it not properly a conditional form of praying; for when the nature of prayer is as it were to move the will of God, it is not so proper to say, 'Lord, do this if it be thy will already;' or 'Lord, be pleased to do this if it be thy pleasure,' as to say, 'Lord, grant this mercy; but if thou deny it, it is my duty to submit.' So Christ mentioneth both the subjective conditionality and the submission of his will. "If it be possible let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. As if he had said, Nature requireth me with a simple nolition to be unwilling of the suffering, and if it be consistent with the desired end of my mediatorship, to be

desirous to avoid it: but seeing that cannot be, my comparing will commandeth this simple will of self-preservation to submit to thy most perfect will. But if any call this (submission) a condition, the matter is not great.

Quest. XX. 'May we pray for all that we may lawfully desire?'

Answ. No: for prayer is not only an expression of desire, but also a means to attain the thing desired. And some things may be lawfully desired (at least with a simple velleity), which may not be sought, because they must not be hoped for, where God hath said that he will not grant them. For it is vain to seek that which you have no hope to find: as to desire to see the conversion of the whole world, or to pass to heaven as Enoch without dying, are lawful (by a simple velleity): but all things compared, it is not lawful peremptorily to desire it, without submission; and therefore not to ask it. It is the expression of a comparate, determinate desire, which is properly called prayer, being the use of means for the obtaining of that desire; and whatsoever I may so desire, I may pray for; for if there be no hope of it, I may not so desire it. But the desire by way of simple velleity may not be put into a proper prayer, when there is no hope. I must have a simple desire (with submission) to attain a sinless perfection here, even this hour; but because there is no hope, I may not let it proceed to a determinate peremptory desire upon a comparing judgment, nor into a proper prayer. And yet these velleities may be expressed in prayer, though they have not the full nature of a prayer. Object. 'But was not Christ's a prayer?' Answ. Either Christ as a man was certain that the cup must not pass from him, or uncertain. If you could prove him uncertain, then it is a proper prayer (with submission to his Father's will;) but if he was certain that it was not to pass from him, then it was analogically only a prayer, it being but a representing of his velleity, to his Father, and not of his determinate will, nor was

any means to attain that end: and indeed such it was, as if he had said, Father if it had stood with the ends of my office and thy will, I would have asked this of thee; but because it doth not, I submit. And this much we may do.

Quest. XXI. 'How then can we pray for the salvation of all the world? must it be for all men collectively? or only for some, excluding no numerical denominate person?'

Answ. Just as Christ prayed here in this text, we must express our simple velleity of it to God, as a thing that in itself is most desirable (as the passing of the cup was unto Christ): but we cannot express a determinate volition, by a full prayer, such as has any tendency as a means to attain that end; because we are certain that God's will is against it, or that it will not be.

Quest. XXII. 'May we pray for the conversion of all the nations of the world to Christianity, with a hopeful prayer?'

Answ. Yes: For we are not certain that every nation shall not be so converted, though it be improbable.

Quest. XXIII. 'May we pray in hope of a proper prayer (as a means to obtain it) that a whole kingdom may be all truly converted and saved?'

Answ. Yes: for God hath no way told us that it shall not be; though it be a thing improbable, it is not impossible; and therefore being greatly desirable may be prayed for. Though Christ has told us that his flock is little, and few find the way of life, yet that may stand with the salvation of a kingdom.

Quest. XXIV. 'May we pray for the destruction of the enemies of Christ, or of the Gospel, or of the king?'

Answ. Not with respect to that which is called God's antecedent will, for so we ought first to pray for their conversion (and restraint till then); but with respect to that called his consequent will we may; that is, we must first pray that they may be restrained and converted, and secondly, that if not, they may be destroyed.

Quest. XXV. 'What is to be thought of that which some call a particular faith in prayer? If I can firmly believe that a lawful prayer shall be granted in kind, may I not be Sure by a divine faith that it shall be so?'

Answ. Belief hath relation to a testimony or revelation. Prayer may be warranted as lawful, if the thing be desirable, and there be any possibility of obtaining it, though there be no certainty, or flat promise; but faith or expectation must be warranted by the promise. If God have promised you the thing prayed for, you may believe that you shall receive it: otherwise your particular faith is a fancy, or a believing of yourselves, and not a believing God that never promised you the thing. Object. Matt. 21:22. "And all things Whatsoever you ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

Answ. There are two sorts of faith: the one a belief that is ordinary, having respect to ordinary promises and mercies: the text can be understood of this in no other sense than this: 'All things which I have promised you, you shall receive, if you ask them believingly.' But this is nothing to that which is not promised. The other faith was extraordinary, in order to the working of miracles: and this faith was a potent inward confidence, which was not in the power of the person when he pleased, but was given like an inspiration by the Spirit of God, when a miracle was to be wrought; and this seemeth to

be it that is spoken of in the text. And this was built on this extraordinary promise, which was made not to all men in all ages, but to those times when the Gospel was to be sealed and delivered by miracles; and especially to the apostles. So that in these times, there is neither such a promise of our working miracles as they had to believe, nor yet a power to exercise that sort of extraordinary faith. Therefore a strong conceit (though it come in a fervent prayer) that any thing shall come to pass, which we cannot prove by any promise or prophecy, is not to be called any act of divine faith at all, nor to be trusted to.

Quest. XXVI. 'But must we not believe that every lawful prayer is accepted and heard of God?'

Answ. Yes: but not that it should be granted in the very thing, unless so promised: but you may believe that your prayer is not lost, and that it shall be a means of that which tendeth to your good.

Quest. XXVII. 'With what faith must I pray for the souls or bodies of other men; for their conversion or their lives?'

Answ. A godly man may pray for wicked relations or others, with more hope than they can pray for themselves, while they remain ungodly: but yet not with any certainty of prevailing for the thing he asketh; for it is not peremptorily promised him. Otherwise Samuel had prevailed for Saul, and Isaac for Esau, and David for Absalom, and the good people for all the wicked; and then no godly parents would have their children lost; no nor any in the world would perish, for godly persons pray for them all. But those prayers are not lost to him that puts them up.

Quest. XXVIII. 'With what faith may we pray for the continuance of the church and Gospel to any nation?'

Answ. The former answer serveth to this; our hope may be according to the degrees of probability: but we cannot believe it as a certainty by divine faith, because it is not promised by God.

Quest. XXIX. 'How may we know when our prayers are heard of God, and when not?'

Answ. Two ways: sometimes by experience, when the thing itself is actually given us; and always by the promise: when we ask for that which God commandeth us to ask, or promiseth to grant; for we are sure God's promises are all fulfilled. If we ask for the objects of sense (as food, or raiment, or health, &c.), sense will tell us whether our prayers be granted in the same kind that we asked for; but if the questions be of the objects of faith, it is faith that must tell you that your prayers are granted; but yet faith and reason make use of evidences or signs: as if I pray for pardon of sin, and salvation, the promise assureth me that this prayer is granted, if I be a penitent, believing, regenerate person, otherwise not; therefore faith only assureth me that such prayers are granted, supposing that I discern the evidence of my regeneration, repentance, and faith in Christ. So if the question be, whether my prayer for others, or for temporal mercies, be answered in some other kind, and conduce to my good some other way, faith only must tell you this from the promise, by the help of evidences: there are millions of prayers that will all be found answered at death and judgment, which we knew not to be answered any way but by believing it.

Quest. XXX. 'What should a Christian of weak parts do, that is dry and barren of matter, and can scarce tell what to say in prayer, but is ready to rise off his knees almost as soon as he hath begun?'

Answ. 1. He must not be a stranger to himself, but study well his heart and life; and then he will find such a multitude of inward

corruptions to lament, and such a multitude of wants to be supplied, and weaknesses to be strengthened, and disorders to be rectified, and actual sins to be forgiven, that may find him work enough for confessions, complaints, and petitions many days together, if expression be but as ready as matter. 2. Let him study God, and get the knowledge of his nature, attributes, and works, and then he will find matter enough to aggravate his sin, and to furnish him with the holy praise of God from day to day. As he that is acquainted with all that is in any book, can copiously discourse of it, when he that knoweth not what is in it, hath little to say of it: so he that knoweth God and his works, and himself, and his sins and wants, is acquainted with the best prayer book; and hath always a full heap of matter before him, whenever he cometh to speak to God. 3. Let him study the mystery of man's redemption, and the person, and office, and covenant, and grace of Christ; and he need not want matter for prayer or praise. A very child if he sees but a pedlar's pack opened, where there are abundance of things which he desireth, will learn without book to say, 'O father, buy me this, and give me that, &c.' So will the soul that seeth the treasuries and riches of Christ. 4. Let him know the extent of the law of God, and the meaning of the Ten Commandments: if he know but what sins are forbidden in each commandment, and what duties are required, he may find matter enough for confession and petition: and therefore the view of such a brief exposition of the commandment, as you may find in "Mr. Brinsley's True Watch," and in "Dr. Downam's" and "Mr. Whateley's Tables," will be a present furniture for such a use, especially in days of humiliation. So it will also to have a particular understanding of the Creed and the Lord's prayer, which will furnish you with much matter. 5. Study well the temptations which you carry about you in your flesh, and meet with in the world, and are suggested by the tempter; and think of the many duties you have to do, and the many dangers and sufferings to undergo, and you will never be

unfurnished for matter for your prayers. 6. Observe the daily passages of providence, to yourselves and others: mark how things go with your souls every day, and hearken how it goeth with the church of God, and mark also how it goeth with your neighbours, and sure you will find matter enough for prayer. 7. Think of the heavenly joys that you are going to, and the streets of the New Jerusalem will be large enough for faith to walk in. 8. For words, be acquainted with the phrase of Scripture, and you will find provisions for all occasions. Read Dr. Wilkins' book, called "The Gift of Prayer," or "Mr. Brinsley's Watch," or "Mr. E. Parr's Abba Father." 9. Keep up the heart in a reverent, serious, lively frame, and it will be a continual spring to furnish you with matter: when a dead and barren heart hath a dry and sleepy tongue. 10. Join as oft as you can with those that are full and copious in prayer; for example and use will be very great helps. 11. Quench not the Spirit of God that must assist you. 12. In case of necessity, use those books or forms which are more full than you can be yourselves till you come to ability to do better without them. Read further the Directions Part i. Chap. 6. Tit. 2. for more.

Quest. XXXI. 'How should a Christian keep up an ordinary fervency in prayer?'

Answ. 1. See that knowledge and faith provide you matter: for as the fire will go out if there be not fuel, so fervency will decay, when you are dry, and scarce know what to say; or do not well believe what you understand. 2. Clog not the body either with overmuch eating and drinking, or over-tiring labours: for an active body helpeth much the activity of the mind: and the holiest person will be able but poorly to exercise his fervency, under a dull or languishing body. 3. Rush not suddenly upon prayer, out of a crowd of other businesses, or before your last worldly cares or discourses be washed clean out of your minds. In study and prayer how certain a truth is it, that 'Non bene

fit quod occupato animo fit.' Hieron. Epist. 143. ad Paulin. That work is not well done, which is done with a mind that is preposessed, or busied about other matters: that mind must be wholly free from all other present thoughts or business, that will either pray or study well. 4. Keep a tender heart and conscience that is not senseless of your own concernments; for all your prayers must needs be sleepy, if the heart and conscience be once hardened, seared, or fallen asleep. 5. Take more pains with your hearts than with your tongues. Remember that the success of your work lieth most on them. Bear not with their sluggishness; do by them as you would do by your child or servant that sleepeth by you at prayer; you will not let them snort on, but jog them till you have awakened them. So do by your hearts when you find them dull. 6. Live as in the continual presence of God; but labour to apprehend his special presence when you are about to speak to him: ask your hearts how they would behave themselves, if they saw the Lord, or but the lowest of his holy angels? 7. Let faith be called up to see heaven and hell as open all the while before you; and such a sight will surely keep you serious. 8. Keep death and judgment in your continual remembrance and expectation: remember how all your prayers will be looked back upon. Look not for long life: remember that this prayer for ought you know may be your last; but certainly you have not long to pray: pray therefore as a dying man should do. 9. Study well the unspeakable necessity of your souls. If you prevail not for pardon, and grace, and preservation, you are undone and lost for ever. Remember that necessity is upon you, and heaven or hell are at the end, and you are praying for more than a thousand lives. 10. Study well the unspeakable excellency of those mercies which you pray for: O think how blessed a life it would be, if you could know God more, and love him more, and live a blameless, heavenly life, and then live with Christ in heaven for ever! Study these mercies till the flames of love put life into your prayers. 11. Study well the exceeding

encouragements that you have to pray and hope: if your hope decay your fervour will decay. Think of the inconceivable love of God, the astonishing mercy shewed to you in your Redeemer, and in the helps of the Holy Spirit, and how Christ is now interceding for you. Think of these till faith make glad your heart; and in this gladness, let praise and thanksgiving have ordinarily no small share in your prayers; for it will tire out the heart to be always poring on its own distempers, and discourage it to look on nothing but its infirmities: and then, a sad, discouraged temper will not be so lively a temper, as a thankful, praiseful, joyful temper is: for 'Lætitia loquax res est, atque ostentatrix sui:' 'Gladness is a very expressive thing, and apt to shew itself.' But 'tristes non eloquentes sunt: maxime si ad ægritudinem animi accedat corporis ægritudo.' Hieron. Epist. 31. ad Theoph. Alexand. 'Sad men are seldom eloquent: especially if the body be sick as well as the mind.' 12. Let the image of a praying and a bleeding Christ, and of his praying saints be (not on a wall before your eyes, but) engraven on your minds: is it not desireable to be conformed to them? Had they more need to pray importunately than you? 13. Be very cautelous in the use of forms, lest you grow dull and customary, and before you are aware your tongues use to go without your hearts. The heart is apt to take its ease when it feeleth not some urgent instigation. And though the presence of God should serve the turn without the regard of man, yet with imperfect men the heart is best held to its duty when both concur. And therefore most are more cautelous of their words, than of their thoughts: as children will learn their lesson better, when they know their masters will hear them it, than when they think he will not. Now in the use of a form of prayer, a sleepy heart is not at all discerned by man, but by God only; for the words are all brought to your hand, and may be said by the most dull and careless mind; but when you are put to express your own desire, without such helps, you are necessitated to be so mindful of what you do, as to form your desires into apt expressions, or else your dulness

or inattentiveness will be observed even by men; and you will be like one that hath his coach, or horse, or crutches taken off him, that if he have legs must use them, or else lie still. And to them that are able, it is often a great benefit to be necessitated to use the ability they have; though to others it is a loss to be deprived of their helps. I speak not this against the lawfulness of a form of prayer; but to warn you of the temptations which are in that way. 14. Join oft with the most serious, fervent Christians; for their fervour will help your hearts to burn, and carry you along with them. 15. Destroy not fervency by adulterating it, and turning it into an affected earnestness of speech, and loudness of voice, when it is but an hypocritical cover for a frozen, empty heart.

Quest. XXXII. 'May we look to speed ever the better for any thing in ourselves, or in our prayers? Is not that to trust in them, when we should trust on Christ alone?'

Answ. We must not trust in them for any thing that is Christ's part and not their's: but for their own part it is a duty to trust in them, (however quarrelsome persons may abuse or cavil at the words:) and he that distrusteth prayer in that which is its proper office, will pray to little purpose: and he that thinks that faithful, fervent, importunate, understanding prayer, is no more effectual with God for mercy, than the babbling of the hypocrite, or the ignorant, careless, unbelieving, sleepy prayers of the negligent, will either not care how he prayeth, or whether he prayeth at all or not. Though our persons and prayers have nothing that is meritorious with God, in point of commutative justice, nor as is co-ordinate with the merits of Christ, yet have they conditions without which God will not accept them, and are meritorious in subordination to the merit of Christ, in point of paternal governing justice according to the covenant of grace; as an obedient child deserveth more love; and praise, and

reward from his father than the disobedient: as the ancient fathers commonly used the word merit.

Quest. XXXIII. 'How must that person and prayer be qualified that shall be accepted of God?'

Answ. There are several degrees of God's acceptance. I. That which is but from common grace, may be accepted as better than none at all. II. That which hath a promise of some success, especially as to pardon and salvation must be, 1. From a penitent, believing, holy person. 2. It must proceed from true desire, and be sincere; and have renewed faith and repentance in some measure. 3. It must be put up in confidence on the merit and intercession of Christ. 4. It must be only for things lawful. 5. And to a lawful end. III. That which is extraordinarily accepted and successful, must be extraordinary in all these respects; in the person's holiness, and in renewed faith and fervent importunity, and holy love.

Tit. 3. Special Directions for Family Prayer

Direct. I. 'Let it be done rather by the master of the family himself than any other, if he be competently able, though others be more able; but if he be utterly unfit, let it rather be done by another than not at all.' And by such an one as is most acceptable to the rest, and like to do most good.

Direct. II. 'Let prayer be suited to the case of those that join in it, and to the condition of the family:' and not a few general words spoken by rote, that serve all times and persons alike.

Direct. III. 'Let it neither be so short as to end before their hearts can be warm and their wants expressed (as if you had an unwilling task

to slubber over, and would fain have done); nor yet so tedious as to make it an ungrateful burden to the family.'

Direct. IV. 'Let not the coldness and dulness of the speaker rock the family asleep:' but keep awake your own heart, that you may keep the rest awake, and force them to attention.

Direct. V. 'Pray at such hours as the family may be least distracted, sleepy, tired, or out of the way.'

Direct. VI. 'Let other duties concur, as oft as may be, to assist in prayer:' as reading, and singing psalms.

Direct. VII. 'Do all with the greatest reverence of God that possibly you can:' not seeming reverence, but real; that so more of God than of man may appear in every word you speak.

Direct. VIII. 'The more the hearers are concerned in it, the more regard you must have to the fitness of your expressions:' for before others, words must be regarded, lest they be scandalized, and God and prayer be dishonoured. And if you cannot do it competently without, use a well composed form.

Direct. IX. 'Let not family prayer be used at the time of public prayer in the church,' nor preferred before it, but prefer public prayer, though the manner were more imperfect than your own.

Direct. X. 'Teach your children and servants how to pray themselves,' that they may not be prayerless when they come among those that cannot pray. John and Christ taught their disciples to pray.

Tit. 4. Special Directions for Secret Prayer

Direct. I. 'Let it be in as secret a place as conveniently you can; that you may not be disturbed.' Let it be done so that others may not be witnesses of it, if you can avoid it; and yet take it not for your duty, to keep it unknown that you pray secretly at all: for that will be a snare and scandal to them.

Direct. II. 'Let your voice be suited to your own help and benefit, if none else hear you.' If it be needful to the orderly proceeding of your own thoughts, or to the warming of your own affections, you may use a voice; but if others be within hearing, it is very unfit.

Direct. III. 'In secret let the matter of your prayers be that which is most peculiarly your own concernment, or those secret things that are not fit for public prayer, or are there passed by;' yet never forgetting the highest interest of Christ, and the Gospel, and the world and church.

Direct. IV. 'Be less solicitous about words in secret than with others, and lay out your care about the heart.' For that is it that God most esteemeth in your prayers.

Direct. V. 'Do not through carnal unwillingness grow into a neglect of secret prayer, when you have time: nor yet do not superstitiously tie yourselves to just so long time, whether you are fit, or at leisure from greater duties or not.' But be the longer when you are most fit and vacant, and the shorter when you are not. To give way to every carnal backwardness, is the sin on one side; and to resolve to spend so long time, when you do but tire yourselves, and sleep, or business, or distemper maketh it a lifeless thing, is a sin on the other side. Avoid them both.

Direct. VI. 'A melancholy person who is unfit for much solitariness and heart-searchings, must be much shorter, if not also seldomer in

secret prayers, than other Christians that are capable of bearing it:' and they must instead of that which they cannot do, be the more in that which they can do; as in joining with others, and in shorter ejaculations, besides other duties; but not abating their piety in the main upon any pretence of curing melancholy.

CHAPTER XXIV

Brief Directions for Families, about the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ

OMITTING those things which concern the public administration of this sacrament, (for the reasons before intimated Part ii.) I shall here only give you some brief Directions for your private duty herein.

Direct. I. 'Understand well the proper ends to which this sacrament was instituted by Christ; and take heed that you use it not to ends, for which it never was appointed.' The true ends are these, 1. To be a solemn commemoration of the death and passion of Jesus Christ, to keep it, as it were, in the eye of the church, in his bodily absence till he come. 2. To be a solemn renewing of the holy covenant which was first entered in baptism, between Christ and the receiver; and in that covenant it is on Christ's part, a solemn delivery of himself first, and with himself the benefits of pardon, reconciliation, adoption, and right to life eternal. And on man's part, it is our solemn acceptance of Christ with his benefits, upon his terms, and a delivering up of ourselves to him, as his redeemed ones, even to the Father, as our reconciled Father, and to the Son as our Lord and Saviour, and to the Holy Spirit as our Sanctifier, with professed thankfulness for so great a benefit. 3. It is appointed to be a lively objective means, by which

the Spirit of Christ should work to stir up, and exercise, and increase the repentance, faith, desire, love, hope, joy, thankfulness, and new obedience of believers; by a lively representation of the evil of sin, the infinite love of God in Christ, the firmness of the covenant or promise, the greatness and sureness of the mercy given, and the blessedness purchased and promised to us, and the great obligations that are laid upon usb. And that herein believers might be solemnly called out to the most serious exercise of all these graces, and might be provoked and assisted to stir up themselves to this communion with God in Christ, and to pray for more as through a sacrificed Christ. 4. It is appointed to be the solemn profession of believers, of their faith, and love, and gratitude, and obedience to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and of continuing firm in the Christian religion. And a badge of the church before the world. 5. And it is appointed to be a sign and means of the unity, love, and communion of saints, and their readiness to communicate to each other.

The false, mistaken ends which you must avoid are these. 1. You must not with the Papists, think that the end of it is to turn bread into no bread, and wine into no wine, and to make them really the true body and blood of Jesus Christ. For if sense (which telleth all men that it is still bread and wine,) be not to be believed, then we cannot believe that ever there was a Gospel, or an apostle, or a pope, or a man, or any thing in the world. And the apostle expressly calleth it bread three times, in three verses together, after the consecration. And he telleth us, that the use of it is (not to make the Lord's body really present, but) "to shew the Lord's death till he come;" that is, as a visible representing and commemorating sign, to be instead of his bodily presence till he come.

2. Nor must you with the Papists use this sacrament to sacrifice Christ again really unto the Father, to propitiate him for the quick

and dead, and ease souls in purgatory, and deliver them out of it. For Christ having died once dieth no more, and without killing him, there is no sacrificing him. By once offering up himself, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, and now there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin: having finished the sacrificing work on earth, he is now passed into the heavens, to appear before God for his redeemed ones.

3. Nor is it any better than odious impiety to receive the sacrament, to confirm some confederacies or oaths of secresy, for rebellions or other unlawful designs; as the powder-plotters in England did.

4. Nor is it any other than impious profanation of these sacred mysteries, for the priest to constrain or suffer notoriously ignorant, and ungodly persons, to receive them; either to make themselves believe that they are indeed the children of God, or to be a means which ungodly men should use to make them godly, or which infidels or impenitent persons must use to help them to repentance and faith in Christ. For though there is that in it which may become a means of their conversion, (as a thief that stealeth a bible or sermon book, may be converted by it,) yet is it not to be used by the receiver to that end. For that were to tell God a lie, as the means of their conversion; for whosoever cometh to receive a sealed pardon, doth thereby profess repentance, as also by the words adjoined he must do; and whosoever taketh, and eateth, and drinketh the bread and wine, doth actually profess thereby, that he taketh and applieth Christ himself by faith: and therefore, if he do neither of these, he lieth openly to God; and lies and false covenants are not the appointed means of conversion. Not that the minister is a liar in his delivery of it: for he doth but conditionally seal and deliver God's covenant and benefits to the receiver, to be his, if he truly repent and believe: but the

receiver himself lieth, if he do not actually repent and believe, as he there professeth to do.

5. Also it is an impious profanation of the sacrament, if any priest for the love of filthy lucre, shall give it to those that ought not to receive it, that he may have his fees or offerings; or, that the priest may have so much money that is bequeathed for saying a mass for such or such a soul.

6. And it is an odious profanation of the sacrament, to use it as a league or bond of faction, to gather persons into the party, and tie them fast to it, that they may depend upon the priest, and his faction and interest may thereby be strengthened, and he may seem to have many followers.

7. And it is a dangerous abuse of it, to receive it, that you may be pardoned, or sanctified, or saved, barely by the work done, or by the outward exercise alone. As if God were there obliged to give you grace, while you strive not with your own hearts, to stir them up to love, or desire, or faith, or obedience, by the means that are before you; or, as if God would pardon and save you for eating so much bread and drinking so much wine, when the canon biddeth you; or, as if the sacrament conveyed grace, like as charms are supposed to work, by saying over so many words.

8. Lastly, It is no appointed end of this sacrament, that the receiver thereby profess himself certain of the sincerity of his own repentance and faith: (for it is not managed on the ground of such certainty only by the receiver; much less by the minister that delivereth it.) But only he professeth, that as far as he can discern by observing his own heart, he is truly willing to have Christ and his benefits, on the terms that they are offered; and that he doth consent to the covenant which

he is there to renew. Think not therefore that the sacrament is instituted for any of these (mistaken) ends.

Direct. II. 'Distinctly understand the parts of the sacrament, that you may distinctly use them, and not do you know not what.' This sacrament containeth these three parts. 1. The consecration of the bread and wine, which maketh it the representative body and blood of Christ. 2. The representation and commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ. 3. The communion: or, communication by Christ, and reception by the people.

I. In the consecration, the church doth first offer the creatures of bread and wine, to be accepted of God, to this sacred use. And God accepteth them, and blesseth them to this use; which he signifieth both by the words of his own institution, and by the action of his ministers, and their benediction. They being the agents of God to the people in this accepting and blessing, as they are the agents of the people to God, in offering or dedicating the creatures to this use.

This consecration having a special respect to God the Father, in it we acknowledge his three grand relations. 1. That he is the Creator, and so the Owner of all the creatures; for we offer them to him as his own. 2. That he is our righteous Governor, whose law it was, that Adam and we have broken, and who required satisfaction, and hath received the sacrifice and atonement, and hath dispensed with the strict and proper execution of that law, and will rule us hereafter by the law of grace. 3. That he is our Father or Benefactor, who hath freely given us a Redeemer, and the covenant of grace, whose love and favour we have forfeited by sin, but desire and hope to be reconciled by Christ.

As Christ himself was incarnate and true Christ, before he was sacrificed to God, and was sacrificed to God before that sacrifice be

communicated for life and nourishment to souls; so in the sacrament, consecration must first make the creature to be the flesh and blood of Christ representative; and then the sacrificing of that flesh and blood must be represented and commemorated; and then the sacrificed flesh and blood communicated to the receivers for their spiritual life.

II. The commemoration chiefly (but not only) respecteth God the Son. For he hath ordained, that these consecrated representations should in their manner and measure, supply the room of his bodily presence, while his body is in heaven: and that thus, as it were, in effigy, in representation, he might be still crucified before the church's eyes; and they might be affected, as if they had seen him on the cross. And that by faith and prayer, they might, as it were, offer him up to God; that is, might shew the Father that sacrifice, once made for sin, in which they trust, and for which it is that they expect all the acceptance of their persons with God, and hope for audience when they beg for mercy, and offer up prayer or praises to him.

III. In the communication, though the sacrament have respect to the Father, as the principal Giver, and to the Son, as both the Gift and Giver, yet hath it a special respect to the Holy Ghost, as being that Spirit given in the flesh and blood, which quickeneth souls; without which, the flesh will profit nothing; and whose operations must convey and apply Christ's saving benefits to us.

These three being the parts of the sacrament in whole, as comprehending that sacred action and participation which is essential to it. The material parts, called the relate and correlate, are, 1. Substantial and qualitative. 2. Active and passive. 1. The first, are the bread and wine as signs, and the body and blood of Christ, with his graces and benefits, as the things signified and given. The second,

are the actions of breaking, pouring out, and delivering on the minister's part, (after the consecration,) and the taking, eating, and drinking, by the receivers as the sign. And the thing signified is the crucifying or sacrificing of Christ, and the delivering himself with his benefits to the believer, and the receiver's thankful accepting, and using the said gift. To these add the relative form, and the ends, and you have the definition of this sacrament. Of which see more in my "Universal Concord," p. 46, &c.

Direct. III. 'Look upon the minister as the agent or officer of Christ, who is commissioned by him to seal and deliver to you the covenant and its benefits: and take the bread and wine, as if you heard Christ himself saying to you, 'Take of my body and blood, and the pardon and grace which is thereby purchased.' It is a great help in the application, to have mercy and pardon brought us by the hand of a commissioned officer of Christ.

Direct. IV. In your preparation beforehand, take heed of these two extremes: 1. That you come not profanely and carelessly, with common hearts, as to a common work. For God will be sanctified in them that draw near himi: and they that eat and drink unworthily, not discerning the Lord's body from common bread, but eating as if it were a common meal, do eat death to themselves, instead of life. 2. Take heed lest your mistakes of the nature of this sacrament, should possess you with such fears of unworthy receiving, and the following dangers, as may quite discompose and unfit your souls for the joyful exercises of faith, and love, and praise, and thanksgiving, to which you are invited. Many that are scrupulous of receiving it in any, save a feasting gesture, are too little careful and scrupulous of receiving it in any, save a feasting frame of mind.

The first extreme is caused by profaneness and negligence, or by gross ignorance of the nature of the sacramental work. The latter extreme is frequently caused as followeth: 1. By setting this sacrament at a greater distance from other parts of God's worship, than there is cause; so that the excess of reverence doth overwhelm the minds of some with terrors. 2. By studying more the terrible words of eating and drinking damnation to themselves, if they do it unworthily, than all the expressions of love and mercy, which that blessed feast is furnished with. So that when the views of infinite love should ravish them, they are studying wrath and vengeance to terrify them, as if they came to Moses, and not to Christ. 3. By not understanding what maketh a receiver worthy or unworthy, but taking their unwilling infirmities for condemning unworthiness. 4. By receiving it so seldom, as to make it strange to them, whereas if it were administered every Lord's day, as it was in the primitive churches, it would better acquaint them with it, and cure that fear that cometh from strangeness. 5. By imagining, that none that want assurance of their own sincerity, can receive in faith. 6. By contracting an ill habit of mistaken religiousness, placing it all in poring on themselves, and mourning for their corruptions, and not in studying the love of God in Christ, and living in the daily praises of his name, and joyful thanksgiving for his exceeding mercies. 7. And if besides all these the body contract a weak or timorous, melancholy distemper, it will leave the mind capable of almost nothing, but fear and trouble, even in the sweetest works. From many such cases it cometh to pass, that the sacrament of the Lord's supper is become more terrible, and uncomfortable to abundance of such distempered Christians, than any other ordinance of God; and that which should most comfort them, doth trouble them most.

Quest. 'But is not this sacrament more holy and dreadful, and should it not have more preparation than other parts of worship?'

Answ. For the degree indeed, it should have very careful preparation: and we cannot well compare it with other parts of worship; as praise, thanksgiving, covenanting with God, prayer, &c. because that all these other parts are here comprised and performed. But doubtless, God must also be sanctified in all his other worship, and his name must not be taken in vain. And when this sacrament was received every Lord's day, and often in the week besides, Christians were supposed to live continually in a state of general preparation, and not to be so far from a due particular preparation, as many poor Christians think they are.

Quest. II. 'How often should the sacrament be now administered, that it neither grow into contempt or strangeness?'

Answ. Ordinarily in well disciplined churches it should be still every Lord's day: for 1. We have no reason to prove, that the apostles' example and appointment in this case, was proper to those times, any more than that praise and thanksgiving daily is proper to them: and we may as well deny the obligation of other institutions, or apostolical orders as that. 2. It is a part of the settled order for the Lord's day worship; and omitting it, maimeth and altereth the worship of the day; and occasioneth the omission of the thanksgiving and praise, and lively commemorations of Christ which should be then most performed: and so Christians by use, grow habituated to sadness, and a mourning, melancholy religion, and grow unacquainted with much of the worship and spirit of the gospel. 3. Hereby the Papists' lamentable corruptions of this ordinance have grown up, even by an excess of reverence and fear, which seldom receiving doth increase, till they are come to worship bread as their God. 4. By seldom communicating, men are seduced to think all proper communion of churches lieth in that sacrament, and to be more profanely bold in abusing many other parts of worship. 5.

There are better means (by teaching and discipline) to keep the sacrament from contempt, than the omitting or displacing of it. 6. Every Lord's day is no oftener than Christians need it. 7. The frequency will teach them to live prepared, and not only to make much ado once a month or quarter, when the same work is neglected all the year besides; even as one that liveth in continual expectation of death, will live in continual preparation: when he that expecteth it but in some grievous sickness, will then be frightened into some seeming preparations, which are not the habit of his soul, but laid by again when the disease is over.

2. But yet I must add, that in some undisciplined churches, and upon some occasions it may be longer omitted or seldomer used; no duty is a duty at all times: and therefore extraordinary cases may raise such impediments, as may hinder us a long time from this, and many other privileges. But the ordinary faultiness of our imperfect hearts, that are apt to grow customary and dull, is no good reason why it should be seldom; any more than why other special duties of worship and church-communion should be seldom. Read well the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians, and you will find that they were then as bad as the true Christians are now, and that even in this sacrament they were very culpable; and yet Paul seeketh not to cure them by their seldomer communicating.

Quest. III. 'Are all the members of the visible church to be admitted to this sacrament, or communicate?'

Answ. All are not to seek it, or to take it, because many may know their own unfitness, when the church or pastors know it not: but all that come to seek it, are to be admitted by the pastors, except such children, idiots, ignorant persons, or heretics, as know not what they are to receive and do, and such as are notoriously wicked or

scandalous, and have not manifested their repentance. But then it is presupposed, that none should be numbered with the adult members of the church, but those that have personally owned their baptismal covenant, by a credible profession of true Christianity.

Quest. IV. 'May a man that hath knowledge, and civility, and common gifts, come and take this sacrament, if he know that he is yet void of true repentance, and other saving grace?'

Answ. No; for he then knoweth himself to be one that is incapable of it in his present state.

Quest. V. 'May an ungodly man receive this sacrament, who knoweth not himself to be ungodly?'

Answ. No; for he ought to know it, and his sinful ignorance of his own condition, will not make his sin to be his duty; nor excuse his other faults before God.

Quest. VI. 'Must a sincere Christian receive, that is uncertain of his sincerity, and in continual doubting?'

Answ. Two preparations are necessary to this sacrament; the general preparation, which is a state of grace, and this the doubting Christian hath; and the particular preparation, which consisteth in his present actual fitness: and all the question is of this. And to know this, you must further distinguish, between immediate duty and more remote, and between the degrees of doubtfulness in Christians. 1. The nearest immediate duty of the doubting Christian is, to use the means to have his doubts resolved, till he know his case, and then his next duty is, to receive the sacrament; and both these still remain his duty, to be performed in this order: and if he say, 'I cannot be resolved, when I have done my best;' yet certainly it is some sin of his own that

keepeth him in the dark, and hindereth his assurance; and therefore duty ceaseth not to be duty. The law of Christ still obligeth him, both to get assurance, and to receive: and the want both of the knowledge of his state, and of receiving the sacrament, are his continual sin, if he lie in it never so long through these scruples, though it be an infirmity that God will not condemn him for. (For he is supposed to be in a state of grace.) But you will say, 'What if still he cannot be resolved whether he have true faith and repentance, or not? what should he do while he is in doubt?' I answer, it is one thing to ask, what is his duty in this case; and another thing to ask, which is the smaller or less dangerous sin? Still his duty is both to get the knowledge of his heart, and to communicate: but while he sinneth (through infirmity) in failing of the first, were he better also omit the other or not? To be well resolved of that, you must discern, 1. Whether his judgment of himself, do rather incline to think and hope that he is sincere in his repentance and faith, or that he is not. 2. And whether the consequents are like to be good or bad to him. If his hopes that he is sincere, be as great or greater than his fears of the contrary, then there is no such ill consequent to be feared as may hinder his communicating; but it is his best way to do it, and wait on God in the use of his ordinance. But if the persuasion of his gracelessness be greater than the hopes of his sincerity, then he must observe how he is like to be affected, if he do communicate. If he find that it is like to clear up his mind, and increase his hopes by the actuating of his grace, he is yet best to go: but if he find that his heart is like to be overwhelmed with horror, and sunk into despair, by running into the supposed guilt of unworthy receiving, then it will be worse to do it, than to omit it. Many such fearful Christians I have known, that are fain many years to absent themselves from the sacrament; because if they should receive it while they are persuaded of their utter unworthiness, they would be swallowed up of desperation, and think that they had taken their own damnation, (as

the twenty-fifth Article of the church of England saith, the unworthy receivers do.) So that the chief sin of such a doubting receiver, is not that he receiveth, though he doubt; for doubting will not excuse us for the sinful omission of a duty (no more of this than of prayer or thanksgiving): but only prudence requireth such a one to forbear that, which through his own distemper would be a means of his despair or ruin: as that physic or food, how good soever, is not to be taken, which would kill the taker: God's ordinances are not appointed for our destruction, but for our edification; and so must be used as tendeth thereunto. Yet to those Christians, who are in this case, and dare not communicate, I must put this question, How dare you so long refuse it? He that consenteth to the covenant, may boldly come and signify his consent, and receive the sealed covenant of God; for consent is your preparation, or the necessary condition of your right: if you consent not, you refuse all the mercy of the covenant. And dare you live in such a state? Suppose a pardon be offered to a condemned thief, but so, that if he after cast it in the dirt, or turn traitor, he shall die a sorer death; will he rather choose to die than take it, and say, I am afraid I shall abuse it? To refuse God's covenant is certain death; but to consent is your preparation and your life.

Quest. VII. 'But what if superiors compel such a Christian to communicate, or else they will excommunicate and imprison him: what then should he choose?'

Answ. If he could do it without his own soul's hurt, he should obey them (supposing that it is nothing but that which in itself is good that they command him). But they have their power to edification, and not to destruction, and he must value his soul above his body; and therefore it is past question, that it is a smaller hurt to be excommunicated, and lie and die in prison, than to cast his soul into

despair, by doing that which he thinketh is a grievous sin, and would be his damnation. But all means must be used to cure the mistake of his own understanding.

Quest. VIII. 'Is not the case of an hypocrite that knoweth not himself to be an hypocrite, and of a sincere Christian that knoweth not himself to be sincere, all one as to communicating: when both are equally in doubt?'

Answ. No: for being and seeing are things that must be distinguished. The one hath grace in being, though he see it not; and therefore hath a right to the blessings of the covenant; and therefore at once remaineth obliged both to discern his title, and to come and take it: and therefore if he come doubtingly, his sin is not that he receiveth, but in the manner of receiving, that he doth it doubtingly; and therefore it will be a greater sin not to receive at all, unless in the last mentioned case, wherein the consequents are like to be worse to him. But the other hath no true repentance or faith, or love in being; and therefore hath no right to the blessings of the covenant; and therefore, at present, is obliged to discern that he is graceless, and to repent of it: and it is not his sin that he doubteth of his title, but that he demandeth and taketh what he hath no title to; and therefore it is a greater sin in him to take it, than to delay in order to his recovery and preparation. Yea, even in point of comfort, there is some disparity: for though the true Christian hath far greater terrors than hypocrites, when he taketh himself to be an unworthy receiver (as being more sensible and regardful of the weight of the matter), yet usually in the midst of all his fears, there are some secret testimonies in his heart of the love of God, which are a cordial of hope that keep him from sinking into despair, and have more life and power in them, than all the hypocrites' false persuasions of his own sincerity.

Quest. IX. 'Wherein lieth the sin of an hypocrite, and ungodly person, if he do receive?'

Answ. His sin is, 1. In lying and hypocrisy; in that he professeth to repent unfeignedly of his sin, and to be resolved for a holy life, and to believe in Christ, and to accept him on his covenant terms, and to give up himself to God, as his Father, his Saviour, and his Sanctifier, and to forsake the flesh, the world, and the devil: when indeed, he never did any of this, but secretly abhorreth it at his heart, and will not be persuaded to it: and so all this profession, and his very covenanting itself, and his receiving, as it is a professing-covenanting sign, is nothing but a very lie. And what it is to lie to the Holy Ghost, the case of Ananias and Sapphira telleth us. 2. It is usurpation to come and lay claim to those benefits, which he hath no title to. 3. It is a profanation of these holy mysteries, to be thus used; and it is a taking of God's name in vain, who is a jealous God, and will be sanctified of all that draw near unto him. 4. And it is a wrong to the church of God, and the communion of saints, and the honour of the Christian religion, that such ungodly hypocrites intrude as members: as it is to the king's army, when the enemies' spies creep in amongst them; or to his marriage-feast to have a guest in ragsk.

Object. 'But it is no lie, because they think they say true in their profession.'

Answ. That is through their sinful negligence and self-deceit: and he is a liar that speaks a falsehood, which he may and ought to know to be a falsehood, though he do not know it. There is a liar in rashness and negligence, as well as of set purpose.

Quest. X. 'Doth all unworthy receiving make a man liable to damnation? Or, what unworthiness is it that is so threatened.'

Answ. There are three sorts of unworthiness (or unfitness) and three sorts of judgment answerably to be feared. 1.There is the utter unworthiness of an infidel, or impenitent, ungodly hypocrite. And damnation to hell fire, is the punishment that such must expect, if conversion prevent it not. 2. There is an unworthiness through some great and scandalous crime, which a regenerate person falleth into; and this should stop him from the sacrament for a time, till he have repented and cast away his sin. And if he come before he rise from his fall by a particular repentance (as the Corinthians that sinned in the very use of the sacrament itself), they may expect some notable temporal judgment at the present; and if repentance did not prevent it, they might fear eternal punishment. 3. There is that measure of unworthiness which consisteth in the ordinary infirmities of a saint; and this should not at all deter them from the sacrament, because it is accompanied with a greater worthiness; yea, though their weakness appear in the time and manner of their receiving: but yet ordinary corrections may follow these ordinary infirmities. (The grosser abuse of the sacrament itself, I join under the second rank.)

Quest. XI. 'What is the particular preparation needful to a fit communicant?'

Answ. This bringeth me up to the next Direction.

Direct. V. 'Let your preparation to this sacrament consist of these particulars following. 1. In your duty with your own consciences and hearts. 2. In your duty towards God. 3. And in your duty towards your neighbour.'

I. Your duty with your hearts consisteth in these particulars. 1. That you do your best in the close examination of your hearts about your states, and the sincerity of your faith, repentance and obedience: to know whether your hearts are true to God, in the covenant which you

are to renew and to seal. Which may be done by these inquiries, and discerned by these signs, (1.) Whether you truly loathe yourselves for all the sins of your hearts and lives, and are a greater offence and burden to yourselves, because of your imperfections and corruptions, than all the world beside is. (2.) Whether you have no sin but what you are truly desirous to know; and no known sin, but what you are truly desirous to be rid of; and so desirous, as that you had rather be perfectly freed from sin, than from any affliction in the worldn. (3.) Whether you love the searching and reforming light, even the most searching parts of the Word of God, and the most searching books, and searching sermons, that by them you may be brought to know yourselves, in order to your settled peace and reformation. (4.) Whether you truly love that degree of holiness in others which you have not yet attained yourselves, and love Christ in his children, with such an unfeigned love, as will cause you to relieve them according to your abilities, and suffer for their sakes, when it is your dutyp. (5.) Whether you can truly say, that there is no degree of holiness so high, but you desire it, and had rather be perfect in the love of God, and the obedience of his will, than have all the riches and pleasures of this world. And had rather be one of the holiest saints, than of the most renowned, prosperous princes upon earthr. (6.) Whether you have so far laid up your treasure, and your hopes in heaven, as that you are resolved to take that only for your portion; and that the hopes of heaven, and interest of your souls, hath the preeminence in your hearts against all that stands in competition with it. (7.) Whether the chiefest care of your hearts, and endeavour of your lives, be to serve and please God, and to enjoy him for ever, rather than for any worldly thingt. (8.) Whether it be your daily desire and endeavour to mortify the flesh, and master its rebellious opposition to the Spirit; and you so far prevail, as not to live, and walk, and be led by the flesh, but that the course and drift of your life is spiritual. (9.) Whether the world, and all its honour, wealth and pleasure

appear to you so small and contemptible a thing, as that you esteem it as dung, and nothing in comparison of Christ, and the love of God and glory? and are resolved, that you will rather let go all, than your part in Christ? And, which useth to carry it in the time of trial, in your deliberate choicex? (10.) Whether you are resolved upon a course of holiness and obedience, and to use those means which God doth make known to you, to be the way to please him, and to subdue your corruption; and yet feeling the frailties of your hearts, and the burden of your sins, do trust in Christ as your righteousness before God, and in the Holy Ghost, whose grace alone can illuminate, sanctify, and confirm you. By these signs you may safely try your states.

2. When this is done, you are also to try the strength and measure of your grace; that you may perceive your weakness, and know for what help you should seek to Christ. And to find out what inward corruptions and sinful inclinations are yet strongest in you, that you may know what to lament, and to ask forgiveness of, and help against. My book called "Directions for Weak Christians," will give you fuller advice in this.

3. You are also to take a strict account of your lives; and to look over your dealings with God and men, in secret and in public, especially of late, since the last renewal of your covenant with God, and to hear what God and conscience have to say about your sins, and all their aggravationsa.

4. And you must labour to get your hearts affected with your condition, as you do discover it. To be humbled for what is sinful, and to be desirous of help against your weakness, and thankful for the grace which you discern.

5. Lastly, you must consider of all the work that you are to do, and all the mercies which you are going to receive, and what graces are necessary to all this, and how they must be used; and accordingly look up all those graces, and prepare them for the exercise to which they are to be called out. I shall name you the particulars anon.

II. Your duty towards God in your preparation for this sacrament, is, 1. To cast down yourselves before him in humble, penitent confession, and lamentation of all the sins which you discover; and to beg his pardon in secret, before you come to have it publicly sealed and delivered. 2. To look up to him with that thankfulness, love, and joy, as becomes one that is going to receive so great a mercy from him; and humbly to beg that grace which may prepare you, and quicken you to, and in the work.

III. Your duty towards others in this your preparation, is, 1. To forgive those that have done you wrong, and to confess your fault to those whom you have wronged, and ask them forgiveness, and make them amends and restitution so far as is in your power; and to be reconciled to those with whom you are fallen out; and to see, that you love your neighbours as yourselves. 2. That you seek advice of your pastors, or some fit persons, in cases that are too hard for yourselves to resolve, and where you need their special help. 3. That you lovingly admonish them that you know do intend to communicate unworthily, and to come thither in their ungodliness, and gross sin unrepented of: that you shew not such hatred of your brother, as to suffer sin upon him: but tell him his faults, as Christ hath directed you, Matt. 18:15–17. And do your parts to promote Christ's discipline, and keep pure the church. See 1 Cor. 5 throughout.

Direct. VI. 'When you come to the holy communion, let not the over-scrupulous regard of the person of the minister, or the company, or

the imperfections of the ministration, disturb your meditations, nor call away your minds from the high and serious employment of the day.' Hypocrites who place their religion in bodily exercises, have taught many weak Christians to take up unnecessary scruples, and to turn their eye and observation too much to things without them.

Quest. 'But should we have no regard to the due celebration of these sacred mysteries, and to the minister, and communicants, and manner of administration?'

Answ. Yes: you should have so much regard to them, 1. As to see that nothing be amiss through your default, which is in your power to amend. 2. And that you join not in the committing of any known sin. But (1.) Take not every sin of another for your sin, and think not that you are guilty of that in others, which you cannot amend; or, that you must forsake the church and worship of God, for these corruptions which you are not guilty of, or deny your own mercies, because others usurp them or abuse them. (2.) If you suspect any thing imposed upon you to be sinful to you, try it before you come thither; and leave not your minds open to disturbance, when they should be wholly employed with Christ.

Quest. I. 'May we lawfully receive this sacrament from an ungodly and unworthy minister?'

Answ. Whoever you may lawfully commit the guidance of your souls to as your pastor, you may lawfully receive the sacrament from, yea, and in some cases from some others: for in case you come into a church that you are no member of, you may lawfully join in communion with that church, for that present, as a stranger, though they have a pastor so faulty, as you might not lawfully commit the ordinary conduct of your soul to. For it is their fault and not yours, that they chose no better; and, in some cases, such a fault as will not

warrant you to avoid communion with them. But you may not receive, if you know it, from a heretic, that teacheth any error against the essence of Christianity. 2. Nor from a man so utterly ignorant of the Christian faith or duty, or so utterly unable to teach it to others, as to be notoriously uncapable of the ministry. 3. Nor from a man professedly ungodly, or that setteth himself to preach down godliness itself. These you must never own as ministers of Christ, that are utterly uncapable of it. But see that you take none for such that are not such. And there are three sorts more, which you may not receive from, when you have your choice, nor take them for your pastors: but in case of necessity imposed on you by others, it is lawful and your duty. And that is, (1.) Usurpers that make themselves your pastors, without a lawful call, and perhaps do forcibly thrust out the lawful pastors of the church. (2.) Weak, ignorant, cold and lifeless preachers, that are tolerable in case of necessity, but not to be compared with worthier men. (3.) Ministers of scandalous, vicious lives. It is a sin in you to prefer any one of these before a better, and to choose them when you have your choice; but it is a sin on the other side, if you rather submit not to one of these, than be quite without, and have none at all. You own not their faults in such a case, by submitting to their ministry.

Quest. II. 'May we communicate with unworthy persons, or in an undisciplined church?'

Answ. You must here distinguish if you will not err: and that, 1. Between persons so unworthy as to be no Christians, and those that are culpable, scandalous Christians. 2. Between a few members, and the whole society, or the denominating part. 3. Between sin professed and owned, and sin disowned by a seeming penitence. 4. And between a case of liberty, when I have my choice of a better

society; and a case of necessity, when I must communicate with the worser society, or with none: and so I answer,

1. You ought not to communicate at all in this sacrament with a society that professeth not Christianity: if the whole body, or denominating part be such; that is, 1. With such as never made profession of Christianity at all. 2. Or have apostatized from it. 3. Or, that openly own any heresy inconsistent with the essential faith or duty of a Christian. 4. Or, that are notoriously ignorant what Christianity is.

2. It is the duty of the pastors and governors of the church, to keep away notorious, scandalous offenders, till they shew repentance; and the people's duty to assist them by private reproof, and informing the church when there is cause. Therefore, if it be through the neglect of your own duty, that the church is corrupted and undisciplined, the sin is yours, whether you receive with them or not.

3. If you rather choose a corrupted, undisciplined church to communicate with, when you have your choice of a better, 'cæteris paribus,' it is your fault.

But on the contrary, it is not your sin, but your duty to communicate with that church which hath a true pastor, and where the denominating part of the members are capable of church communion, though there may some infidels, or heathens, or incapable persons violently intrude, or scandalous persons are admitted through the neglect of discipline; in case you have not your choice to hold personal communion with a better church, and in case also you be not guilty of the corruption, but by seasonable and modest professing your dissent, do clear yourself of the guilt of such intrusion and corruption. For here the reasons and ends of a lawful separation are removed; because it tendeth not to God's honour, or

their reformation, or your benefit: for all these are more crossed by holding communion with no church, than with such a corrupted church. And this is to be preferred before none, as much as a better before this.

Quest. III. 'But what if I cannot communicate unless I conform to an imposed gesture, as kneeling or sitting?'

Answ. 1. For sitting or standing, no doubt it is lawful in itself: for else authority were not to be obeyed, if they should command it; and else the church had sinned in forbearing kneeling in the act of receiving, so many hundred years after Christ; as is plain they did, by the canons of general councils (Nic. i. and Trull.) that universally forbade to adore kneeling, any Lord's day in the year, and any week day between Easter and Whitsuntide; and by the fathers, Tertullian, Epiphanius, &c., that make this an apostolic or universal tradition. 2. And for kneeling, I never yet heard any thing to prove it unlawful; if there be any thing, it must be either some Word of God, or the nature of the ordinance, which is supposed to be contradicted. But 1. There is no Word of God for any gesture, nor against any gesture: Christ's example can never be proved to be intended to oblige us more in this, than in many other circumstances that are confessed not obligatory: as that he delivered it but to ministers, and but to a family, to twelve, and after supper, and on a Thursday night, and in an upper room, &c.: and his gesture was not such a sitting as ours. 2. And for the nature of the ordinance, it is mixed: and if it be lawful to take a pardon from the king upon our knees, I know not what can make it unlawful to take a sealed pardon from Christ (by his ambassador) upon our knees.

Quest. IV. 'But what if I cannot receive it, but according to the administration of the Common prayer-book? or some other imposed

form of prayer? Is it lawful so to take it?'

Answ. If it be unlawful to receive it, when it is administered with the Common prayer-book, it is either, 1. Because it is a form of prayer. 2. Or because that form hath some forbidden matter in it. 3. Or because that form is imposed. 4. Or because it is imposed to some evil end and consequent. 1. That it is not unlawful, because a form, is proved before, and indeed needs no proof with any that is judicious. 2. Nor yet for any evil in this particular form: for in this part the Common Prayer is generally approved. 3. Nor yet, because it is imposed: for a command maketh not that unlawful to us, which is lawful before; but it maketh many things lawful and duties, that else would have been unlawful accidentally. 4. And the intentions of the commanders, we have little to do with; and for the consequents they must be weighed on both sides; and the consequents of our refusal will not be found light.

In the general, I must here tell all the people of God, in the bitter sorrow of my soul, that at last it is time for them to discern that temptation, that hath in all ages of the church almost, made this sacrament of our union, to be the grand occasion or instrument of our divisions; and that true humility, and acquaintance with ourselves, and sincere love to Christ and one another, would shew some men, that it was but their pride, and prejudice, and ignorance, that made them think so heinously of other men's manner of worship: and that on all sides among true Christians, the manner of their worship is not so odious, as prejudice, and faction, and partiality representeth it: and that God accepteth that which they reject. And they should see how the devil hath undone the common people by this means; by teaching them every one to expect salvation for being of that party which he taketh to be the right church, and for worshipping in that manner which he and his party thinketh best:

and so wonderful a thing is prejudice, that every party by this is brought to account that ridiculous and vile, which the other party accounted best.

Quest. V. 'But what if my conscience be not satisfied, but I am still in doubt, must I not forbear? Seeing he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not in faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.'

Answ. The apostle there speaketh not of eating in the sacrament, but of eating meats which he doubteth of whether they are lawful, but is sure that it is lawful to forbear them. And in case of doubting about things indifferent, the surer side is to forbear them, because there may be sin in doing; but there can be none on the other side, in forbearing. But in case of duties, your doubting will not disoblige you; else men might give over praying, and hearing God's Word, and believing, and obeying their rulers, and maintaining their families, when they are but blind enough to doubt of it. 2. Your erring conscience is not a law maker, and cannot make it your duty to obey it: for God is your king, and the office of conscience is to discern his law, and urge you to obedience, and not to make you laws of its own: so that if it speak falsely, it doth not oblige you, but deceive you: it doth only 'ligare,' or insnare you, but not 'obligare,' or make a sin a duty: it casteth you into a necessity of sinning more or less, till you relinquish the error; but in the case of such duties as these, it is a sin to do them with a doubting conscience, but (ordinarily) it is a greater sin to forbear.

Object. 'But some divines write, that conscience being God's officer, when it erreth, God himself doth bind me by it to follow that error, and the evil which it requireth becometh my duty.'

Answ. A dangerous error tending to the subversion of souls and kingdoms, and highly dishonourable to God. God hath made it your duty to know his will, and do it: and if you ignorantly mistake him, will you lay the blame on him, and draw him into participation of your sin, when he forbiddeth you both the error and the sin? And doth he at once forbid and command the same thing? At that very moment, God is so far from obliging you to follow your error, that he still obligeth you to lay it by, and do the contrary. If you say, 'You cannot,' I answer, your impotency, is a sinful impotency; and you can use the means, in which his grace can help you: and he will not change his law, nor make you kings and rulers of yourselves instead of him, because you are ignorant or impotent.

Direct. VII. 'In the time of the administration, go along with the minister throughout the work, and keep your hearts close to Jesus Christ, in the exercise of all those graces which are suited to the several parts of the administration.' Think not that all the work must be the minister's: it should be a busy day with you, and your hearts should be taken up with as much diligence, as your hands be in your common labour; but not in a toilsome, weary diligence, but in such delightful business as becometh the guests of the God of heaven, at so sweet a feast, and in the receiving of such invaluable gifts.

Here I should distinctly shew you, I. What graces they be that you must there exercise. II. What there is objectively presented before you in the Sacrament, to exercise all these graces. III. At what seasons in the administration each of these inward works are to be done.

I. The graces to be exercised are these, (besides that holy fear and reverence common to all worship,) 1. A humble sense of the odiousness of sin, and of our undone condition as in ourselves, and a

displeasure against ourselves, and loathing of ourselves, and melting repentance for the sins we have committed; as against our Creator, and as against the love and mercy of a Redeemer, and against the Holy Spirit of Grace. 2. A hungering and thirsting desire after the Lord Jesus, and his grace, and the favour of God and communion with him, which are there represented and offered to the soul. 3. A lively faith in our Redeemer, his death, resurrection, and intercession; and a trusting our miserable souls upon him, as our sufficient Saviour and help; and a hearty acceptance of him and his benefits upon his offered terms. 4. A joy and gladness in the sense of that unspeakable mercy which is here offered us. 5. A thankful heart towards him from whom we do receive it. 6. A fervent love to him that by such love doth seek our love. 7. A triumphant hope of life eternal, which is purchased for us, and sealed to us. 8. A willingness and resolution to deny ourselves, and all this world, and suffer for him that hath suffered for our redemption. 9. A love to our brethren, our neighbours, and our enemies, with a readiness to relieve them, and to forgive them when they do us wrong. 10. And a firm resolution for future obedience, to our Creator, and Redeemer, and Sanctifier, according to our covenant.

II. In the naming of these graces, I have named their objects, which you should observe as distinctly as you can that they may be operative. 1. To help your humiliation and repentance, you bring thither a loaden miserable soul, to receive a pardon and relief: and you see before you the sacrificed Son of God, who made his soul an offering for sin, and became a curse for us to save us who were accursed. 2. To draw out your desires, you have the most excellent gifts and the most needful mercies presented to you that this world is capable of: even the pardon of sin, the love of God, the Spirit of grace, and the hopes of glory, and Christ himself with whom all this is given. 3. To exercise your faith you have Christ here first

represented as crucified before your eyes: and then with his benefits, freely given you, and offered to your acceptance, with a command that you refuse them not. 4. To exercise your delight and gladness, you have this Saviour and this salvation tendered to you; and all that your souls can well desire set before you. 5. To exercise your thankfulness, what could do more than so great a gift, so dearly purchased, so surely sealed, and so freely offered? 6. To exercise your love to God in Christ, you have the fullest manifestation of his attractive love, even offered to your eyes, and taste, and heart, that a soul on earth can reasonably expect; in such wonderful condescension, that the greatness and strangeness of it surpasseth a natural man's belief. 7. To exercise your hopes of life eternal, you have the price of it here set before you; you have the gift of it here sealed to you; and you have that Saviour represented to you in his suffering, who is now there reigning, that you may remember him as expectants of his glorious coming to judge the world, and glorify you with himself. 8. To exercise your self-denial and resolution for suffering, and contempt of the world and fleshly pleasures, you have before you both the greatest example and obligation, that ever could be offered to the world; when you see and receive a crucified Christ, that so strangely denied himself for you, and set so little by the world and flesh. 9. To exercise your love to brethren, yea, and enemies, you have his example before your eyes, that loved you to the death when you were enemies: and you have his holy servants before your eyes, who are amiable in him through the workings of his Spirit, and on whom he will have you shew your love to himself. 10. And to excite your resolution for future obedience, you see his double title to the government of you, as Creator and as Redeemer; and you feel the obligations of mercy and gratitude; and you are to renew a covenant with him to that end; even openly where all the church are witnesses. So that you see here are powerful objects before you to draw out all

these graces, and that they are all but such as the work requireth you then to exercise.

III. But that you may be the readier when it cometh to practice, I shall as it were lead you by the hand, through all the parts of the administration, and tell you when and how to exercise every grace, and those that are to be joined together I shall take together, that needless distinctness do not trouble you.

1. When you are called up and going to the table of the Lord, exercise your humility, desire, and thankfulness, and say in your hearts, 'What, Lord, dost thou call such a wretch as I? What! me, that have so oft despised thy mercy, and wilfully offended thee, and preferred the filth of this world, and the pleasures of the flesh before thee? Alas, it is thy wrath in hell that is my due: but if love will choose such an unworthy guest, and mercy will be honoured upon such sin and misery, I come Lord at thy call: I gladly come: let thy will be done; and let that mercy which inviteth me, make me acceptable, and graciously entertain me; and let me not come without the wedding garment, nor unreverently rush on holy things, nor turn thy mercies to my bane.'

2. When the minister is confessing sin, prostrate your very souls in the sense of your unworthiness, and let your particular sins be in your eye, with their heinous aggravations. The whole need not the physician, but the sick. But here I need not put words into your mouths or minds, because the minister goeth before you, and your hearts must concur with his confessions, and put in also the secret sins which he omitteth.

3. When you look on the bread and wine which is provided and offered for this holy use, remember that it is the Creator of all things, on whom you live, whose laws you did offend; and say in your hearts,

'O Lord, how great is my offence! who have broken the laws of him that made me, and on whom the whole creation doth depend! I had my being from thee, and my daily bread; and should I have requited thee with disobedience? Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

4. When the words of the institution are read, and the bread and wine are solemnly consecrated, by separating them to that sacred use, and the acceptance and blessing of God is desired, admire the mercy that prepared us a Redeemer, and say, "O God, how wonderful is thy wisdom and thy love! How strangely dost thou glorify thy mercy over those sins that gave thee advantage to glorify thy justice! Even thou our God whom we have offended, hast out of thy own treasury satisfied thy own justice, and given us a Saviour by such a miracle of wisdom, love, and condescension, as men or angels shall never be able fully to comprehend: so didst thou love the sinful world, as to give thy Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. O thou that hast prepared us so full a remedy, and so precious a gift, sanctify these creatures to be the representative body and blood of Christ, and prepare my heart for so great a gift, and so high, and holy, and honourable a work."

5. When you behold the consecrated bread and wine, discern the Lord's body, and reverence it as the representative body and blood of Jesus Christ; and take heed of profaning it, by looking on it as common bread and wine; though it be not transubstantiate, but still is very bread and wine in its natural being, yet it is Christ's body and blood in representation and effect. Look on it as the consecrated bread of life, which with the quickening Spirit must nourish you to life eternal.

6. When you see the breaking of the bread, and the pouring out of the wine, let repentance, and love, and desire, and thankfulness, thus work within you: "O wondrous love! O hateful sin! How merciful, Lord, hast thou been to sinners! and how cruel have we been to ourselves and thee! Could love stoop lower? Could God be merciful at a dearer rate? Could my sin have done a more horrid deed, than put to death the Son of God? How small a matter hath tempted me to that, which must cost so dear before it was forgiven! How dear payed my Saviour for that which I might have avoided at a very cheap rate! At how low a price have I valued his blood, when I have sinned and sinned again for nothing! This is my doing! My sins were the thorns, the nails, the spear! "Can a murderer of Christ be a small offender? O dreadful justice! It was I and such other sinners that deserved to bear the punishment, who were guilty of the sin; and to have been fuel for the unquenchable flames for ever. O precious sacrifice! O hateful sin! O gracious Saviour! How can man's dull and narrow heart be duly affected with such transcendent things? or heaven make its due impression upon an inch of flesh? Shall I ever again have a dull apprehension of such love? or ever have a favourable thought of sin? or ever have a fearless thought of justice? O break or melt this hardened heart, that it may be somewhat conformed to my crucified Lord! The tears of love and true repentance are easier than the flames from which I am redeemed. O hide me in these wounds, and wash me in this precious blood! This is the sacrifice in which I trust: this is the righteousness by which I must be justified, and saved from the curse of thy violated law! As thou hast accepted this, O Father, for the world, upon the cross, behold it still on the behalf of sinners; and hear his blood that crieth unto thee for mercy to the miserable, and pardon us, and accept us as thy reconciled children, for the sake of this crucified Christ alone! We can offer thee no other sacrifice for sin; and we need no other."

7. When the minister applieth himself to God by prayer, for the efficacy of this sacrament, that in it he will give us Christ and his benefits, and pardon, and justify us, and accept us as his reconciled children, join heartily and earnestly in these requests, as one that knoweth the need and worth of such a mercy.

8. When the minister delivereth you the consecrated bread and wine, look upon him as the messenger of Christ, and hear him as if Christ by him said to you, "Take this my broken body and blood, and feed on it to everlasting life: and take with it my sealed covenant, and therein the sealed testimony of my love, and the sealed pardon of your sins, and a sealed gift of life eternal; so be it, you unfeignedly consent unto my covenant, and give up yourselves to me as my redeemed ones." Even as in delivering the possession of house or lands, the deliverer giveth a key, and a twig, and a turf, and saith, "I deliver you this house, and I deliver you this land;" so doth the minister by Christ's authority deliver you Christ, and pardon, and title to eternal life. Here is an image of a sacrificed Christ of God's own appointing, which you may lawfully use: and more than an image; even an investing instrument, by which these highest mercies are solemnly delivered to you in the name of Christ. Let your hearts therefore say with joy and thankfulness, with faith and love, "O matchless bounty of the eternal God! what a gift is this! and unto what unworthy sinners! And will God stoop so low to man? and come so near him? and thus reconcile his worthless enemies? Will he freely pardon all that I have done? and take me into his family and love, and feed me with the flesh and blood of Christ? I believe; Lord, help mine unbelief. I humbly and thankfully accept thy gifts! Open thou my heart, that I may yet more joyfully and thankfully accept them. Seeing God will glorify his love and mercy by such incomprehensible gifts as these, behold, Lord, a wretch that needeth all this mercy! And seeing it is the offer of thy grace and covenant, my soul doth gladly

take thee for my God and Father, for my Saviour and my Sanctifier. And here I give up myself unto, thee, as thy created, redeemed, and (I hope) regenerate one; as thy own, thy subject, and thy child, to be saved and sanctified by thee, to be beloved by thee, and to love thee to everlasting. O seal up this covenant and pardon, by thy Spirit, which thou sealest and deliverest to me in thy sacrament; that without reserve I may be entirely and for ever thine!"

9. When you see the communicants receiving with you, let your very hearts be united to the saints in love, and say, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! How amiable is the family of the Lord! How good and pleasant is the unity of brethren! How dear to me are the precious members of my Lord! though they have yet all their spots and weaknesses which he pardoneth and so must we. My goodness, O Lord, extendeth not unto thee; but unto thy saints, the excellent ones on earth, in whom is my delight. What portion of my estate thou requirest, I willingly give unto the poor, and if I have wronged any man, I am willing to restore it. And seeing thou hast loved me an enemy, and forgiven me so great a debt, I heartily forgive those that have done me wrong, and love my enemies. O keep me in thy family all my days, for a day in thy courts is better than a thousand, and the door-keepers in thy house are happier than the most prosperous of the wicked."

10. When the minister returneth thanks and praise to God, stir up your souls to the greatest alacrity; and suppose you saw the heavenly hosts of saints and angels praising the same God in the presence of his glory; and think with yourselves, that you belong to the same family and society as they, and are learning their work, and must shortly arrive at their perfection: strive therefore to imitate them in love and joy; and let your very souls be poured out in praises and thanksgiving. And when you have the next leisure for your private

thoughts, (as when the minister is exhorting you to your duty,) exercise your love, and thanks, and faith, and hope, and self-denial, and resolution for future obedience, in some such breathings of your souls as these: "O my gracious God, thou hast surpassed all human comprehension in thy love! Is this thy usage of unworthy prodigals? I feared lest thy wrath as a consuming fire would have devoured such a guilty soul; and thou wouldst have charged upon me all my folly. But while I condemned myself, thou hast forgiven and justified me; and surprised me with the sweetest embracements of thy love! I see now that thy thoughts are above our thoughts, and thy ways above our ways, and thy love excelleth the love of man, even more than the. heavens are above the earth. With how dear a price hast thou redeemed a wretch that deserved thy everlasting vengeance! with how precious and sweet a feast hast thou entertained me, who deserved to be cast out with the workers of iniquity! Shall I ever more slight such love as this? shall it not overcome my rebelliousness, and melt down my cold and hardened heart? shall I be saved from hell, and not be thankful? Angels are admiring these miracles of love? and shall not I admire them? Their love to us doth cause them to rejoice, while they stand by and see our heavenly feast: and should it not be sweeter to us that are the guests that feed upon it? My God, how dearly hast thou purchased my love! how strangely hast thou deserved and sought it! Nothing is so much my grief and shame, as that I can answer such love with no more fervent, fruitful love. O what an addition would it be to all this precious mercy, if thou wouldst give me a heart to answer these thine invitations, that thy love, thus poured out, might draw forth mine, and my soul might flame by its approaching unto these thy flames! and that love, drawn out by the sense of love, might be all my life; O that I could love thee as much as I would love thee! yea, as much as thou wouldst have me love thee! But this is too great a happiness for earth! But thou hast shewed me the place where I may attain it! My Lord is there, in full

possession: who hath left me these pledges, till he come and fetch us to himself, and feast us there in our Master's joy. O blessed place! O happy company that see his glory, and are filled with the streams of those rivers of consolation! yea, happy we whom thou hast called from our dark and miserable state, and made us heirs of that felicity, and passengers to it, and expectants of it, under the conduct of so sure a guide! O then we shall love thee, without these sinful pauses and defects; in another measure and in another manner than now we do: when thou shalt reveal and communicate thy attractive love, in another measure and manner than now! Till then, my God, I am devoted to thee; by right and covenant I am thine! My soul here beareth witness against myself, that my defects of love have no excuse: thou deservest all, if I had the love of all the saints in heaven and earth to give thee. What hath the world to do with my affections? And what is this sordid, corruptible flesh, that its desires and pleasures should call down my soul, and tempt it to neglect my God? What is there in all the sufferings that man can lay upon me, that I should not joyfully accept them for his sake, that hath redeemed me from hell, by such unmatched, voluntary sufferings? Lord, seeing thou regardest, and so regardest, so vile a worm, my heart, my tongue, my hand confess, that I am wholly thine. O let me live to none but thee, and to thy service, and thy saints on earth! And O let me no more return unto iniquity! nor venture on that sin that killed my Lord! And now thou hast chosen so low a dwelling, O be not strange to the heart that thou hast so freely chosen! O make it the daily residence of thy Spirit! Quicken it by thy grace; adorn it with thy gifts; employ it in thy love; delight it in its attendance on thee; refresh it with thy joys and the light of thy countenance; and destroy this carnality, selfishness, and unbelief: and let the world see that God will make a palace of the lowest heart, when he chooseth it for the place of his own abode."

Direct. VIII. 'When you come home review the mercy which you, have received, and the duty which you have done, and the covenant you have made: and 1. Betake yourselves to God in praise and prayer, for the perfecting of his work. And 2. Take heed to your hearts that they grow not cold, and that worldly things or diverting trifles, do not blot out the sacred impressions which Christ hath made, and that they cool not quickly into their former dull and sleepy frame. 3. And see that your lives be actuated by the grace that you have here received, that even they that you converse with may perceive that you have been with God.' Especially when temptations would draw you again to sin; and when the injuries of friends or enemies would provoke you, and when you are called to testify your love to Christ, by any costly work or suffering; remember then what was so lately before your eyes, and upon your heart, and what you resolved on, and what a covenant you made with God. Yet judge not of the fruit of your receiving, so much by feeling, as by faith; for more is promised than you yet possess.

CHAPTER XXV

Directions for Fearful, Troubled Christians that are perplexed with Doubts of their Sincerity and Justification

HAVING directed families in the duties of their relations, and in the right worshipping of God, I shall speak something of the special duties of some Christians, who in regard of their state of soul and body, have special need of help and counsel. As 1. The doubting, troubled Christian. 2. The declining, or backsliding Christian. 3. The poor. 4. The aged. 5. The sick. 6. And those that are about the sick and dying. Though these might seem to belong rather to the first Part, yet because I would have those directions lie here together,

which the several sorts of persons in families most need, I have chosen to reserve them rather to this place. The special duties of the strong, the rich, and the young and healthful, I omit, because I find the book grow big, and you may gather them from what is said before, on several such subjects. And the Directions which I shall first give to doubting Christians, shall be but a few brief memorials, because I have done that work already, in my "Directions or Method for Peace of Conscience and Spiritual Comfort;" and much is here said before, in the Directions against Melancholy and Despair.

Direct. I. 'Find out the special cause of your doubts and troubles, and bend most of your endeavours to remove that cause.' The same cure will not serve for every doubting soul, no, nor for every one that hath the very same doubts. For the causes may be various, though the doubts should be the same: and the doubts will be continued while the cause remaineth.

1. In some persons the chief cause is a timorous, weak and passionate temper of body and mind; which in some (especially of the weaker sex) is so natural a disease, that there is no hope of a total cure; though yet we must direct and support such as we are able. These persons have so weak a head, and such powerful passions, that passion is their life; and according to passion they judge of themselves, and of all their duties. They are ordinarily very high or very low; full of joy, or sinking in despair; but usually fear is their predominant passion. And what an enemy to quietness and peace strong fear is, is easily observed in all that have it. Assuring evidence will not quiet such fearful minds, nor any reason satisfy them. The directions for these persons must be the same which I have before given against melancholy and despair. Especially that the preaching, and books, and means, which they make use of, be rather such as tend to inform the judgment, and settle the will, and guide the life,

than such as by the greatest fervency tend to awaken them to such passions or affections which they are unable to manage.

2. With others the causes of their troubles is melancholy, which I have long observed to be the commonest cause, with those godly people that remain in long and grievous doubts; where this is the cause, till it be removed, other remedies do but little: but of this I have spoken at large before.

3. In others the cause is a habit of discontent, and peevishness, and impatiency; because of some wants or crosses in the world: because they have not what they would have, their minds grow ulcerated, like a body that is sick or sore, that carrieth about with them the pain and smart; and they are still complaining of the pain they feel; but not of that which maketh the sore, and causeth the pain. The cure of these is either in pleasing them that they may have their will in all things (as you rock children and give them that which they cry for to quiet them); or rather to help to cure their impatiency, and settle their minds against their childish, sinful discontents (of which before).

4. In others the cause is error or great ignorance about the tenor of the covenant of grace, and the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ, and the work of sanctification, and evidences thereof; they know not on what terms Christ dealeth with sinners in the pardoning of sin, nor what are the infallible signs of sanctification: it is sound teaching, and diligent learning that must be the cure of these.

5. In others the cause is a careless life or frequent sinning, and keeping the wounds of conscience still bleeding: they are still fretting the sore, and will not suffer it to skin: either they live in railing and contention, or malice, or some secret lust, or fraud, or some way stretch and wrong their consciences: and God will not give his peace and comfort to them till they reform. It is a mercy that they are

disquieted and not given over to a seared conscience, which is past feeling.

6. In others the cause of their doubts is, placing their religion too much in humiliation, and in a continual poring on their hearts, and overlooking or neglecting the high and chiefest parts of religion, even the daily studies of the love of God, and the riches of grace in Jesus Christ, and hereby stirring up the soul to love and delight in God. When they make this more of their religion and business, it will bring their souls into a sweeter relish.

7. In others the cause is such weakness of parts and confusion of thoughts, and darkness of mind, that they are not able to examine themselves, nor to know what is in them: when they ask themselves any question, about their repentance or love to God, or any grace, they are fain to answer like strangers, and say, they cannot tell whether they do it or not. These persons must make more use than others, of the judgment of some able, faithful guide.

8. But of all others, the commonest cause of uncertainty, is the weakness or littleness of grace; when it is so little as to be next to none at all, no wonder if it be hardly and seldom discerned: therefore

Direct. II. 'Be not neglecters of self-examination, but labour for skill to manage aright so great a work; but yet let your care and diligence be much greater to get grace and use it, and increase it, than to try whether you have it already or not.' For in examination, when you have once taken a right course to be resolved, and yet are in doubt as much as before, your overmuch poring upon these trying questions, will do you but little good, and make you but little the better, but the time and labour may be almost lost: whereas all the labour which you bestow in getting, and using and increasing grace, is bestowed profitably to good purpose; and tendeth first to your safety and

salvation, and next that, to your easier certainty and comfort. There is no such way in the world to be certain that you have grace, as to get so much as is easily discerned and will shew itself, and to exercise it much that it may come forth into observation: when you have a strong belief you will easily be sure that you believe: when you have a fervent love to Christ and holiness, and to the Word, and ways, and servants of God, you will easily be assured that you love them. When you strongly hate sin and live in universal, constant obedience, you will easily discern your repentance and obedience. But weak grace will have but weak assurance and little consolation.

Direct. III. 'Set yourselves with all your skill and diligence to destroy every sin of heart and life, and make it your principal care and business to do your duty, and please, and honour God in your place, and to do all the good you can in the world: and trust God with your souls, as long as you wait upon him in his way.' If you live in wilful sin and negligence, be not unwilling to be reproved and delivered! If you cherish your sensual, fleshly lusts, and set your hearts too eagerly on the world, or defend your unpeaceableness and passion, or neglect your own duty to God or man, and make no conscience of a true reformation, it is not any enquiries after signs of grace, that will help you to assurance. You may complain long enough before you have ease, while such a thorn is in your foot. Conscience must be better used before it will speak a word of sound, well-grounded peace to you. But when you set yourselves with all your care and skill to do your duties, and please your Lord, he will not let your labour be in vain: he will take care of your peace and comfort, while you take care of your duty: and in this way you may boldly trust him: only think not hardly and falsely of the goodness of that God whom you study to serve and please.

Direct. IV. 'Be sure whatever condition you are in, that you understand, and hold fast, and improve the general grounds of comfort, which are common to mankind, so far as they are made known to them: and they are three, which are the foundation of all our comfort. 1. The goodness and mercifulness of God in his very nature. 2. The sufficiency of the satisfaction or sacrifice of Christ. 3. The universality, and freeness, and sureness of the covenant or promise of pardon and salvation to all, that by final impenitence and unbelief do not continue obstinately to reject it:' (or to all that unfeignedly repent and believe.) (1.) Think not poorly and meanly of the infinite goodness of God: even to Moses he proclaimeth his name at the second delivery of the law, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin—c" His mercy is over all his works; it is great and reacheth to the heavens; it is firm and endureth for ever; "And he hath pleasure in those that hope in his mercy. (2.) Extenuate not the merits and sacrifice of Christ; but know that never man was damned for want of a Christ to die and be a sacrifice for his sin, but only for want of repentance and faith in hime. (3.) Deny not the universality of the conditional promise of pardon and salvation, to all that it is offered to, and will accept it on the offerer's terms. And if you do but feel these three foundations firm and stedfast under you, it will encourage every willing soul. The love of God was the cause of our redemption by Christ: redemption was the foundation of the promise or new covenant: and he that buildeth on this threefold foundation is safe.

Direct. V. 'When you come to try your particular title, to the blessings of the covenant, be sure that you well, understand the condition of the covenant; and look for the performance of that condition in yourselves, as the infallible evidence of your title; and know that the

condition is nothing but an unfeigned consent unto the covenant.' Or such a belief of the Gospel, as maketh you truly willing of all the mercies offered in the Gospel, and of the duties required in order to those mercies. And that nothing depriveth any man that heareth the Gospel of Christ, and pardon, and salvation, but obstinate unwillingness or refusal of the mercy, and the necessary annexed duties. Understand this well, and then peruse the covenant of grace (which is, but to take God for your God and happiness, your Father, your Saviour, and your Sanctifier): and then ask your hearts, whether any thing be here that you are unwilling of; and unwilling of in a prevailing degree, when it is greater than your willingness: and if truly you are willing to be in covenant with your God, and Saviour, and Sanctifier upon these terms, know that your consent, or willingness, or acceptance of the mercy offered you, is your true performance of the condition of your title, and consequently the infallible evidence of your title; even as marriage consent is a title-condition to the person and privileges: and therefore if you find this, your doubts are answered: you have found as good an evidence as Scripture doth acquaint us with; and if this will not quiet and satisfy you, you understand not the business; nor is it reason or evidence that can satisfy you, till you are better prepared to understand them. But if really you are unwilling, and will not consent to the terms of the covenant, then instead of doubting, be past doubt that you are yet unsanctified: and your work is presently to consider better of the terms and benefits, and of those unreasonable reasons that make you unwilling: till you see that your happiness lieth upon the business, and that you have all the reason in the world to make you willing, and no true reason for the withholding of your consent: and when the light of these considerations hath prevailed for your consent, the match is made, and your evidence is sure.

Direct. VI. 'Judge not of your hearts and evidences upon every sudden glance or feeling, but upon a sober, deliberate examination, when your minds are in a clear, composed frame: and as then you find yourselves, record the judgment or discovery: and believe not every sudden, inconsiderate appearance, or passionate fear, against that record.' Otherwise you will never be quiet or resolved; but carried up and down by present sense. The case is weighty, and not to be decided by a sudden aspect, nor by a scattered or a discomposed mind; if you call your unprovided or your distempered understandings suddenly to so great a work, no wonder if you are deceived. You must not judge of colours when your eye is blood-shotten, or when you look through a coloured glass, or when the object is far off. It is like casting up a long and difficult account, which must be done deliberately as a work of time; and when it is so done, and the sums subscribed, if afterwards you will question that account again, you must take as full a time to do it, and that when you are as calm and vacant as before, and not unsettle an exact account upon a sudden view, or a thought of some one particular. Thus must you trust to no examinations and decisions about the state of your souls, but those that in long and calm deliberation, have brought it to an issue.

Direct. VII. 'And in doing this, neglect not to make use of the assistance of an able, faithful guide, so far as your own weakness makes it. necessary.' Your doubting sheweth that you are not sufficient to dispatch it satisfactorily yourselves: the question then is, what help a wiser man can give you? Why, he can more clearly open to you the true nature of grace, and the marks that are infallible, and the extent of the grace and tenor of the covenant; and he can help you how to trace your hearts, and observe the discoveries of good or evil in them; he can shew you your mistakes, and help you in the application, and tell you much of his own and others' experiences;

and he can pass a strong conjecture upon your own case in particular, if he be one that knoweth the course of your lives, and is intimately acquainted with you; for sin and grace are both expressive, operative things, like life that ordinarily will stir, or fire that will be seen; though their judgment cannot be infallible of you, and though for a while hypocrisy may hide you from the knowledge of another, yet 'ficta non diu, &c.' ordinarily nature will be seen, and that which is within you will shew itself; so that your familiar acquaintance that see your lives in private and in public, may pass a very strong conjecture at your state, whether you set yourselves indeed to please in sincerity God or no. Therefore, if possible, choose such a man to help you, as is 1. Able. 2. Faithful; and 3. Well acquainted with you; and undervalue not his judgment.

Direct. VIII. 'When you cannot attain to a certainty of your case, undervalue not and neglect not the comforts which a bare probability may afford you.' I know that a certainty in so weighty a case, should be earnestly desired, and endeavoured to the uttermost. But yet it is no small comfort which a likelihood or hopefulness may yield you. Husband and wife are uncertain every day, whether one of them may kill the other; and yet they can live comfortably together, because it is an unlikely thing; and though it be possible, it is not much to be feared; all the comforts of Christians dependeth not on their assurance; it is but few Christians in the world that reach to clear assurance; for all the Papists, Lutherans, and Arminians are without any certainty of their salvation; because they think it cannot be had; and all those Jansenists, or Protestants that are of Augustine's judgment are without assurance of salvation, though they may have assurance of their justification and sanctification; because their judgment is that the justified and sanctified (though not the elect) may fall away. And of those that hold the doctrine of perseverance, how few do we find, that can say, they are certain of their sincerity

and salvation. Alas, not one of very many. And yet many thousands of these do live in some peace of conscience, and quietness, and comfort, in the hopefulness, and probabilities to which they have attained.

Direct. IX. 'Resolve to be much in the great, delightful duties, of thanksgiving and the praise of God; and to spend a considerable part (ordinarily) of all your prayers herein; especially to spend the Lord's day principally in these.' And thus you will have three great advantages; 1. The very actings of love, and thanks, and joy, will help you to comfort, in a nearer way, than arguments and self-examination will do; even in a way of feeling, as the fire maketh you warm.2. The custom of exercising those sweetest graces, will habituate your souls to it, and in time wear out the sadder impression. 3. God will most own you in those highest duties.

Direct. X. 'Mark well how far your doubtings do help or hinder you in your sanctification: So far as they turn your heart from God, and from the love and sweetness of a holy life, and unfit you for thankfulness and cheerful obedience; so far you may be sure, that satan is gratified by them, and God displeased, and therefore they should be resisted: but so far, as they keep you humble and obedient, and make you more tenderly afraid of sin, and quicken your desires of Christ and grace, so far God useth them for your benefit.' And therefore be not too impatient under them, but wait on God in the use of his means, and he will give his comforts in the fittest season. Many an one hath sweet assurance at his death, or in his sufferings for Christ when he needed it most, that was fain to live long before without it. Especially take care, 1. That you miss not of assurance, through your own neglect. 2. And that your doubtings work no ill effects, in turning away your hearts from God, or discouraging you in

his service, and then you may take them as a trial of your patience, and they will certainly have a happy end.

CHAPTER XXVI

Tit. 1. Directions for Declining or Backsliding Christians: and about Perseverance

THE case of Backsliders is so terrible, and yet the mistakes of many Christians so common in thinking unjustly, that they are backsliders, that this subject must be handled with the greater care. And when I have first given some Directions for the cure, I shall next give some to others for prevention, of so sad a state.

Direct. I. 'Understand well wherein backsliding doth consist, the sorts, and the degrees of it, that so you may the more certainly and exactly discern, whether it be indeed your case, or not.' To this end, I shall here open to you, I. The several sorts of backsliders. II. The several steps or degrees of backsliding. III. The signs of it.

I. There are in general three sorts of backsliders. 1. Such as decline from the truth by the error of their understanding. 2. Such as turn from the goodness of God and holiness, by the corruption of their will and affections. 3. Such as turn from the obedience of God, and an upright conversation, by the sinfulness of their lives.

The first sort containeth in it, 1. Such as decline to infidelity from faith; and doubt of the truth of the Word of God. 2. Such as decline only to error, about the meaning of the Scriptures, though they doubt not of the truth of them. This corrupted judgment will presently corrupt both heart and life.

The second sort (backsliders in heart) containeth, 1. Such as only lose their affections to good; their complacency and desire; and lose their averseness and zeal against sin. 2. And such as lose the very resolution of the will also, and grow unresolved what to do, if not resolved to do evil, and to omit that which is good.

The third sort (backsliders in life) comprehendeth, 1. Those that fall from duty, towards God or man. 2, And those that fall into positive sins, and turn to sensuality, in voluptuousness, worldliness, or pride.

II. Backsliders in judgment, do sometimes fall by slow degrees, and sometimes suddenly at once. Those that fall by degrees, do some of them begin in the failing of the understanding; but most of them, begin at the failing or falseness of the heart, and the corrupted will corrupteth the understanding.

1. Those that fall by degrees through the failing of the understanding, are those simple souls that never were well grounded in the truth: and some of them reason themselves into error or unbelief; and others of them (which is most usual) are led into it by the cunning and diligence of seducers. And for the degrees, they grow first to doubt of some arguments which formerly seemed valid to them; and then they doubt of the truth itself; or else they hear some argument from a seducer, which, through their own weakness, they are unable to answer; and then they yield to it, as thinking that it is right, because they see not what is to be said against it; and know not what others know to the contrary, nor how easily another can confute it. And when once they are brought into a suspicion of one point, which they formerly held, they quickly suspect all the rest; and grow into a suspicion and disaffection to the persons whom they did before most highly value. And then they grow into a high esteem of the persons and party that seduced them; and think that they that are wiser in

one thing, are wiser in the rest: and so are prepared to receive all the errors which follow that one, which they first received: and next they embody with the sect that seduced them; and separate from the sober, united part of the church: and so they grow to a zealous importunity for the increase of their party, and to lose their charity to those that are against their way; and to corrupt their morals, in thinking all dishonesty lawful, which seemeth necessary to promote the interest of their sect, which they think is the interest of the truth and of God. And at last, it is like they will grow weary of that sect, and hearken to another, and another; till in the end, they come to one of these periods; either to settle in Popery, as the easiest religion: and being taken with their pretence of antiquity, stability, unity, and universality; or else to turn to atheism or infidelity, and take all religion for a mere deceit; or else, (if they retained an honest heart in their former wanderings God sheweth them their folly, and bringeth them back to unity and charity, and maketh them see the vanity of those reasonings which before seduced them, and which once they thought were some spiritual, celestial light. This is the common course of error; when the understanding is the most notable cause. But sometimes a deceiver prevaileth with them on a sudden, by such false appearances of truth which they are unable to confute. But still an ill-prepared, unfurnished mind is the chiefest cause.

2. But those whose judgments are conquered by the perverse inclination of their wills, are usually carnal, worldly hypocrites, who never conquered the fleshly mind and interest, nor overcame the world, nor ever were acquainted with the heavenly nature and life, nor with the power of divine love; and these having made a change of their profession, through the mere conviction of their understandings, and benefit of education or government, or the advantages of religion in the country where they live, without a renewed, holy heart, the bias of their hearts doth easily prevail

against the light of their understandings: and because they would fain have those doctrines to be true, which save them from sufferings, or give them liberty for a fleshly, ambitious, worldly life, therefore they do by degrees prevail with their understandings to receive them.

II. Backsliders in heart, do fall by divers degrees and means: for satan's methods are not always the same. Some of them fall through the corruption of their judgments; for every error hath much influence on the heart. Some are tempted suddenly into some gross or sensual sin; and so the errors of their lives call away their hearts from God. Not but that some sin of the heart or will, doth still go first, but yet the extraordinary declension and pravity of the heart, may sometimes be caused by the errors of the judgment, or the life. But sometimes the beginning and progress is almost observable in the appetite and will itself: and here the inclining to evil, (that is, to sensual or carnal good) and the declining from true, spiritual good, do almost always go together. And it is most usually by this method, and by these degrees.

1. The devil usually beginneth with the fantasy and appetite, and representeth some worldly, fleshly thing, as very pleasant and desirable. 2. Next that, he causeth this complacency to entice the thoughts; so that they are much and oft in thinking on this pleasure. 3. Next that, the will is drawn into a liking of it, and he wisheth he might enjoy it (whether it be riches, or pleasant dwellings, or pleasant company, or pleasant meats or drinks, or fleshly accommodations, or apparel, or honour, or command, or ease, or lust, or sports and recreations, or whatever else). 4. Next that, the understanding is drawn into the design, and is casting and contriving how it may be obtained, and all lawful means are first considered of, that if possible, the business might be accomplished without the

hazard of the soul. 5. Next to that, endeavours are used to that end, by such means as are supposed lawful, and the conscience quieted with the conceit of the harmlessness and security. 6. By this time the man is engaged in his carnal cause and course, and so the difficulty of returning is increased: and the inclination of the heart groweth stronger to the sensual pleasure than before. 7. And then he is drawn to prosecute his design by any means how sinful soever; if it be possible, making himself believe by some reasonings or other, that all is lawful still, or if the case be too palpable to be so cloaked, conscience, at last, is cast asleep, and seared, and stupified, that it may be silent under all; till either grace or vengeance awake the sinner, and make him amazed at his madness and stupidity. This is the most usual method of the heart's relapse to positive evil.

2. And by such degrees doth the heart decline from the love of God and goodness: as 1. The thoughts are diverted to some carnal vanity that is over-loved: and the thoughts of God are seldomer and shorter, than they were wont to be. 2. And at the same time, the thoughts of God do grow less serious and pleasing, and more dead and lifeless. 3. And then the means which should kindle love, are used with more dulness, and remissness, and indifferency. 4. And then conscience being galled with the guilt of wilful omissions and commissions (being acquainted with the fleshly designs of the heart), doth raise a secret fear of God's displeasure. And this being not strong enough to restrain the man from sin, doth make his sin greater, and maketh him very backward to draw near to God, or seriously to think of him, or call upon him; and turneth love into terror and aversion. 5. And if God do not stop and recover the sinner, he will next grow quite weary of God, and out of love with a holy life, and change him for his worldly, fleshly pleasures. 6. And next that, he will entertain some infidel, or atheistical, or libertine doctrine, which may quiet him in his course of sin, by justifying it, and will conform his judgment to

his heart. 7. And next that, he will hate God, and his ways, and servants, and turn a persecutor of them; till vengeance lay him in hell, where pain and desperation will increase his hatred; but his fleshly pleasure, and malicious persecution shall be for ever at an end.

III. Backsliders in life and practice, do receive the first infection at the heart; and the life declineth no further than the heart declineth: but yet I distinguish this sort from the other, as the effect from the cause; and the rather, because some few do much decline in heart, that yet seem to keep much blamelessness of life in the eye of men: and it is usually done by these degrees.

1. In the man's backsliding into positive sin (as sensuality or worldliness) the heart being prepared as before. 1. The judgment doth reason more remissly against sin, than it did before; and the will doth oppose it with less resolution, and with greater faintness and indifferency. 2. Then the sinner tasteth of the bait, and first draweth as near to sin as he dare, and embraceth the occasions and opportunities of sinning, while yet he thinketh to yield no further. And in this case, he is so long disputing with the tempter, and hearkening to him, and gazing on the bait, till at last he yieldeth; and having long been playing at the pit's brink, his violent lust or appetite doth thrust him in. 3. When he hath once sinned (against knowledge) he is troubled awhile, and this he taketh for true repentance: and when he is grown into some hope, that the first sin is forgiven him, he is the bolder to venture on the like again; and thinketh, that the second may be as well forgiven as the first. 4. In the same order he falleth into it again and again, till it come to a custom. 5. And by this time he loveth it more, and wisheth it were lawful, and there were no danger by it. 6. And then he thinketh himself concerned to prove it lawful to quiet conscience, that it may not torment him; and

therefore he gladly heareth what the justifiers of his sin can say for it, and he maketh himself believe that the reasons are of weight. 7. And then he sinneth without remorse.

2. So in men's backsliding from the practice of religion. 1. The heart is alienated and undisposed as aforesaid. 2. And then the life of the duty doth decay, and it dwindleth towards a dead formality; like a body in a consumption, the vivid complexion, and strength, and activity decay. 3. Next this, he can frequently omit a duty, especially in secret where no man knoweth it; till by degrees he grow more seldom in it. 4. All this he taketh for a pardoned infirmity, which consisteth with a state of grace; and therefore he is little troubled about it. 5. Next this, he loseth all the life and comfort of religion, and misseth not any duty when he hath omitted it, but is glad that he escapeth it, and when it is at an end, as an ox is when he is out of the yoke. 6. Next, he beginneth to hearken to them that speak against so much ado in religion, as if it were a needless, unprofitable thing. 7. And if God forsake him, he next repenteth of his former diligence, and settleth himself, either in a dead course of such customary lip-service as doth cost him nothing, or else in utter worldliness and ungodliness, and perhaps at last in malignity and persecution.

III. Though the signs or symptoms of declining may be gathered from what is said already, I shall add some more. 1. You are declining when you grow bolder with sin, or with the occasions of it, and temptations to it, than you were in your more watchful state. 2. When you make a small matter of those inward corruptions and infirmities, which once seemed grievous to you, and almost intolerable. 3. When you settle in a course of profession or religiousness, that putteth your flesh to little cost, in labour, reproach, or suffering from the ungodly, but leave out the hard and costly part, and seem to be very religious in the rest. 4. When you are

quiet and contented in the daily, customary use of ordinances, though you find no profit or increase in grace by it or communion with God. 5. When you grow strange to God and Jesus Christ, and have little converse with him in the Spirit; and your thoughts of him are few, and cold, and lifeless; and your religion lieth all in conversing with good men, and good books, and outward duties. 6. When you grow neglecters of your hearts, and strangers to them, and find little work about them from day to day, either in trying them, or watching them, or stirring them up, or mortifying their corruptions; but your business in religion is most abroad, and in outward exercises. 7. Yea, though your own hearts and duties be much of your care and thoughts, you are on the losing hand, if the wonders of love and grace in Christ have not more of your thoughts, or, if you set not yourselves more to the study of a crucified and glorified Christ, than of your own distempered hearts. 8. All is not well with you, when spiritual helps and advantages are less relished and valued, and you grow more indifferent to the sermons, and prayers, and sacraments, which once you could not live without; and use them but as bare duties for necessity, and not as means, with any great hope of benefit and success. 9. When you grow too regardful of the eye of man, and too regardless of the eye of God; and are much more careful about the words, and outside of your prayers and discourses, than the spirit and inward part and manner of them; and dress yourselves accurately when you appear abroad, as those that would seem very good to men, but go at home in the most sordid garb of a cold and careless heart and life. 10. When you grow hottest about some controverted, smaller matters in religion, or studious of the interest of some private opinion and party which you have chosen, more than of the interest of the common truths and cause of Christ. 11. When in joining with others, you relish more the fineness of the speech, than the spirit, and weight, and excellency of the matter; and are impatient of hearing of the most wholesome truths, if the speaker

manifest any personal infirmity in the delivery of them; and are weary and tired, if you be not drawn on with novelty, variety, or elegancy of speech. 12. When you grow more indifferent for your company, and set less by the company of serious, godly Christians than you did, and are almost as well pleased with common company and discourse. 13. When you grow more impatient of reproof for sin, and love not to be told of any thing in you that is amiss; but love those best that most highly applaud you. 14. When the renewing of your repentance is grown a lifeless, cursory work; when in preparation for the Lord's day, or Sacrament, or other occasions, you call yourselves to ho considerable account, or make no greater a matter of the sins which you find on your account, than if you were almost reconciled to them. 15. When you grow more uncharitable and censorious to brethren that differ from you in tolerable points; and less tender of the names or welfare of others, and love not your neighbours as yourselves, and do not as you would be done by. 16. When you grow less compassionate to the ungodly world, and less regardful of the common interest of the universal church, and of Jesus Christ throughout the earth, and grow more narrow, private spirited, and confine your care to yourselves, or to your party. 17. When the hopes of heaven, and the love of God, cannot content you, but you are thirsty after some worldly contentment, and grow eager in your desires, and the world groweth more sweet to you, and more amiable in your eyes. 18. When sense, and appetite, and fleshly pleasure are grown more powerful with you, and you make a great matter of them, and cannot deny them, without a great deal of striving and regret, as if you had done some great exploit, if you live not like a beast. 19. When you are more proud and impatient, and are less able to bear disesteem, and slighting, and injuries from men, or poverty, or sufferings for Christ; and make a greater matter of your losses, and crosses, or wrongs, than beseemeth one that is dead to the flesh, and to the world. 20. Lastly, when you had rather dwell on

earth than be in heaven; and are more unwilling to think of death, or to prepare for it, end expect it, and are less in love with the coming of Christ, and are ready to say of this sinful life in flesh, it is good to be here. All these are signs of a declining state, though yet you are not come to apostacy.

But the signs of a mortal, damnable state indeed, are found in these following degrees: 1. When a man had rather have worldly prosperity, than the favour and fruition of God in heaven. 2. When the interest of the flesh can do more with him, than the interest of God and his soul, and doth more rule and dispose of his heart and life. 3. When he had rather live in sensuality, than in holiness: and had rather have leave to live as he list, than have a Christ and Holy Spirit to sanctify and cure him; or, at least, will not be cured on the terms proposed in the Gospel. 4. When he loveth not the means that would recover him (as such). The nearer you come to this, the more dangerous is your case.

And these following signs, are therefore of a very dangerous signification. 1. When the pleasure of sinful prosperity and delights, doth so far overtop the pleasures of holiness, that you are under trouble and weariness in holy duties, and at ease and merry, when you have your sinful delights. 2. When no persuasion of a minister or a friend, can bring you so thoroughly to repent of your open, scandalous sins, as to take shame to yourselves in a free confession of them (even in the open assembly, if you are justly called to it), to condemn yourselves, and give warning to others, and glorify the most holy God: but you will not believe that any such disgraceful confession is your duty, because you will not do it. 3. When you cannot bring your hearts to a full resolution to let go your sin; but though conscience worry and condemn you for it, you do but slightly purpose hereafter to amend, but will not presently resolve. 4. When

you will not be persuaded to consent to the necessary, effectual means of your recovery; as to abstain from the bait, and temptation, and occasion of sin. Many a drunkard hath told me, he was willing to be reformed; but when I have desired them then to consent to drink no wine or ale, for so many months, and to keep out of the place, and to commit the government of themselves for so many months to their wives, or some other friend that liveth with them, and to drink nothing but what they give them; they would not consent to any of this, and so shewed the hypocrisy of their professed willingness to amend. 5. When sin becometh easy, and the conscience groweth patient with it, and quiet under it. 6. When the judgment taketh part with it, and the tongue will plead for it, and justify or extenuate it, instead of repenting of it.

These are dangerous signs of an impenitent, unpardoned, miserable soul. And the man is in a dangerous way to this, 1. When he hath plunged himself into such engagements to sin, that he cannot leave it, but it will cost him very dear: as it will be his shame to confess it, or his undoing in the world to forsake it, or a great deal of cost and labour must be lost, which his ambitious or covetous projects have cost him: it will be hard breaking over so great difficulties. 2. When God letteth him alone in sin, and prospereth him in it, or doth not much disturb him or afflict him. This also is a dangerous case.

By all this you may perceive, that those are no signs of a backsliding state, which some poor Christians are afraid are such. As, 1. When poverty necessitateth them to lay out more of their time, and thoughts, and words about the labours of their callings, than some richer persons do. 2. When age or sickness causeth their memories to decay; so that they cannot remember a sermon as well as heretofore. 3. When age or sickness taketh off the quickness and vigour of their spirits; so that they have not the lively affections in prayer, or holy

conference, or meditation, or reading, or hearing, as formerly they had. But (though they are as much as ever resolved for God, against sin and vanity, yet) they are colder and duller, and have less zeal, and fervency, and delight in holy exercises. 4. When age, or weakness, or melancholy, hath decayed or confounded their imaginations, and ravelled their thoughts, so that they cannot order them, and command them, as formerly they could. 5. And when age or melancholy hath weakened their parts and gifts; so that they are of slower understandings, and more unable in prayer, or preaching, or conference to express themselves than heretofore. All these are but bodily changes, and such hindrances of the soul as depend thereon, and not to be taken for signs of a soul that declineth in holiness, and is less accepted of God.

Direct. II. 'When you know the marks of a backslider, come into the light, and be willing to know yourselves, whether this be your condition, or not, and do not foolishly cover your disease.' Inquire whether it be with you as in former times, when the light of God did shine upon you, and you delighted in his ways: when you hated sin, and loved holiness; and were glad of the company of the heirs of life: when the Word of God was pleasant to you; and when you poured out your souls to him in prayer and thanksgivings: when you were glad of the Lord's day, and were quickened and confirmed under the teaching and exhortation of his ministers: when you took worldly wealth and pleasures, as childish toys and fooleries, in comparison of the content of holy souls: when you hungered and thirsted after Christ and righteousness; and had rather have been in heaven to enjoy your God, and be free from sinning, than to enjoy all the pleasures and prosperity of this world. And when it was your daily business to prepare for death, and to live in expectation of the everlasting rest, which Christ hath promised. If this were once your

case, inquire whether it be so still? Or, what alterations are made upon your hearts and lives?

Direct. III. 'If you find yourselves in a backsliding case, by all means endeavour the awakening of your souls, by the serious consideration of the danger and misery of such a state.' To which end I shall here set some such awakening thoughts before you (for security is your greatest danger).

1. Consider that to fall back from God, was the sin of the devils. "They are angels that kept not their first estate, but left their own habitations, and are now reserved in chains under darkness, to the judgment of the great day." And shall they entice you into their own condemnation?

2. It was the sin of our first parents Adam and Eve, to revolt from God, and lose their holiness. And is there any sin that we should more carefully avoid, than that which all the world hath so much suffered by? Every one of the creatures that you look on, and every pain and misery you feel, doth mind you of that sin, and call to you to take heed by the warning of your first parents, that you suffer not your hearts to be drawn from God.

3. It is a part of hell that you are choosing upon earth. "Depart from me ye cursed," is the sentence on the damned. And will you damn yourselves by departing from God, and that when he calleth you and obligeth you to him? To be separated from God, is one half of the misery of the damned.

4. You are drawing back towards the case that you were in, in the days of your unconverted state. And what a state of darkness, and folly, and delusion, and sin, and misery, was that? If it were good or tolerable, why turned you from it? And, why did you so lament it?

And, why did you so earnestly cry out for deliverance? But if it were as bad as you then apprehended it to be; why do you again turn towards it? Would you be again in the case you were? Would you perish in it? Or, would you have all those heart-breakings and terrors to pass through again? May I not say to you, as Paul to the Galatians? "O foolish sinners! who hath bewitched you, that you are so soon turned back? Who have seen that of sin, and of God, and of Christ, and of heaven, and of hell, as you have done?

5. Yea, it is a far more doleful state that you are drawing towards, than that which you were in before. For the guilt of an apostate is much greater than if he had never known the truth. And his recovery is more difficult, and of smaller hope: because he is "twice dead and plucked up by the root." "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning: for it had been better for them, not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the miree." "For if we sin wilfully (by apostacy) after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." I know this speaketh only of total apostacy from Christ (such being worthy "of far sorer punishment, than he that despiseth Moses's lawg). But it is a terrible thing to draw towards so desperate a state. A habit is easier introduced upon a negation than a privation; in him that never had it, than in him that hath totally lost it.

6. What abundance of experience do you sin against in your backsliding? You have had experience of the evil of sin, and of the smart of repentance, and of the deceitfulness of all that can be said of sinning; and of the goodness of God, and of the safety and sweetness of religion: and will you sin against so great experience? If your horse fall once into a quicksand, he will scarce be forced into it again. And will you be less wise?

7. What abundance of promises and covenants, which you have made to God, do you violate in your backsliding? How often in your fears, and dangers, and sicknesses, at sacraments and days of humiliation, have you bound yourselves afresh to God! And will you forget all these, and sin against them?

8. By what a multitude of mercies hath God obliged you? Mercies before your repentance, and mercies that drew you to repent, and mercies since? How mercifully hath he kept you out of hell? How mercifully hath he borne with you in all your sins? and maintained you while you provoked him? and pardoned all that you have done against him (if you were truly penitent believers)! How mercifully hath he taught you, and sanctified you, and comforted you; and plentifully provided for you? And yet do you forsake him, and return to folly? For which of all his mercies is it that you thus unworthily requite him? Can you remember how he hath dealt with you, and not be ashamed of your backslidings? Doth it not melt your heart to look back on his love, and to think of your ungrateful dealing?

9. Nay what a multitude of present mercies dost thou run away from? Doth not thy conscience tell thee, that it is safer and better for thee to be true to Christ, than to return to sin? Wilt thou take thy leave of thy God, and thy Redeemer, and thy Comforter? Wilt thou quit thy title to pardon and protection, and all the promises of grace? Wilt thou

bid farewell to all the comforts of a saint? Dost thou not tremble to think of such a day? Thou forsakest all these when thou forsakest God.

10. Yea look before thee man, and consider what greater things are promised thee, than yet thou ever didst enjoy. Christ is conducting thee to eternal happiness, in the sight of God. And wilt thou forsake thy guide, and break away from him, and quit all thy hopes of everlasting life?

11. Consider for what it is, that thou art about to run so great a hazard? Is it not for some worldly gain or honour, or some fleshly pleasure, sport, or ease? And hast thou not known long ago what all these are? What have they done for thee? or what will they ever do? Can any thing in the world be more causeless and unreasonable, than thy forsaking God, and turning back from the way of holiness? Will the world or sin give more for thee, than God will? Or be better to thee here and hereafter? What wouldst thou have in God, or in thy Saviour, that thou thinkest wanting in him? Is it any thing that the world can make up? Which hath nothing itself but what is from him? What wrong hath God, or his service done thee, that thou shouldst now forsake him, and turn back? For thy soul's sake, man, think of some reasonable answer to such questions, before thou venture thyself upon a course, which thou hast found so bad and perilous heretofore! Let all the malice of earth or hell, say the worst it can against God and holiness, it shall never justify thy revolt!

12. Consider what abundance of labour and suffering, is all lost, if thou fall away from Christ. Is all thy hearing, and meditation, and prayer, come to this? Is all thy self-denial, and sufferings for Christ, and godliness, come to this? "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of

afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.—Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." You should have let Christ alone, if you would not follow him to the end: he is less foolish that sitteth still, than he that first tireth himself, and then turneth again. The idle beggar is not so foolish, as the husbandman that will plough and sow, and at last lose his crop for the want of the labour to reap it, and carry it home. Shall all thy pains and sufferings, be lost at last, for nothing?

13. God is not so forward to cast you off, who hath just cause: and why then should you be forward to turn from him? If he had, what had become of you long ago? Yea what abundant occasion have you given him, when he never gave you any at all? Thy sins have testified and cried against thee! Abused mercies have witnessed against thee! And yet he hath not cast thee off! Satan hath stood up before God to accuse thee; and glad he would be to see thee utterly forsaken of God, and yet he hath not utterly forsaken thee! Even while thou art forsaking him, he is protecting and supporting thee, and providing for thee! Did he forsake thee when thou wast in sickness, want, and danger? If he had, thou hadst not now been here. And wilt thou begin, and run away from him? What if Christ should offer thee a bill of divorce, and say, 'Seeing thou hast so little mind of me, or of my service, take thy course, and seek another master, I discharge thee from all thy relations to me; follow thy own way, and take what thou gettest by it.' Would this be welcome tidings to thee? Or durst thou accept of it, and be gone?

14. If thou do turn back for the pleasures of the flesh, or the preferments or profits of the world, thou wilt have less pleasure in them now, than thou hadst heretofore, or than the unconverted have.

For they that sin in the dark, do not know their danger, and therefore sin not with so much terror, as thou wilt hereafter. Thou hast known the danger, thou hast confessed the folly; the reasons of God's Word will never be forgotten, nor thy conviction ever totally blotted out: thou wilt be remembering the ancient kindnesses of Christ, and thy former purposes, and promises, and ways; and thou wilt be thinking both of the days that are past, and the days that are to come, and foreseeing thy terrible account: so that thou wilt sin in such terrors, that thou wilt have a taste of hell in the very exercise of thy sin, and be tormented before the time. And will the world and sin, be worth the enjoying on such terms as these?

15. Either thou hopest to recover from thy backsliding by a second repentance, or else thou purposest to go on. If thou shouldst be so happy, as to be recovered, dost thou know with how much pain and terror it is like to be accomplished? When thou thinkest of thy backslidings, and what thou hast done in revolting after such convictions, and promises, and mercies, and experiences, thou wilt be very hardly kept from desperation. Thou wilt read such passages, as Heb. 6:4–6, 10:26–29. with so much horror, that thou wilt hardly be persuaded that there is any hope: thou wilt be ready to think that thou hast sinned against the Holy Ghost, and that thou hast trampled under foot the blood of the covenant, and done despite to the Spirit of Grace. And thou wilt think, that there is no being twice born again! Or, if thou be restored to life, thou wilt hardly ever be restored to thy comforts here; if thy backsliding should be very great. But indeed, the danger is exceeding great, lest thou never be recovered at all, if once thou be "twice dead, and plucked up by the roots. And lest God do finally forsake thee! And then how desperate will be thy case?

16. Is not the example of Backsliders very terrible, which God hath set up for the warning of his servants, as monuments of his wrath? Remember Lot's wife, saith Christ, to them that are about to lose their estates, or goods, or lives, by saving them? How frightful is the remembrance of a Cain, a Judas, a Saul, a Joashn, a Julian? How sad is it to hear but such a one as Spira, especially at his death, crying out of his backsliding in the horror of his soul? and to see such ready to make away with themselves?

17. Consider, that there is none that so much dishonoureth God as a backslider; others are supposed to sin in ignorance. But you do by your lives as bad as speak such blasphemy as this against the Lord: as if you should say, 'I thought once that God had been the best master, and his servants the wisest and happiest men; and godliness the best and safest life: but now I have tried both, and I find by experience that the devil is a better master, and his servants are the happiest men, and the world and the flesh do give the truest contentment to the mind.' This is the plain blasphemy of your lives. And bethink thee how God should bear with this?

18. There is none that so much hardeneth the wicked in his sin, and furthereth the damnation of souls, as the backslider: if you would but drive your sheep or cattle into a house, those that go in first, do draw the rest after them; but those that run out again, make all the rest afraid, and run away: one apostate that hath been noted for religion, and afterwards turneth off again, doth discourage many that would come in: for he doth, as it were, say to them by his practice, 'Keep off, and meddle not with a religious life; for I have tried it, and found that a life of worldliness and fleshliness, is better.' And people will think with themselves, 'Such a man hath tried a religious life, and he hath forsaken it again; and therefore he had some reason for it, and knew what he did.' "Woe to the world, because of offences; and woe

to him, by whom the offence shall come." How dreadful a thing is it to think that men's souls should lie in hell, and you be the cause of it? "It were good for that man, that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the seap."

19. There is none that are so great a terror to weak Christians, as these backsliders. For they are thinking how far such went before they fell away; and those that think that true grace may be lost, are saying, 'Alas, how shall I stand, when such that were better and stronger than I have fallen away.' And those that think that true grace cannot be lost, are as much perplexed, and say, 'How far may an hypocrite go, that after falleth away! How piously did this man live! How sorrowfully did he repent! How blamelessly did he walk? How fervently and constantly did he pray! How savourily did he speak! How charitably and usefully did he live! And I that come far short of him, as far as I can discern, can have no assurance that I am sincere, till I am sure that I go further, than ever he did.' Woe to thee, that thus perplexest the consciences of the weak, and hinderest the comforts of believers.

20. Thou art the greatest grief to the faithful ministers of Christ. Thou canst not conceive what a wound it giveth to the heart and comforts of a minister, when he hath taken a great deal of pains for thy conversion, and after that rejoiced when he saw thee come to the flock of Christ; and after that, laboured many a year to build thee up, and suffered many a frown from the ungodly, for thy sake; to see all his labour at last come to nought, and all his glorying of thee, turned to his shame, and all his hopes of thee disappointed? I tell thee, this is more doleful to his heart, than any outward loss or cross that could have befallen him: it is not persecution that is his greatest grief, as long as it hindereth not the good of souls: it is such as thou that are his sorest persecutors, that frustrate his labours, and rob him of his

joys; and his sorrows shall one day cost thee dear. The life and comforts of your faithful pastors, is much in your hands. "Now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord."

21. Thou art more treacherous to Christ, than thou wouldst be to a common friend. Wouldst thou forsake thy friend without a cause? especially an old and tried friend? And especially, when in forsaking him, thou dost forsake thyself? "Thy own friend, and thy father's friend forsake not." "A friend loveth at all times; and a brother is born for adversitys." If thy friend were in distress, wouldst thou forsake him? And wilt thou forsake thy God, that needs thee not, but supplieth thy needs? Ruth was more faithful to Naomi, that resolved, "Whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: where thou diest, I will die—." And hath God deserved worse of thee?

22. Nay, thou dealest worse with God, than the devil's servants do with him: alas, they are too constant to him. Reason will not change them, nor the commands of God, nor the offers of everlasting life, nor the fears of hell; nothing will change them, till the Spirit of God do it. And wilt thou be less constant to thy God?

23. Consider also that thy end is so near, that thou hadst but a little while longer to have held out; and thou mightst have known that thou couldst keep thy worldly pleasures but a little while. And it is a pitiful thing to see a man that hath borne the sorest brunt of the battle, and run till he is almost at the end of the race, to lose all for the want of a little more; and to see a man sell his God, and soul, and heaven for fleshly pleasure, when perhaps he hath not a year or a month, or for aught he knoweth a day more to enjoy it. For a man to be weary and give over prayer, just when the mercy is at hand! and to be weary and give over a holy life, when his labour and sufferings are almost at an end! How sad will this day be to thee, if death this night

be sent to fetch away thy soul! Then whose will all those pleasures be, that thou soldest thy soul for? If thou knewest that thou hadst but a month or year to live, wouldst thou not have held out that one year? Thou knowest not that it shall be one week. This is like the sad story of a student at one of our Universities, who wanting money, and his father delaying to send it him, he staid so long, till at last he resolved to stay no longer, but steal for it rather than be without: and so went out, and robbed, and murdered the first man he met, who proved to be his father's messenger, that was bringing him the money that he robbed and killed him for: which when he perceived by a letter which he found in his pocket, he confessed it through remorse of conscience, and was hanged. When a few hours' patience more might have saved his innocency, and his life. And so is it with many a backsliding wretch, that is cut off, if not like Zimri and Cozbi in the act of their sin, yet quickly after; and enjoy the pleasure which they forsook their God for, but a little while.

Direct. IV. 'When you are awakened to see the terribleness of a relapsed state, presently return and fly to Christ, to reconcile your guilty souls to God, and make a stop and go not one step further in your sin, nor make any delays in returning to your fidelity.' It is too sad a case to be continued in. If thou darest delay yet longer, and wilfully sin again, thou art yet impenitent, and thy heart is hardened; and if the Lord have not mercy on thee, to recal thee speedily, thou art lost for ever.

Direct. V. 'Make haste away from the occasions of thy sin, and the company which ensnareth thee in it.' If thou knewest that they were robbers that intended to murder thee, thou wouldst be gone: if thou knewest that they had plague-sores running on them, thou wouldst be gone. And wilt thou not be gone, when thou knowest that they are the servants of the devil, that would infect thee with sin, and cheat

thee of thy salvation? Say not, Is not this company lawful, and that pleasure lawful? &c. If it be like to entice thy heart to sin, it is unlawful to thee, whatever it is to others; it is not lawful to undo thy soul.

Direct. VI. 'Come off by sound and deep repentance, and shame thyself by free confession, and mince not the matter, and deal not gently with thy sin, and be not tender of thy fleshly interest, and skin not over the sore, but go to the bottom, and deceive not thyself with a seeming cure. Many a one is undone, by repenting by the halves, and refusing to take shame to themselves by a free confession, and to engage themselves to a thorough reformation by an openly professed resolution. Favouring themselves and sparing the flesh, when the sore should be lanced and searched to the bottom, doth cause many to perish, while they supposed that they had been cured.

Direct. VII. 'Command thy senses, and at least forbear the outward acts of sin, while thy conscience considereth further of the matter.' The drunkard cannot say, that he hath not power to shut his mouth; let the forbidden cup alone; no one compelleth you; you can forbear it if you will. The same I may say of other such sins of sensuality. Command thy hand, thy mouth, thy eye, and guard these entrances and instruments of sin.

Direct. VIII. 'Engage some faithful friend to assist thee in thy watch.' Open all thy case to some one, that is fit to be thy guide or helper; and resolve that whenever thou art tempted to the sin, thou wilt go presently and tell them before thou do commit it; and entreat them to deal plainly with you; and give them power to use any advantages that may be for your good.

Direct. IX. 'Do your first works, and set yourselves seriously to all the duties of a holy life: and incorporate yourselves into the society of the

saints:' for holy employment and holy company, are very great preservatives against every sin.

Direct. X. 'Go presently to your companions in sin, and lament that you have joined with them, and earnestly warn and entreat them to repent; and if they will not, renounce their course and company, and tell them what God hath shewed you of the sin and danger.' If really you will return, as with Peter you have fallen, so with Peter, go out and weep bitterly; and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren, and help to recover those that you have sinned with.

I have suited most of these Directions to those that relapse into sins of sensuality, rather than to them that fall into atheism, infidelity, or heresy; because I have spoken against these sins already; and the Directions there given, shew the way for the recovery of such.

Tit. 2. Directions for preventing Backsliding, or for Perseverance

Apostacy and backsliding is a state that is more easily prevented than cured: and therefore I shall desire those that stand, to use these following Directions, lest they fall.

Direct. I. 'Be well grounded in the nature and reason of your religion.' For it is not the highest zeal and resolution that will cause you to persevere, if your judgments be not furnished with sufficient reasons, to confute gainsayers, and evidence the truth, and tell you why you should persevere. I speak that with grief and shame which cannot be concealed: the number of Christians is so small that are well seen in the reasons and methods of Christianity, and are able to prove what they hold to be true, and to confute opposers, that it greatly afflicteth me to think, what work the atheists and infidels would make, if they once openly play their game, and be turned loose

to do their worst! If they deride and oppose the immortality of the soul, and the life to come, and the truth of the Scriptures, and the work of redemption, and office of Christ; alas, how few are able to withstand them, by giving any sufficient reason of their hope? We have learnt of the Papists, that he hath the strongest faith that believeth with least reason; and we have been (truly) taught that to deny our foundations, is the horrid crime of infidelity: and therefore because it is so horrid a crime to deny or question them, we thought we need not study to prove them: and so most have taken their foundation upon trust (and indeed are scarce able to bear the trial of it), and have spent their days about the superstructure, and in learning to prove the controverted, less necessary points. Insomuch, that I fear there are more that are able to prove the points which an Antinomian, or an Anabaptist do deny, than to prove the immortality of the soul, or the truth of Scripture, or Christianity; and to dispute about a ceremony, or form of prayer, or church government, than to dispute for Christ against an infidel. So that their work is prepared to their hands, and it is no great victory to overcome such raw, unsettled souls.

Direct. II. 'Get every sacred truth which you believe, into your very hearts and lives; and see that all be digested into holy love and practice.' When your food is turned into vital nutriment, into flesh and blood, it is not cast up by every thing that maketh you sick, and turneth your stomachs; as it may be before it is concocted, distributed and incorporated. Truth that is but barely known, is but like meat that is undigested in the stomach: but truth, which is turned into the love of God, and of a holy life, is turned into a new nature; and will not so easily be let go.

Direct. III. 'Take heed of doctrines of presumption and security, and take heed lest you fall away, by thinking it so impossible to fall away,

that you are past all danger.' The covenant of grace doth sufficiently encourage you to obey and hope, against temptations to despair and casting off the means: but it encourageth no man to presume or sin, or to cast off means as needless things. Remember that if ever you will stand, the fear of falling must help you to stand: and if ever you will persevere, it must be by seeing the danger of backsliding, so far as to make you afraid, and quicken you in the means which are necessary to prevent it. It is no more certain that you shall persevere, than it is certain that you shall use the means of persevering: and one means is, by seeing your danger, to be stirred up to fear and caution to escape it. Because it is my meaning in this Direction, to save men from perishing by security upon the abuse of the doctrine of perseverance, I hope none will be offended that I lay down these antidotes.

1. Consider, that the doctrine of perseverance hath nothing in it to encourage security. The very controversies about it, may cause you to conclude, that a certain sin is not to be built upon a controverted doctrine. Till Augustine's time, it is hard to find any ancient writers, that clearly asserted the certain perseverance of any at all. Augustine and Prosper maintain the certain perseverance of all the elect, but deny the certain perseverance of all that are regenerated, justified, or sanctified: for they thought that more were regenerate and justified than were elect, of whom some stood (even all the elect) and the rest fell away: so that I confess, I never read one ancient Father, or Christian writer, that ever maintained the certainty of the perseverance of all the justified, of many hundred, if not a thousand years after Christ. And a doctrine, that to the church was so long unknown, hath not that certainty, or that necessity, as to encourage you to any presumption or security. The churches were saved many hundred years without believing it.

2. The doctrine of perseverance is against security, because it uniteth together the end and the means: for they that teach, that the justified shall never totally fall from grace, do also teach, that they shall never totally fall into security, or into any reigning sin. For this is to fall away from grace. And they teach that they shall never totally fall from the use of the necessary means of their preservation; nor from the cautious avoiding of the danger of their souls: God doth not simply decree that you shall persevere; but that you shall be kept in perseverance by the fear of your danger, and the careful use of means; and that you shall persevere in these, as well as in other graces. Therefore if you fall to security and sin, you fall away from grace, and shew that God never decreed or promised, that you should never fall away.

3. Consider how far many have gone that have fallen away: the instances of our times are much higher than any I can name to you out of history. Men that have seemed to walk humbly and holily, fearing all sin, blameless in their lives, zealous in religion, twenty or thirty years together, have fallen to deny the truth, or certainty of the Scriptures, the Godhead of Christ, if not Christianity itself. And many that have not quite fallen away, have yet fallen into such grievous sins, as make them a terrible warning to us all, to take heed of presumption and carnal security.

4. Grace is not in the nature of it, a thing that cannot perish or be lost. For, 1. It is a separable quality. 2. Adam did lose it. 3. We lose a great degree of it too oft; and the remaining degrees are of the same nature. It is not Only possible in itself to lose it, but too easy; and not possible without co-operating grace to keep it.

5. Grace is not natural to us; to love our ease, and honour, and friends, is natural; but to love Christ, and his holy ways and servants,

is not natural to us: indeed when we do it, it is our natural powers that do it; but not as naturally disposed to it, but as inclined by the cure of supernatural grace. Eating, and drinking, and sleeping we forget not, because nature itself remembereth us of them; but learning and acquired habits may be lost, if not very deeply radicated; and it is commonly concluded as to the nature of them, that 'Habitus infusi habent se ad modum acquisitorum:' 'Infused habits are like to acquired ones.'

6. Grace is, as it were, a stranger, or new comer in us. It hath been there but a little while; and therefore we are but raw, and too unacquainted with the right usage and improvement of it; and are the apter to forget our duty, or to neglect it, or ignorantly to do that which tendeth to its destruction.

7. Grace dwelleth in a heart, which is not wholly dispossessed of those objects which are against its work, nor delivered from those principles which have an enmity against it. The love of the world and flesh was in the heart, before the love of God and holiness: and ignorance was before knowledge, and pride before humility, and selfishness before self-denial. And these are not wholly rooted out; we have dealt so gently with them, (as the Israelites with the Canaanites, Jebusites and other inhabitants of the land) that they are left to try us, and to be thorns in our sides. And the garrison is not free from danger, that hath an enemy always lodged within: our enemies are in the house with us; they lie down and rise up with us, and are as near as our flesh and bones: we can never be where they are not, nor leave them behind us, whithersoever we go, or whatever we do. No marvel, if brother be against brother, and the father against the son; when we are so much against ourselves. And are we yet secure?

8. And the number of snares that are still before us, and of the subtle, malicious enemies of our souls may easily convince us that we are not wholly free from danger. How subtle and diligent is the devil? How much do his servants imitate him? Every creature or person that we have to do with, and every common mercy which we receive, hath matter of danger in it, which calleth us to fear and watch.

9. Perseverance is nothing else but our continuance in the grace which we received: and this grace consisteth in act as well as in habit: and the habit is for action; and the act is it that increaseth and continueth the habit. And the fear of God, and the belief of his threatenings, and repenttance, and watchfulness, and diligent obedience, are a great part of this grace. And the acts are ours, performed by ourselves, by the helps of God: God doth not believe, and repent, and obey in us, but causeth us ourselves to do it. Therefore to grow cold, and secure, and sinful, upon pretence that we are sure to persevere, this is to cease persevering, and to fall away, because we are sure to persevere, and not to fall away: which is a mere contradiction.

10. Lastly, Bethink you well what is the meaning of all these texts of Scripture, and the reason that the Holy Ghost doth speak to us in this manner. "And you—hath he reconciled,—to present you holy:—if ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel." "Abide in me, and I in you. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withered. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye willd." "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." "Keep yourselves in the love of Godf." "They drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ; but with many of them God was not well pleased: wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest

he fall." "Be not highminded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee." "Ye are fallen from gracei." "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." "Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. For we are partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the endl." "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." "Hold fast till I comen." "And he that overcometh and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations."

Take heed therefore of that doctrine which telleth you, that sins to come are all pardoned to you before they are committed, and that you are justified from them, and that it is unlawful to be afraid of falling away, because it is impossible, &c, For no sin is pardoned before it is committed, (though the remedy be provided:) for it is then no sin: and you are justified from no sin, any further than it is pardoned. Suppose God either to decree, or but to foreknow the freest, most contingent act, and there will be a logical impossibility in order of consequence, that it should be otherwise than he so decreeth or foreseeth. But that inferreth no natural impossibility in the thing itself: for God doth not decree or foresee that such a man's fall shall be impossible, but only 'non futurum.'

Direct. IV. 'In a special manner take heed of the company and doctrine of deceivers; yea, though they seem most religious men, and are themselves first deceived, and think they are in the right. And take heed of falling into a dividing party, which separateth from the generality of the truly wise and godly people.' For this hath been an ordinary introduction to backsliding; false doctrine hath a mighty power on the heart. And he that can separate one of the sheep from the rest of the flock, hath a fair advantage to carry him awayq.

Direct. V. 'Be very watchful against the sin of pride, especially pride of gifts, or knowledge, or holiness, which some call spiritual pride;' for God is engaged to cast down the proud. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Satan assaulted our first parents by that way that he fell himself; and his success encourageth him to try the same way with their posterity. And, alas, how greatly hath he succeeded through all ages of the world till now!

Direct. VI. 'Take heed of a divided, hypocritical heart, which never was firmly resolved for God, upon expectation of the worst, and upon terms of self-denial, nor was ever well loosed from the love of this present world, nor firmly believed the life to come.' For it is no wonder that he falleth from grace, who never had any grace but common, which never renewed his soul. It is no wonder that false-hearted friends forsake us, when their interest requireth it; nor that the seed which never had depth of earth, doth bring forth no fruit, but what will wither when persecution shall arise, or that which is sown among thorns be choked. Sit down and count what it will cost you to be Christians, and receive not Christ upon mistakes, or with reserves.

Direct. VII. 'Take heed lest the world, or any thing in it, steal again into your hearts, and seem too sweet to you.' If your friends, or dwellings, or lands and wealth, or honours, begin to grow too pleasant, and be overloved, your thoughts will presently be carried after them, and turned away from God, and all holy affection will be damped and decay, and grace will fall into a consumption. It is the love of money that is the root of all evil; and the love of this world which is the mortal enemy of the love of God. Keep the world from your hearts, if you would keep your graces.

Direct. VIII. 'Keep a strict government and watch over your fleshly appetite and sense.' For the loosing of the reins to carnal lusts, and yielding to the importunity of sensual desires, is the most ordinary way of wasting grace, and falling off from God.

Direct. IX. 'Keep as far as you can from temptations, and all occasions and opportunities of sinning.' Trust not to your own strength; and be not so foolhardy as to thrust yourselves into needless danger. No man is long safe that standeth at the brink of ruin; if the fire and straw be long near together, Some spark is like to catch at last.

Direct. X. 'Incorporate yourselves into the communion of saints, and go along with them that go towards heaven, and engage yourselves in the constant use of all those means which God hath appointed you to use for your perseverance; especially take heed of an idle, slothful, unprofitable life: and keep your graces in the most lively exercise; for the slothful is brother to the waster;' and idleness consumeth or corrupteth our spiritual health and strength, as well as our bodily. Set yourselves diligently to work while it is day, and do all the good in your places, that you are able: for it is acts that preserve and increase the habits; and a religion which consisteth only in doing no hurt, is so lifeless and corrupt, that it will quickly perish.

Direct. XI. 'Keep always in thine eye the doleful case of a backslider' (which I opened before). O what horror is waiting to seize on their consciences! How many of them have we known, that on their deathbeds have lain roaring in the anguish of their souls, crying out, "I am utterly forsaken of God, because I have forsaken him! There is no mercy for Such an apostate wretch: O that I had never been born, or had been any thing rather than a man! Cursed be the day that ever I hearkened to the counsel of the wicked, and that ever I pleased this

corruptible flesh, to the utter undoing of my soul! O that it were all to do again!. Take Warning by a mad, besotted sinner, that have lost my soul for that which I knew would never make me satisfaction, and have turned from God when I had found him to be good and gracious." O prepare not for such pangs as these, or worse than these in endless desperation.

Direct. XII. Make not a small matter of the beginnings of your backsliding.' There are very few that fall quite away at once, the misery creepeth on by insensible degrees. You think it a small matter to cut short one duty, and omit another, and be negligent at another; and to entertain some pleasing thoughts of the world; or first to look on the forbidden fruit, and then to touch it, and then to taste it; but this is the way to that which is not small. A thought, or a look, or a taste, or a delight hath begun that with many, which never stopt, till it had shamed them here, and damned them for ever.

CHAPTER XXVII

Directions for the Poor

THERE is no condition of life so low or poor, but may be sanctified, and fruitful, and comfortable to us, if our own misunderstanding, or sin and negligence, do not pollute it or imbitter it to us: if we do the duty of our condition faithfully, we shall have no cause to murmur at it. Therefore I shall here direct the poor in the special duties of their condition; and if they will but conscionably perform them, it will prove a greater kindness to them, than if I could deliver them from their poverty, and give them as much riches as they desire. Though I

doubt this would be more pleasing to the most, and they would give me more thanks for money, than for teaching them how to want it.

Direct. I. 'Understand first the use and estimate of all earthly things: that they were never made to be your portion and felicity, but your provision and helps in the way to heaven.' And therefore they are neither to be estimated nor desired simply for themselves, (for so there is nothing good but God,) but only as they are means to the greatest good. Therefore neither poverty nor riches are simply to be rejoiced in for themselves, as any part of our happiness; but that condition is to be desired and rejoiced in, which affordeth us the greatest helps for heaven, and that condition only is to be lamented and disliked, which hindereth us most from heaven, and from our duty.

Direct. II. 'See therefore that you really take all these things, as matters in themselves indifferent, and of small concernment to you; and as not worthy of much love, or care, or sorrow, further than they conduce to greater things.' We are like runners in a race, and heaven or hell will be our end; and therefore woe to us, if by looking aside, or turning back, or stopping, or trifling about these matters, or burdening ourselves with worldly trash, we should lose the race, and lose our souls. O sirs, what greater matters than poverty or riches have we to mind! Can those souls that must shortly be in heaven or hell, have time to bestow any serious thoughts upon these impertinencies? Shall we so much as "look at the temporal things which are seen, instead of the things eternal that are unseen?" Or shall we whine under those light afflictions, which may be so improved, as to "work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of gloryc?" Our present "life is not in the abundance of the things which we possess;" much less is our eternal life.

Direct. III. 'Therefore take heed that you judge not of God's love, or of your happiness or misery by your riches or poverty, prosperity or adversity, as knowing that they come alike to all,' and love or hatred is not to be discerned by them; except only God's common love, as they are common mercies to the body. If a surgeon is not to be taken for a hater of you, because he letteth you blood, nor a physician because he purgeth his patient, nor a father because he correcteth his child; much less is God to be judged an enemy to you, or unmerciful, because his wisdom and not your folly disposeth of you, and proportioneth your estates. A carnal mind will judge of its own happiness and the love of God by carnal things, because it savoureth not spiritual mercies: but grace giveth a Christian another judgment, relish and desire: as nature setteth a man above the food and pleasures of a beast.

Direct. IV. 'Stedfastly believe that God is every way fitter than you to dispose of your estate and you.' He is infinitely wise, and knoweth what is best and fittest for you: he knoweth beforehand what good or hurt any state of plenty or want will do you: he knoweth all your corruptions, and what condition will most conduce to strengthen them or destroy them, and which will be your greatest temptations and snares, and which will prove your safest state; much better than any physician or parent knoweth how to diet his patient or his child. And his love and kindness are much greater to you, than your's are to yourself; and therefore he will not be wanting in willingness to do you good: and his authority over you is absolute, and therefore his disposal of you must be unquestionable. "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good." "The will of God should be the rest and satisfaction of your willsh."

Direct. V. 'Stedfastly believe that, ordinarily, riches are far more dangerous to the soul than poverty, and a greater hindrance to men's

salvation.' Believe experience; how few of the rich and rulers of the earth are holy, heavenly, self-denying, mortified men? Believe your Saviour, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they that heard it said, who then can be saved? And he said, The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God." So that you see the difficulty is so great of saving such as are rich, that to men it is a thing impossible, but to God's omnipotency only it is possible. So 1 Cor. 1:26. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called." Believe this, and it will prevent many dangerous mistakes.

Direct. VI. 'Hence you may perceive, that though no man must pray absolutely either for riches or poverty, yet of the two it is more rational ordinarily to pray against riches than for them, and to be rather troubled when God maketh us rich, than when he maketh us poor.' (I mean it, in respect to ourselves, as either of them seemeth to conduce to our own good or hurt: though to do good to others, riches are more desirable.) This cannot be denied by any man that believeth Christ: for no wise man will long for the hindrance of his salvation, or pray to God to make it as hard a thing for him to be saved, as for a camel to go through a needle's eye; when salvation is a matter of such unspeakable moment, and our strength is so small, and the difficulties so many and great already.

Object. 'But Christ doth not deny but the difficulties to the poor may be as great.' Answ. To some particular persons upon other accounts it may be so; but it is clear in the text, that Christ speaketh comparatively of such difficulties as the rich had more than the poor.

Object. 'But then how are we obliged to be thankful to God for giving us riches, or blessing our labours?' Answ. 1. You must be thankful for them, because in their own nature they are good, and it is by accident, through your own corruption, that they become so dangerous 2. Because you may do good with them to others, if you have hearts to use them well. 3, Because God in giving them to you rather than to others, doth signify (if you are his children) that they are fitter for you than for others. In Bedlam and among foolish children, it is a kindness to keep fire, and swords, and knives out of their way: but yet they are useful to people that have the use of reason. But our folly in spiritual matters is so great, that we have little cause to be too eager for that which we are inclined so dangerously to abuse, and which proves the bane of most that have it.

Direct. VII. 'See that your poverty be not the fruit of your idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, pride, or any other flesh-pleasing sin,' For if you bring it thus upon yourselves, you can never look that it should be sanctified to your good, till sound repentance have turned you from the sin: nor are you objects worthy of much pity from man (except as you are miserable sinners). He that rather chooseth to have his ease and pleasure, though with want, than to have plenty, and to want his ease and pleasure, it is pity that he should have any better than he chooseth.

1. Slothfulness and idleness are sins that naturally tend to want, and God hath caused them to be punished with poverty; as you may see Prov. 12:24. 27. 18:9. 21:25. 24:34. 26:14. 15. 6:11. 20:13. Yea, he commandeth that if any (that is able) "will not work, neither should he eat." In the sweat of their face must they eat their bread: and "six days must they labour and do all that they have to don." To maintain your idleness is a sin in others. If you will please your flesh with ease,

it must be displeased with want; and you must suffer what you choose.

2. Gluttony and drunkenness are such beastly devourers of mercy, and abusers of mankind, that shame and poverty are their punishment and cure. "Be not among wine-bibbers, amongst riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." It is not lawful for any man to feed the greedy appetites of such: if they choose a short excess before a longer competency, let them have their choice.

3. Pride also is a most consuming, wasteful sin: it sacrificeth God's mercies to the devil, in serving him by them, in his firstborn sin. Proud persons must lay it out in pomp and gaudiness, to set forth themselves to the eyes of others; in buildings, and entertainments, and fine clothes, and curiosities: and poverty is also both the proper punishment and cure of this sin: and it is cruelty for any to save them from it, and resist God, that by abasing them takes the way to do them good.

4. Falsehood also and deceit, and unjust getting tend to poverty; for God doth often, even in this present life, thus enter into judgment with the unjust. Ill-gotten wealth is like fire in the thatch, and bringeth ofttimes a secret curse and destruction upon all the rest. The same may be said of unmercifulness to the poor; which is oft cursed with poverty, when the liberal are blest with plenty.

Direct. VIII. 'Be acquainted with the special temptations of the poor, that you may be furnished to resist them.' Every condition hath its own temptations, which persons in that condition must specially be fortified and watch against; and this is much of the wisdom and safety of a Christian.

Tempt. 1. One temptation of poverty will be to draw you to think more highly of riches and honours than you ought; to make you think that the rich are much happier than they are. For the world is like all other deceivers; it is most esteemed where it is least known. They that never tried a life of wealth, and plenty, and prosperity, are apt to admire it, and think it braver and better than it is. And so you may be drawn as much to overlove the world by want, as other men by plenty. Against this remember, that it is folly to admire that which you never tried and knew; and mark whether all men do not vilify it, that have tried it to the last: dying men call it no better than vanity and deceit. And it is rebellious pride in you so far to contradict the wisdom of God, as to think most highly of that condition, which he hath judged worst for you; and to fall in love with that which he denieth you.

Tempt. II. The poor will also be tempted to overmuch care about their wants and worldly matters; they will think that necessity requireth it in them, and will excuse them. So much care is your duty, as is needful to the right doing of your work. Take care how to discharge your own duties; but be not too careful about the event, which belongs to God. If you will care what you should be and do, God will care sufficiently what you shall haves. And so be it you faithfully do your business, your other care will add nothing to the success, nor make you any richer, but only vex and disquiet your minds. It is the poor as well as the rich, that God hath commanded to be careful for nothing, and to cast all their care on him.

Tempt. III. Poverty also will tempt you to repining, impatience and discontent, and to fall out with others; which because it is one of the chief temptations, I will speak to by itself anon.

Tempt. IV. 'Also you will be tempted to be coveting after more; satan maketh poverty a snare to draw many needy creatures, to greater covetousness than many of the rich are guilty of; none thirst more eagerly after more; and yet their poverty blindeth them, so that they cannot see that they are covetous, or else excuse it as a justifiable thing. They think that they desire no more but necessaries, and that it is not covetousness, if they desire not superfluities. But do you not covet more than God allotteth you? And are you not discontent with his allowance? And doth not he know best what is necessary for you, and what superfluous? What then is covetousness, if this be not?

Tempt. V. Also you will be tempted to envy the rich, and to censure them in matters where you are incompetent judges. It is usual with the poor to speak of the rich with envy and censoriousness; they call them covetous, merely because they are rich, especially if they give them nothing; when they know not what ways of necessary expence they have, nor how many others they are liberal to, that they are unacquainted with. Till you see their accounts you are unfit to censure them.

Tempt. VI. The poor also will be tempted to use unlawful means to supply their wants. How many by the temptation of necessity have been tempted to comply with sinners, and wound their consciences, and lie and flatter for favour or preferment, or to cheat, or steal, or overreach! A dear price! to buy the food that perisheth, with the loss or hazard of everlasting life; and lose their souls to provide for their flesh!

Tempt. VII. Also you will be tempted to neglect your souls, and omit your spiritual duties, and as Martha to be troubled about many things, while the one thing needful is forgotten; and you will think that necessity will excuse all this; yea, some think to be saved,

because they are poor, and say, God will not punish them in this life and another too. But alas, you are more inexcusable than the rich, if you are ungodly and mindless of the life to come. For he that will love a life of poverty and misery better than heaven, deserveth indeed to go without it much more than he that preferreth a life of plenty and prosperity before it. God hath taught you by his providence to know, that you must either be happy in heaven, or no where;—if you would be worldlings, and part with heaven for your part on earth, how poor a bargain are you like to make? To love rags, and toil, and want, and sorrow, better than eternal joy and happiness, is the most unreasonable kind of ungodliness in the world. It is true, that you are not called to spend so many hours of the week-days, in reading and meditation, as some that have greater leisure are; but you have reason to seek heaven, and set your hearts upon it, as much as they; and you must think of it when you are about your labour, and take those opportunities for your spiritual duties, which are allowed you. Poverty will excuse ungodliness in none! Nothing is so necessary as the service of God and your salvation; and therefore no necessity can excuse you from it. Read the case of Mary and Martha: one would think that your hearts should be wholly set upon heaven, who have nothing else but it to trust to. The poor have fewer hindrances than the rich, in the way to life eternal! And God will save no man because he is poor; but condemn poor and rich that are ungodly.

Tempt. VIII. Another great temptation of the poor, is to neglect the holy education of their children; so that in most places, there are none so ignorant, and rude, and heathenish, and unwilling to learn, as the poorest people and their children; they never teach them to read, nor teach them any thing for the saving of their souls; and they think that their poverty will be an excuse for all. When reason telleth

them, that none should be more careful to help their children to heaven, than they that can give them nothing upon earth.

Direct. IX. 'Be acquainted with the special duties of the poor; and carefully perform them.' They are these,

1. Let your sufferings teach you to contemn the world; it will be a happy poverty if it do but help to wean your affections from all things below; that you set as little by the world as it deserveth.

2. Be eminently heavenlyminded; the less you have or hope for in this life, the more fervently seek a better. You are at least as capable of the heavenly treasures as the greatest princes; God purposely straiteneth your condition in the world, that he may force up your hearts unto himself, and teach you to seek first for that which indeed is worth your seekingy.

3. Learn to live upon God alone; study his goodness, and faithfulness, and all-sufficiency; when you have not a place nor a friend in the world, that you can comfortably betake yourselves to for relief, retire unto God, and trust him, and dwell the more with him. If your poverty have but this effect, it will be better to you than all the riches in the world.

4. Be laborious and diligent in your callings; both precept and necessity call you unto this; and if you cheerfully serve him in the labour of your hands, with a heavenly and obedient mind, it will be as acceptable to him, as if you had spent all that time in more spiritual exercises; for he had rather have obedience than sacrifice; and all things are pure and sanctified to the pure; if you cheerfully serve God in the meanest work, it is the more acceptable to him, by how much the more subjection and submission there is in your obedience.

5. Be humble and submissive unto all. A poor man proud is doubly hateful: and if poverty cure your pride, and help you to be truly humble, it will be no small mercy to you.

6. You are specially obliged to mortify the flesh, and keep your senses and appetites in subjection; because you have greater helps for it than the rich: you have not so many baits of lust, and wantonness, and gluttony, and voluptuousness as they.

7. Your corporal wants must make you more sensibly remember your spiritual wants; and teach you to value spiritual blessings; think with yourselves, if a hungry, cold and naked body, be so great a calamity, how much greater is a guilty, graceless soul! a dead or a diseased heart? If bodily food and necessaries are so desirable, O how desirable is Christ, and his Spirit, and the love of God and life eternal?

8. You must above all men be careful redeemers of your time; especially of the Lord's day; your labours take up so much pf your time, that you must be the more careful to catch every opportunity for your souls! Rise earlier to get half an hour for holy duty; and meditate on holy things in your labours, and spend the Lord's day in special diligence, and be glad of such seasons; and let scarcity preserve your appetites.

9. Be willing to die; seeing the world giveth you so cold entertainment, be the more content to let it go, when God shall call you; for what is here to detain your hearts?

10. Above all men, you should be most fearless of sufferings from men, and therefore true to God and conscience: for you have no great matter of honour, or riches, or pleasure to lose: as you fear not a thief, when you have nothing for him to rob you of.

11. Be specially careful to fit your children also for heaven: provide them a portion which is better than a kingdom; for you can provide but little for them in the world.

12. Be exemplary in patience and contentedness with your state: for that grace should be the strongest in us, which is most exercised; and poverty calleth you to the frequent exercise of this.

Direct. X. 'Be specially furnished with those reasons which should keep you in a cheerful contentedness with your state; and may suppress every thought of anxiety and discontent.' As 1. Consider as aforesaid, that that is the best condition for you which helpeth you best to heaven; and God best knoweth what will do you good, or hurt. 2. That it is rebellion to grudge at the will of God; which must dispose of us, and should be our rest. 3. Look over the life of Christ, who chose a life of poverty for your sakes; and had not a place to lay his head. He was not one of the rich and voluptuous in the world; and are you grieved to be conformed to him. 4. Look to all his apostles, and most holy servants and martyrs. Were not they as great sufferers as you? 5. Consider that the rich will shortly be all as poor as you. Naked they came into the world, and naked they must go out; and a little time makes little difference. 6. It is no more comfort to die rich than poor; but usually much less: because the more pleasant the world is to them, the more it grieveth them to leave it. 7. All men cry out, that the world is vanity at last. How little is it valued by a dying man? And how sadly will it cast him off! 8. The time is very short and uncertain, in which you must enjoy it: we have but a few days more to walk about, and we are gone. Alas, of how small concernment is it, whether a man be rich or poor, that is ready to step into another world? 9. The love of this world drawing the heart from God, is the common cause of men's damnation: and is not the world more likely to be over-loved, when it entertaineth you with

prosperity, than when it useth you like an enemy? Are you displeased, that God thus helpeth to save you from the most damning sin? And that he maketh not your way to heaven more dangerous? 10. You little know the troubles of the rich. He that hath much, hath much to do with it, and much to care for; and many persons to deal with, and more vexations than you imagine. 11. It is but the flesh that suffereth; and it furthereth your mortification of it. 12. You pray but for your daily bread, and therefore should be contented with it. 13. Is not God, and Christ, and heaven, enough for you? Should that man be discontent that must live in heaven? 14. Is it not your lust, rather than your well-informed reason that repineth? I do but name all these reasons for brevity: you may enlarge them in your meditations.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Directions for the Rich

I HAVE said so much of this already, Part i, about covetousness or worldliness, and about good works, and in my book of "Self-denial," and that of "Crucifying the World;" that my reason commandeth me brevity in this place.

Direct. I. 'Remember that riches are no part of your felicity; or, that if you have no better, you are undone men.' Dare you say, that they are fit to make you happy? Dare you say, that you will take them for your part? and be content to be turned off when they forsake you? They reconcile not God; they save not from his wrath; they heal not a wounded conscience; they may please your flesh, and adorn your funeral, but they neither delay, nor sanctify, nor sweeten death, nor make you either better or happier than the poor. Riches are nothing but plentiful provision for tempting, corruptible flesh. When the flesh is in the dust, it is rich no more. All that abounded in wealth, since Adam's days, till now, are levelled with the lowest in the dust.

Direct. II. 'Yea, remember that riches are not the smallest temptation and danger to your souls.' Do they delight and please you? By that way they may destroy you. If they be but loved above God, and make earth seem better for you than heaven, they have undone you. And if God recover you not, it had been better for you to have been worms or brutes, than such deceived, miserable souls. It is not for nothing, that Christ giveth you so many terrible warnings about riches, and so describeth the folly, the danger, and the misery of the worldly rich. And telleth you how hardly the rich are saved. Fire burneth most,

when it hath most fuel; and riches are the fuel of worldly love, and fleshly lustc.

Direct. III. 'Understand what it is to love and trust in worldly prosperity and wealth.' Many here deceive themselves to their destruction. They persuade themselves, that they desire and use their riches but for necessity; but that they do not love them, nor trust in them, because they can say that heaven is better, and wealth will leave us to a grave! But do you not love that ease, that greatness, that domination, that fulness, that satisfaction of your appetite, eye, and fancy, which you cannot have without your wealth? It is fleshly lust, and will, and pleasure, which carnal worldlings love for itself; and then they love their wealth for these. And to trust in riches, is not to trust that they will never leave you; for every fool doth know the contrary. But it is to rest, and quiet, and comfort your minds in them, as that which most pleaseth you, and maketh you well, or to be as you would be. Like him in Luke 12:18, 19. that said, "Soul take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry, thou hast enough laid up for many years." This is to love and trust in riches.

Direct. IV. 'Above all the deceits and dangers of this world, take heed of a secret, hypocritical hope of reconciling the world to heaven, so as to make you a felicity of both; and dreaming of a compounded portion, or of serving God and mammon.' The true state of the hypocrite's heart and hope is, 'To love his worldly prosperity best, and desire to keep it as long as he can, for the enjoyment of hi fleshly pleasures; and when he must leave this world against his will, he hopeth then to have heaven as his reserve; because he thinketh it better than hell, and his tongue can say, It is better than earth, though his will and affections say the contrary.' If this be your case, the Lord have mercy upon you, and give you a more believing,

spiritual mind, or else you are lost, and you and your treasure will perish together.

Direct. V. 'Accordingly take heed, lest when you seem to resign yourselves, and all that you have to God, there should be a secret purpose at the heart, that you will never be undone in the world for Christ, nor for the hopes of a better world.' A knowing hypocrite is not ignorant, that the terms of Christ, proposed in the Gospel, are no lower than forsaking all; and that in baptism, and our covenant with Christ, all must be designed and devoted to him, and the cross taken up instead of all, or else we are no Christians, as being not in covenant with Christ. But the hypocrite's hope is, that though Christ put him upon these promises, he will never put him to the trial for performance, nor ever call him to forsake all indeed: and therefore, if ever he be put to it, he will not perform the promise which he hath made. He is like a patient that promiseth to be wholly ruled by his physician, as hoping that he will put him upon nothing which he cannot bear. But when the bitter potion or the vomit cometh, he saith, 'I cannot take it, I had hoped you would have given me gentler physic.'

Direct. VI. 'And accordingly take heed lest while you pretend to live to God, and to use all that you have as his stewards for his service, you should deceitfully put him off with the leavings of your lusts, and give him only so much as your flesh can spare.' It is not likely that the damned gentleman, Luke 16 was never used to give any thing to the poor; else what did beggars use his doors for? When Christ promiseth to reward men for a cup of cold water, the meaning is, when they would give better if they had it. There are few rich men of all that go to hell, that were so void of human compassion, or of the sense of their own reputation, as to give nothing at all to the poor: but God will have all, though not all for the poor, yet all employed as

he commandeth; and will not be put off with your tithes or scraps. His stewards confess that they have nothing of their own.

Direct. VII. 'Let the use of your riches in prosperity shew, that you do not dissemble when you promise to forsake all for Christ in trial, rather than forsake him.' You may know whether you are true or false in your covenant with Christ, and what you would do in a day of trial, by what you do in your daily course of life. How can that man leave all at once for Christ, that cannot daily serve him with his riches, nor leave that little which God requireth, in the discharge of his duty in pious and charitable works? What is it to leave all for God, but to leave all rather than to sin against God? And will he do that, who daily sinneth against God by omission of good works, because he cannot leave some part? Study as faithful stewards, to serve God to the utmost, with what you have now, and then you may expect that his grace should enable you to leave all in trial, and not prove withering hypocrites and apostates.

Direct. VIII. 'Be not rich to yourselves, or to your fleshly wills and lusts: but remember that the rich are bound to be spiritual, and to mortify the flesh, as well as the poor.' Let lust fare never the better for all the fulness of your estates. Fast, and humble your souls never the less; please an inordinate appetite never the more in meat and drink; live never the more in unprofitable idleness. The rich must labour as constantly as the poor, though not in the same kind of work. The rich must live soberly, temperately, and heavenly, and must as much mortify all fleshly desires as the poor. You have the same law and master, and have no more liberty to indulge your lusts; but if you live after the flesh, you shall die as well as any other. O the partiality of carnal minds! They can see the fault of a poor man, that goeth sometimes to an alehouse, who perhaps drinketh water (or that which is next it) all the week; when they never blame

themselves, who scarce miss a meal without wine, and strong drink, and eating that which their appetite desireth. They think it a crime in a poor man, to spend but one day in many, in such idleness, as they themselves spend most of their lives in. Gentlemen think that their riches allow them to live without any profitable labour, and to gratify their flesh, and fare deliciously every day: as if it were their privilege to be sensual, and to be damned.

Direct. IX. 'Nay, remember that you are called to far greater self-denial, and fear, and watchfulness against sensuality, and wealthy vices than the poor are.' Mortification is as necessary to your salvation, as to theirs, but much more difficult. If you live after the flesh, you shall die as well as they. And how much stronger are your temptations! Is not he more easily drawn to gluttony or excess in quality or quantity, who hath daily a table of plenty, and enticing delicious food before him, than he that never seeth such a temptation once in half a year? Is it not harder for him to deny his appetite who hath the baits of pleasant meats and drinks daily set upon his table, than for him that is seldom in sight of them, and perhaps in no possibility of procuring them; and therefore hath nothing to solicit his appetite or thoughts? Doubtless the rich, if ever they will be saved, must watch more constantly, and set a more resolute guard upon the flesh, and live more in fear of sensuality than the poor, as they live in greater temptations and dangers.

Direct. X. 'Know therefore particularly what are the temptations of prosperity, that you may make a particular, prosperous resistance.' And they are especially these,

1. Pride. The foolish heart of man is apt to swell upon the accession of so poor a matter as wealth; and men think they are got above their

neighbours, and more honour and obeisance is their due, if they be but richer.

2. Fulness of bread. If they do not eat till they are sick, they think the constant and costly pleasing of their appetite in meats and drinks, is lawful.

3. Idleness. They think he is not bound to labour, that can live without it, and hath enough.

4. Time-wasting sports and recreations. They think their hours may be devoted to the flesh, when all their lives are devoted to it: they think their wealth alloweth them to play, and court, and compliment away that precious time, which no men have no more need to redeem; they tell God that he hath given them more time than they have need of; and God will shortly cut it off, and tell them that they shall have no more.

5. Lust and wantonness, fulness and idleness, cherish both the cogitations and inclinations unto filthiness: they that live in gluttony and drunkenness, are like to live in chambering and wantonness.

6. Curiosity, and wasting their lives in a multitude of little, ceremonious, unprofitable things, to the exclusion of the great businesses of life. Well may we say, that men's lusts are their jailors, and their fetters, when we see to what a wretched kind of life, a multitude of the rich (especially ladies and gentlewomen) do condemn themselves. I should pity one in bridewell, that were but tied so to spend their time; when they have poor, ignorant, proud, worldly, peevish, hypocritical, ungodly souls to be healed, and a life of great and weighty business to do for eternity, they have so many little things all day to do, that leave them little time to converse with God, or with their consciences, or to do any thing that is really worth

the living for: they have so many fine clothes and ornaments to get, and use; and so many rooms to beautify and adorn, and so many servants to talk with, that attend them, and so many dishes and sauces to bespeak, and so many flowers to plant, and dress, and walks, and places of pleasure to mind; and so many visitors to entertain with whole hours of unprofitable talk; and so many great persons accordingly to visit; and so many laws of ceremony and compliment to observe; and so many games to play (perhaps) and so many hours to sleep, that the day, the year, their lives are gone, before they could have while to know what they lived for. And if God had but damned them to spend their days in picking straws or filling a bottomless vessel, or to spend their days as they choose themselves to spend them, it would have tempted us to think him unmerciful to his creatures.

7. Tyranny and oppression: when men are above others, how commonly do they think that their wills must be fulfilled by all men, and none must cross them, and they live as if all others below them were as their beasts, that are made for them, to serve and please them.

Direct. XI. 'Let your fruitfulness to God, and the public good, be proportionable to your possessions.' Do as much more good in the world than the poor, as you are better furnished for it than they. Let your servants have more time for the learning of God's Word, and let your families be the more religiously instructed and governed. To whom God giveth much, from them he doth expect much.

Direct. XII. 'Do not only take occasions of doing good, when they are thrust upon you; but study how to do all the good you can, as those "that are zealous of good works." Zeal of good works will make you, 1. Plot and contrive for them. 2. Consult, and ask advice for them. 3. It

will make you glad when you meet with a hopeful opportunity. 4. It will make you do it largely, and not sparingly, and by the halves. 5. It will make you do it speedily, without unwilling backwardness and delay. 6. It will make you do it constantly to your lives' end. 7. It will make you pinch your own flesh, and suffer somewhat yourselves to do good to others. 8. It will make you labour in it as your trade, and not only consent that others do good at your charge. 9. It will make you glad, when good is done, and not to grudge at what it cost you. 10. In a word, it will make your neighbours to be to you as yourselves, and the pleasing of God to be above yourselves, and therefore to be as glad to do good, as to receive it.

Direct. XIII. 'Do good both to men's souls and bodies; but always let bodily benefits be conferred in order to those of the soul, and in due subordination, and not for the body alone. And observe the many other rules of good works, more largely laid down, Part i. Chap 3. Direct. 10.

Direct. XIV. 'Ask yourselves often, How you shall wish at death and judgment, your estates had been laid out; and accordingly now use them.' Why should not a man of reason do that which he knoweth beforehand he shall vehemently wish that he had done?

Direct. XV. 'As your care must be in a special manner for your children and families; so take heed of the common error of worldlings, who think their children must have so much, as that God and their own souls have very little.' When selfish men can keep their wealth no longer to themselves, they leave it to their children, who are as their surviving selves. And all is cast into this gulf, except some inconsiderable parcels.

Direct. XVI. 'Keep daily account of your use and improvement of your master's talents.' Not that you should too much remember your

own good works, but remember to do them; and therefore ask yourselves, What good have I done with all that I have, this day or week?

Direct. XVII. 'Look not for long life; for then you will think that a long journey needeth great provisions; but die daily, and live as those that are going to give up their account:' and then conscience will force you to ask, whether you have been faithful stewards, and to lay up a treasure in heaven, and to make you friends of the mammon that others use to unrighteousness, and to lay up a good foundation for the time to come, and to be glad that God hath given you that, the improvement of which may further the good of others, and your salvation. Living and dying, let it be your care and business to do good.

CHAPTER XXIX

Directions for the Aged (and Weak)

HAVING before opened the duties of children to God, and to their parents, I shall give no other particular Directions to the young, but shall next open the special duties of the aged.

Direct. I. 'The old and weak have a louder call from God, than others, to be accurate in examining the state of their souls, and making their calling and election sure.' Whether they are yet regenerate and sanctified or not, is a most important question for every man to get resolved; but especially for them that are nearest to their end. Ask counsel, therefore, of some able, faithful minister or friend, and set yourselves diligently to try your title to eternal life, and to cast up your accounts, and see how all things stand between God and you: and if you should find yourselves in an unrenewed state, as you love

your souls, delay no longer, but presently be humbled for your so long and sottish neglect, of so necessary and great a work. Go, open your case to some able minister, and lament your sin, and fly to Christ, and set your hearts on God, as your felicity, and change your company and course, and rest not any longer in so dangerous and miserable a case: the more full Directions for your conversion I have given before, in the beginning of the book, and in divers others; and therefore shall say no more to such, it being others that I am here especially to direct.

Direct. II. 'Cast back your eyes upon the sins of all your life, that you may perceive how humble those souls should be, that have sinned so long as you have done; and may feel what need you have of Christ, to pardon so long a life of sin.' Though you have repented and been justified long ago, yet you have daily sinned since you were justified; and though all be forgiven that is repented of, yet must it be still before your eyes, both to keep you humble, and continue the exercise of that repentance, and drive you to Christ, and make you thankful. Yea, your forgiveness and justification, are yet short of perfection, (whatever some may tell you to the contrary) as well as your sanctification. For, 1. Your justification is yet given you, but conditionally as to its continuance, even upon condition of your perseverance. 2. And the temporal chastisement, and the pains of death, and the long absence of the body from heaven, and the present wants of grace, and comfort, and communion with God, are punishments which are not yet forgiven executively. 3. And the final sentence of justification at the day of judgment, (which is the most perfect sort) is yet to come: and therefore you have still reason enough to review, and repent of all that is past and still pray for the pardon of all the sins that ever you committed, which were forgiven you before. So many years sinning should have a very serious repentance, and lay you low before the Lord.

Direct. III. 'Cleave closer now to Christ than ever.' Remembering that you have a life of sin, for him to answer for, and save you from. And that the time is near, when you shall have more sensible need of him, than ever you have had. You must shortly be cast upon him as your Saviour, Advocate, and Judge, to determine the question, what shall become of you unto all eternity, and to perfect all that ever he hath done for you, and accomplish all that you have sought and hoped for. And now your natural life decayeth, it is time to retire to him that is your root, and to look to the "life that is hid with Christ in God:" and to him that is preparing you a mansion with himself; and whose office it is to receive the departing souls of true believers. Live therefore in the daily thoughts of Christ, and comfort your souls in the belief of that full supply and safety which you have in him.

Direct. IV. 'Let the ancient mercies and experiences of God's love through all your lives, be still before you, and fresh upon your minds, that they may kindle your love and thankfulness to God, and may feed your own delight and comfort, and help you the easier to submit to future weaknesses and death.' Eaten bread must not be forgotten: a thankful remembrance preserveth all your former mercies still fresh and green; the sweetness and benefit may remain, though the thing itself be past and gone. This is the great privilege of an aged Christian; that he hath many years' mercy more to think on, than others have. Every one of those mercies was sweet to you by itself, at the time of your receiving it (except afflictions, and misunderstood and unobserved mercies): and then how sweet should altogether be? If unthankfulness have buried any of them, let thankfulness give them now a resurrection. What delightful work is it for your thoughts, to look back to your childhood, and remember how mercy brought you up, and conducted you to every place that you have lived in; and provided for you, and preserved you, and heard your prayers, and disposed of all things for your good: how it brought you under

the means of grace, and blessed them to you; and how the Spirit of God began and carried on the work of grace upon your hearts? I hope you have recorded the wonders of mercy ever upon your hearts, with which God hath filled up all your lives. And is it not a pleasant work in old age to ruminate upon them? If a traveller delight to talk of his travels, and a soldier or seaman, upon his adventures, how sweet should it be to a Christian to peruse all the conduct of mercy through his life, and all the operations of the Spirit upon his heart. Thankfulness taught men heretofore, to make their mercies, as it were, attributes of their God. As "the God that brought them out of the land of Egypt," was the name of the God of Israel. And Gen. 48:15. Jacob delighteth himself in his old age, in such reviews of mercy: "The God which fed me all my life long unto this day. The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." Yea, such thankful reviews of ancient mercies, will force an ingenuous soul to a quieter submission to infirmities, sufferings, and death; and make us say as Job, "Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and not evil?" and as old Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." It is a powerful rebuke of all discontents, and maketh death itself more welcome, to think how large a share of mercy, we have had already in the world.

Direct. V. 'Draw forth the treasure of wisdom and experience, which you have been so long in laying up, to instruct the ignorant, and warn the inexperienced and ungodly that are about you.' "Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom." "The aged women must teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands and children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphemedd." It is supposed that time and experience hath taught you more than is known to raw and ignorant youth. Tell them what you have suffered by the deceits of sin: tell them the method and

danger of temptations: tell them what you lost by delaying your repentance; and how God recovered you: and how the Spirit wrought upon your souls: tell them what comforts you have found in God; what safety and sweetness in a holy life; how sweet the holy Scriptures have been to you; how prayers have prevailed; how the promises of God have been fulfilled; and what mercies and great deliverances you have had. Tell them how good you have found God; and how bad you have found sin; and how vain you have found the world Warn them to resist their fleshly lusts, and to take heed of the ensnaring flatteries of sin: acquaint them truly with the history of public sins, and judgments, and mercies in the times which you have lived in. God hath made this the duty of the aged, that the "Fathers should tell the wonders of his works and mercies to their children, that the ages to come may praise the Lord."

Direct. VI. 'The aged must be examples of wisdom, gravity, and holiness unto the younger.' Where should they find any virtues in eminence, if not in you, that have so much time, and helps, and experiences? It may well be expected that nothing but savoury, wise, and holy, come from your mouths; and nothing unbeseeming wisdom and godliness, be seen in your lives. Such as you would have your children after you to be, such shew yourselves to them in all your conversation.

Direct. VII. 'Especially it belongeth to you, to repress the heats, and dividing, contentious, and censorious disposition of the younger sorts of professors of godliness.' They are in the heat of their blood, and want the knowledge and experience of the aged to guide their zeal: they have not their senses yet exercised in discerning good and evil: they are not able to try the spirits: they are yet but as children, apt to be tossed to and fro, and "carried up and down with every wind of doctrine, after the craft and subtlety of deceiversf." The

novices are apt to be puffed up with pride, and "fall into the condemnation of the devil." They never saw the issue of errors, and sects, and parties, and what divisions and contentions tend to, as you have done. And therefore it belongeth to your gravity and experience to call them unto unity, charity, and peace, and to keep them from proving firebrands in the church, and rashly overrunning their understandings and the truth.

Direct. VIII. 'Of all men you must live in the greatest contempt of earthly things, and least entangle yourselves in the love or needless troubles of the world: you are like to need it and use it but a little while: a little may serve one that is so near his journey's end: you have had the greatest experience of its vanity: you are so near the great things of another world, that methinks you should have no leisure to remember this, or room for any unnecessary thoughts or speeches of it. As your bodies are less able for worldly employment than others, so accordingly you are allowed to retire from it more than others, for your more serious thoughts of the life to come. It is a sign of the bewitching power of the world, and of the folly and unreasonableness of sin, to see the aged usually as covetous as the young; and men that are going out of the world, to love it as fondly, and scrape for it as eagerly, as if they never looked to leave it. You should rather give warning to the younger sort, to take heed of covetousness, and of being ensnared by the World, and while they labour in it faithfully with their hands, to keep their hearts entirely for God.

Direct. IX. 'You should highly esteem every minute of your time, and lose none in idleness or unnecessary things; but be always doing or getting some good; and do what you do with all your might.' For you are sure now that your time will not be long: how little have you left to make all the rest of your preparation in for eternity! The young

may die quickly, but the old know that their time will be but short. Though nature decay, yet grace can grow in life and strength; and when "your outward man perisheth, the inner man may be renewed day by day." Time is a most precious commodity to all; but especially to them that have but a little more to determine the question in, 'Whether they must live in heaven or hell for ever.' Though you cannot do your worldly businesses as heretofore, yet you have variety of holy exercises to be employed in; bodily ease may beseem you, but idleness is worse in you than in any.

Direct. X. 'When the decay of your strength, of memory, or parts, doth make you unable to read, or pray, or meditate by yourselves, so much or so well as heretofore, make the more use of the more lively gifts and help of others.' Be the more in hearing others, and in joining with them in prayer; that their memory, and zeal, and utterance may help to lift you up and carry you on.

Direct. XI. 'Take not a decay of nature, and of those gifts and works which depend thereon, for a decay of grace.' Though your memory, and utterance, and fervour of affection, abate as your natural heat abateth, yet be not discouraged; but remember, that you may for all this grow in grace. If you do but grow in holy wisdom and judgment, and a higher esteem of God and holiness, and a greater disesteem of all the vanities of the world, and a firmer resolution to cleave to God and trust on Christ, and never to turn to the world and sin; this is your growth in grace.

Direct. XII. 'Be patient under all the infirmities and inconveniencies of old age.' Be not discontented at them, repine not, nor grow peevish and froward to those about you. This is a common temptation which the aged should carefully resist. You knew at first that you had a body that must decay: if you would not have had it till a decaying age, why

were you so unwilling to die? If you would, why do you repine? Bless God for the days of youth, and strength, and health, and ease which you have had already! and grudge not that corruptible flesh decayeth.

Direct. XIII. 'Understand well that passive obedience is that which God calleth you to in your age and weakness, and in which you must serve and honour him in the conclusion of your labour.' When you are unfit for any great or public works, and active obedience hath not opportunity to exercise itself as heretofore, it is then as acceptable to God that you honour him, by patient suffering. And therefore it is a great error of them that wish for the death of all that are impotent, decrepit, and bedrid, as if they were utterly unserviceable to God. I tell you, it is no small service that they may do, not only by their prayers, and their secret love to God, but by being examples of faith, and patience, and heavenly-mindedness, and confidence and joy in God, to all about them. Grudge not then if God will thus employ you.

Direct. XIV. 'Let your thoughts of death, and preparations for it, be as serious as if death were just at hand.' Though all your life be little enough to prepare for death, and it be a work that should be done as soon as you have the use of reason, yet age and weakness call louder to you, presently to prepare without delay. Do therefore all that you would fain find done, when your last sickness cometh; that unreadiness to die may not make death terrible, nor your age uncomfortable.

Direct. XV. 'Live in the joyful expectation of your change, as becometh one that is so near to heaven, and looketh to live with Christ for ever.' Let all the high and glorious things, which faith apprehendeth, now shew their power in the love, and joy, and longings of your soul. There is nothing in which the weak and aged can more honour Christ and do good to others, than in joyful

expectation of their change, and an earnest desire to be with Christ. This will do much to convince unbelievers, that the promises are true, and that heaven is real, and that a holy life is indeed the best, which hath so happy an end. When they see you highest in your joys, at the time when others are deepest in distress; and when you rejoice as one that is entering upon his happiness, when all the happiness of the ungodly is at an end; this will do more than many sermons, to persuade a sinner to a holy life. I know that this is not easily attained; but a thing so sweet and profitable to yourselves, and so useful to the good of others, and so much tending to the honour of God, should be laboured after with all your diligence: and then you may expect God's blessing on your labours. Read to this use the fourth part of my "Saints' Rest."

CHAPTER XXX

Directions for the Sick

THOUGH the chief part of our preparation for death be in the time of health, and it is a work for which the longest life is not too long; yet because the folly of unconverted sinners is so great, as to forget what they were born for till they see death at hand, and because there is a special preparation necessary for the best, I shall here lay down some Directions for the Sick. And I shall reduce them to these four heads. 1. What must be done to make death safe to us, that it may be our passage to heaven and not to hell. 2. What must be done to make sickness profitable to us? 3. What must be done to make death comfortable to us, that we may die in peace and joy. 4. What must be done to make our sickness profitable to others about us.

Tit. 1. Directions for a Safe Death, to secure our Salvation

The Directions of this sort are especially necessary to the unconverted, impenitent sinner; yet needful also to the godly themselves; and therefore I shall distinctly speak to both.

I. Directions for an Unconverted Sinner in his Sickness

It is a very dreadful case to be found by sickness in an unconverted state. There is so great a work to be done, and so little time to do it in, and soul and body so unfit and undisposed for it, and the misery so great (even everlasting torment) that will follow so certainly and so quickly if it be undone, that one would think it should overwhelm the understanding and heart of any man with astonishment and horror, to foresee such a condition in the time of his health; much more to find himself in it in his sickness. And though one would think that the near approach of death, and the nearness of another world, should be irresistibly powerful to convert a sinner, so that few or none should die unconverted, however they lived; yet Scripture and sad experience declare the contrary, that most men die as well as live, in an unsanctified and miserable state. For 1. A life of sin doth usually settle a man in ignorance or unbelief, or both: so that sickness findeth him in such a dungeon of darkness, that he is but lost and confounded in his fears, and knoweth not whither he is going, nor what he hath to do. 2. And also sin woefully hardeneth the heart, and the long-resisted Spirit of God forsaketh them, and giveth them over to themselves in sickness, who would not be ruled and sanctified by him in their health: and such remain like blocks or beasts even to the last. 3. And the nature of sickness and approaching death doth tend more to affright than to renew the soul; and rather to breed fear and trouble than love. And though grief and fear be good preparatives and helps, yet it is the love of God and holiness in which the soul's regeneration and renovation doth consist; and there is no more holiness than there is love and willingness. And many a

one that is affrighted into strong repentings, and cries, and prayers, and promises, and seem to themselves and others to be converted, do yet either die in their sins and misery, or return to their unholy lives when they recover, being utter strangers to that true repentance which reneweth the heart, as sad experience doth too often testify. 4. And many poor sinners finding that they have so short a time, do end it in mere amazement and terror, not knowing how to compose their thoughts, to examine their hearts and lives, nor to exercise faith in Christ, nor to follow any Directions that are given them; but lie in trembling and astonishment, wholly taken up with the fears of death, much worse than a beast that is going to be butchered. 5. And the very pains of the body do so divert or hinder the thoughts of many, that they can scarce mind any spiritual things, with such a composedness as is necessary to so great a work. 6. And the greatest number being partly confounded in ignorance, and partly withheld by backwardness and undisposedness, and partly disheartened by thinking it impossible to become new creatures, and get a regenerate, heavenly heart on such a sudden, do force themselves to hope that they shall be saved without it, and that though they are sinners, yet that kind of repentance which they have, will serve the turn and be accepted, and God will be more merciful than to damn them. And this false hope they think they are necessitated to take up. For there is but two other ways to be taken: the one is, utterly to despair; and both Scripture, and reason, and nature itself are against that: the other way is to be truly converted and won to the love of God and heaven by a lively faith in Jesus Christ: and they have no such faith: and to this they are strange and undisposed, and think it impossible to be done. And if they must have no hopes but upon such terms as these, they think they shall have none at all. Or else if they hear that there is no other hope, and that none but the holy can be saved, they will force themselves to hope that they have all this, and that they are truly converted, and become new creatures, and do love God and

holiness above all: not because indeed it is so, but because they would have it so, for fear of being damned. And instead of finding that they are void of faith, and love, and holiness, and labouring to get a renewed soul, they think it a nearer way to make themselves believe that it is so already: and thus in their presumption, self-deceiving, and false hopes, they linger out that little time that is left them to be converted in, till death open their eyes, and hell do undeceive them. 7. And the same devil, and wicked men his instruments, that kept them in health from true repentance, will be as diligent to keep them from it in their sickness; and will be loath to lose all at the last cast, which they had been winning all the time before. And if the devil can but keep them in his power, till sickness come and take them up with pain and fear, he will hope to keep them a few days longer, till he have finished that which he had begun and carried on so far. And if there be here and there one, that will be held no longer by false hopes and presumption, he will at last think to take them off by desperation, and make them believe that there is no remedy.

And, indeed, it is a thing so difficult and unlikely, to convert a sinner in all his pain and weakness at the last, that even the godly friends of such, do many times even let them alone, as thinking that there is little or no hope. But this is a very sinful course: as long as there is life, there is some hope. And as long as there is hope, we must use the means. A physician will try the best remedies he hath, in the most dangerous disease, which is not desperate: for when it is certain that there is no hope without them, if they do no good, they do no harm. So must we try the saving of a poor soul, while there is life and any hope: for if once death end their time and hopes, it will be then too late; and they will be out of our reach and help for ever. To those that sickness findeth in so sad a case, I shall give here but a few brief

Directions, because I have done it more at large in the first Part and first Chapter, whither I refer them.

Direct. I. 'Set speedily and seriously the judging of your selves, as those that are going to be judged of God.' And do it in the manner following. 1. Do it willingly and resolvedly, as knowing that it is now no time to remain uncertain of your everlasting state, if you can possibly get acquainted with it. Is it not time for a man to know himself, whether he be a sanctified believer or not, when he is just going to appear before his Maker, and there be judged as he is found? 2. Do it impartially; as one that is not willing to find himself deceived, as soon as death hath acquainted him with the truth. O take heed, as you love your souls, of being foolishly tender of yourselves, and resolving for fear of being troubled at your misery, to believe that you are safe, whether it be true or false. This is the way that thousands are undone by. Thinking that you are sanctified, will neither prove you so, nor make you so: no more than thinking you are well, will prove or make you well. And what good will it do you to think you are pardoned and shall be saved, for a few days longer, and then to find too late in hell that you were mistaken? Is the ease of so short a deceit worth all the pain and loss that it will cost you? Alas, poor soul! God knoweth it is not needlessly to affright thee, that we desire to convince thee of thy misery! We do not cruelly insult over thee or desire to torment thee. But we pity thee in so sad a case. To see an unsanctified person ready to pass into another world, and to be doomed unto endless misery, and will not know it till he is there! Our principal reason of opening your danger is because it is necessary to your escaping it. If soul diseases were like bodily diseases, which may sometimes be cured without the patient's knowing them and the danger of them, we would never trouble you at such a time as this. But it will not be so done: you must understand your danger, if you will be saved from it: therefore be

impartial with yourself if you are wise, and be truly willing to know the worst. 3. In judging yourselves proceed by the same rule or law that God will judge you by; that is, by the Word of God revealed in the Gospel. For your work now is not to steal a little short-lived quiet to your consciences, but to know how God will judge your souls, and whether he will doom you to endless joy or misery: and how can you know this, but by that law or rule that God will judge you by? And certainly God will judge you, by the same law or rule by which he governed you, or which he gave you to lives by in the world. It will go never the better or worse there with any man, for his good or bad conceits of himself, if they were his mistakes; but just what God hath said in his Word that he will do with any man, that will he do with him in the day of judgment. All shall be justified whom the Gospel justifieth; and all shall be condemned that it condemneth; and therefore judge yourself by it. By what signs you may know an unsanctified man, I have told you before, Part i. Chap. 1. Direct. 8. And by what signs true grace may be known, I told you before, in the Preparation for the Sacrament. 4. If you cannot satisfy yourself about your own condition, advise with some godly, able minister, or other Christian, that is best acquainted with you; that knoweth how you have lived towards God and man: or at least open all your heart and life to him that he may know it; and if he tell you that he feareth you are yet unsanctified, you have the more reason to fear the worst. But then be sure that he be not a carnal, ungodly, worldly man himself: for they that flatter and deceive themselves, are not unlike to do so by others. Such blind deceivers will daub over all, and bid you never trouble yourself; but even comfort you as they comfort themselves, and bid you believe that all is well, and it will be well; or will make you believe that some forced confession and unsound repentance, will serve instead of true conversion. But a man that is going to the bar of God, should be loath to be deceived by himself or others.

Direct. II. 'If by a due examination you find yourself unsanctified, bethink you seriously of your case, both what you have done, and what a condition you are in, till you are truly humbled, and willing of any conditions that God shall offer you for your deliverance.' Consider how foolishly you have done, how rebelliously, how unthankfully, to forsake your God, and forget your souls, and lose all your time, and abuse all God's mercies, and leave undone the work that you were made, and preserved, and redeemed for! Alas, did you never know till now that you must die? and that you had all your time to make preparation for an endless life which followeth death? Were you never warned by minister or friend? Were you never told of the necessity of a holy, heavenly life; and of a regenerate, sanctified state, till now? O what could you have done more unwisely, or wickedly, than to cast away a life that eternal life so much depended on; and to refuse your Saviour, and his grace and mercies, till your last extremity? Is this the time to look after a new birth, and to begin your life, when you are at the end of it? O what have you done to delay so great a work till now! And now if you die before you are regenerate, you are lost for ever. O humble your souls before the Lord! Lament your folly; and presently condemn yourselves before him, and make out to him for mercy while there is hope.

Direct. III. 'When you are humbled for your sin and misery, and willing of mercy upon any terms, believe that yet your case is not remediless, but that Jesus Christ hath given himself to God a sacrifice for your sins, and is so sure and all-sufficient a Saviour, that yet nothing can hinder you from pardon and salvation, but your own impenitence and unbelief. Come to him therefore as the Saviour of souls, that he may teach you the will of God, and reconcile you to his Father, and pardon your sins, and renew you by his Spirit, and acquaint you with his Father's love, and save you from damnation, and make you heirs of life eternal. For all this may yet possibly be

done, as short as your time is like to be: and it will yet be long of you, if it be not done. The covenant of grace doth promise pardon and salvation to every penitent believer whenever they truly turn to God, without excepting any hour, or any person in all the world. Nothing but an unbelieving, hardened heart, resisting his grace, and unwilling to be holy, can deprive you of pardon and salvation, even at the last. It was a most foolish wickedness of you to put it off till now: but yet for all that, if you are not yet saved, it shall not be long of Christ, but you: yet he doth freely offer you his mercy; and he will be your Lord and Saviour if you will not refuse him: yet the match shall not break on his part: see that it break not on your part and you shall be saved. Know therefore what he is, as God and man, and what a blessed work he hath undertaken, to redeem a sinful, miserable world, and what he hath already done for us, in his life and doctrine, in his death and sufferings, by his resurrection and his covenant of grace, and what he is now doing at his Father's right hand, in making intercession for penitent believers, and what an endless glory he is preparing for them, and how he will save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him. O yet let your heart even leap for joy, that you have an all-sufficient, willing, gracious Saviour; whose grace aboundeth more than sin aboundeth. If the devils and poor damned souls in hell were but in your case, and had your offers and your hopes, how glad do you imagine they would be? Cast yourselves therefore in faith and confidence upon this Saviour: trust your souls upon his sacrifice and merit, for the pardon of your sins, and peace with God: beg of him yet the renewing grace of his Spirit: be willing to be made holy, and a new creature, and to live a holy life if you should survive: resolve to be wholly ruled by him, and give up yourself absolutely to him as your Saviour, to be justified, and sanctified, and saved by him, and then trust in him for everlasting happiness. O happy soul, if yet you can do thus, without deceit.

Direct. IV. 'Believe now, and consider what God is and will be to your soul, and what love he hath shewed to you by Christ, and what endless joy and glory you may have with him in heaven, notwithstanding all the sins that you have done: and think what the world and the flesh have done for you, in comparison of God: think of this till you fall in love with God, and till your hearts and hopes are set on heaven, and turned from this world and flesh, and till you feel yourself in love with holiness, and till you are firmly resolved in the strength of Christ to live a holy life, if God recover you: and then you are truly sanctified, and shall be saved if you die in this condition.' Take heed that you take not a repentance and good purposes which come from nothing but fear, to be sufficient; if you recover, all this may die again, when your fear is over; you are not sanctified, nor hath God your hearts, till your love be to him: that which you do through fear alone, you had rather not do if you might be excused; and therefore your hearts are still against it. When the feeling of God's unspeakable love in Christ, doth melt and overcome your hearts; when the infinite goodness of God himself, and his mercies to your souls and bodies, do make you take him as more lovely and desirable than all the world; when you so: believe the heavenly joys above, as to desire them more than earthly pleasures; when you love God better than worldly prosperity, and when a life of such love and holiness seemeth better to you, than all the merriments of sinners, and you had rather be a saint, than the most prosperous of the ungodly, and are firmly resolved for a holy life, if God recover you, then are you indeed in a state of grace, and not till then; this must be your case, or you are undone for ever. And therefore meditate on the love of Christ, and the goodness of God, and the joys of heaven, and the happiness of saints, and the misery of worldlings and ungodly men; meditate on these till your eyes be opened, and your hearts be touched with a holy love, and heaven and holiness be the very things that you desire above all; and then you may boldly go to God; and

believe that all your sins are pardoned; and it is not bare terror, but these believing thoughts of God, and heaven, and Christ, and love, that must change your hearts and do the work.

These four Directions truly practised, will yet set you on safe ground, as sad and dangerous as your condition is; but it is not the hearing of them, or the bare approbation of them that will serve the turn; to find out your sinful, miserable state, and to be truly humbled for it, and to discern the remedy which you have in Christ, and penitently and believingly to enter into his covenant, and to see that your happiness is wholly in the love and fruition of God, and to believe the glory prepared for the saints, and to prefer it before all the prosperity of the world, and love it, and set your hearts upon it, and to resolve on a holy life if you should recover, forsaking this deceitful world and flesh; all this is a work that is not so easily done as mentioned, and requireth your more serious, fixed thoughts; and indeed had been fitter for your youthful vigour, than for a painful, weak, distempered state. But necessity is upon you; it must needs be yet done, and thoroughly and sincerely done, or you are lost for ever. And therefore do it as well as you can, and see that your hearts do not trifle and deceive you. In some respect you have greater helps than ever you had before; you cannot now keep up your hard-heartedness and security, by looking at death as a great way off. You have now fuller experience, than ever you had before; what the flesh, and all its pleasures will come to, and what good your sinful sports, and recreations, and merriments will do you; and what all the riches, and greatness, and gallantry, and honours of the world are worth, and what they will do for you in the day of your necessity. You stand so near another world, and must so quickly appear before the Lord, that methinks a dead and senseless heart, should no longer be able to make you slight your God, your Saviour, and your endless life: and one would think that the flesh, and world, should never be able to

deceive you any more. O happy soul, if yet at last, you are not only frightened into an unsound repentance, but can hate all sin, and love the Lord, and trust in Christ, and give up yourself entirely to him, and set your heart upon that blessed life, where you may see and love him perfectly for ever!

Quest. 'But will so late repentance serve the turn, for one that hath been so long ungodly?'

Answ. Yes, if it be sincere: but there is all the doubt; and that is it, that your salvation now dependeth on.

Quest. 'But how may I know, whether it be sincere?'

Answ. 1. If you be not only frighted into it; but your very heart, and will, and love are changed. 2. If it extend both to the end, and the necessary means: so that you love God, and the joys of heaven, above all earthly prosperity and pleasure; and also you had rather be perfectly holy, than live in all the delights of sin. And if you hate every known sin, and love the holy ways and servants of God, and this unfeignedly: this is a true change. 3. And if this repentance and change be such as will hold, if God should recover you, and would shew itself in a new, and holy, and self-denying life; which certainly it will do, if it come not only from fear, but from love: but if you renounce the world, and the flesh, against your wills, because you know there is no remedy; and if you bid farewell to your worldly, sinful pleasures, not because you love God better, but because you cannot keep them, though you would; and if you take not God and heaven as your best, but only for better than hell; but not as better than worldly prosperity, which yet you would choose, if you had your choice. This kind of repentance will never save you, and if you should recover, it would vanish away, and come to nothing, as soon as your fears of death are over, and you are returned to your worldly delights

again. Though now in your extremity, you cry out never so confidently, O I had rather have heaven than earth, and I had rather have Christ and holiness, than all the pleasures and prosperity of sinners; yet if it be not from a renewed, sanctified heart, that had rather be such indeed, but from mere necessity and fear, and against the habit of your hearts and wills. This is but such a repentance as Judas had, that is neither sincere at present, nor if you recover, will hold you to a holy life.

II. Directions to the Sanctified, for a safe Departure

When the soul is truly converted and sanctified, the principal business is dispatched, that is necessary to a safe departure: but yet I cannot say that there is no more to be done. They were godly persons that were exhorted, "to give diligence to make their calling and election sure." Which being (as the Greek importeth) not only to make it known or certain; but to make it firm, doth signify more than barely to discern it. These following duties are yet further necessary.

Direct. I. 'Satisfy not yourselves that once you found yourselves sincere; but if your understandings be clear and free, renew the trial; and if you are insufficient for it of yourself, make use of the help of a faithful, judicious minister or friend.' For when a man is going to the bar of God, it concerneth him to make all as sure as possibly he can.

Direct. II. 'Review your lives, and renew your universal repentance, for all the sins that ever you committed; and also let your particular repentance extend to every particular sin which you remember, but especially repent of your most aggravated, soul-wounding sins.' For if your repentance be universal and true, it will also be particular; and you will be specially humbled for your special sins: and search deep, and see that none escape you. And think not that you are not called to repent of them, or ask forgiveness, because you have

repented of them long ago, and received a pardon: for this is a thing to be done even to the last.

Direct. III. 'Renew your faith in Jesus Christ, and cast your souls upon his merits and mediation.' Satisfy not yourselves that you have a habit of faith, and that formerly you did believe; but fly to your trusty rock and refuge, and continue the exercise of your faith, and again give up your souls to Christ.

Direct. IV. 'Make it your chief work to stir up in your hearts, the love of God, and a desire to live with Christ in glory.' Let those comforting and encouraging objects which are the instruments of this, be still in your thoughts: and if you can do this, it will be the surest proof of your title to the crown.

Direct. V. 'If you have wronged any by word or deed, be sure that you do your best to right them, and make them satisfaction; and if you have fallen out with any, be reconciled to them.' Leave not other men's goods to your heirs and executors: restore what you have wrongfully gotten, before you leave your legacies to any. Confess your faults where you can do no more: and ask those forgiveness, whom you have injured; and leave not men's names, or estates, or souls, under the effects of your former wrongs, so far as you are able to make them reparation.

Direct. VI. 'Be still taken up in your duty to God, even that which he now calleth you to, that you may not be found idle, or in the sins of omission; but may be most holy and fruitful at the last.' Though sickness call you not to all the same duties, which were incumbent on you in your health; yet think not therefore, that there is no duty at all expected from the sick. Every season and state hath its peculiar duties (and its peculiar mercies) which it much concerneth us to know. I shall anon tell you more particularly what they are.

Direct. VII. 'Be specially fortified and vigilant against the most dangerous temptations of satan, by which he useth to assault the sick.' Pray now especially, that God would not lead you into temptation, but deliver you from the evil one: for in your weakness you may be less fit to wrestle with them, than at another time. O beg of God, that as he hath upheld you, and preserved you till now, he would not forsake you at last in your extremity. Particularly,

Tempt. I. One of the most dangerous temptations of the enemy, is, 'To take the advantage of a Christian's bodily weakness, to shake his faith, and question his foundations, and call him to dispute over his principles again, Whether the soul be immortal? and there be a heaven, and a hell? And whether Christ be the Son of God, and the Scriptures be God's word?' &c. As if this had never been questioned, and scanned, and resolved before! It is a great deal of advantage that satan expecteth by this malicious course. If he could, he would draw you from Christ to infidelity; but Christ prayeth for you, that your faith may not fail: if he cannot do this, he would at least weaken your faith, and hereby weaken every grace: and he would hereby divert you from the more needful thoughts, which are suitable to your present state; and he would hereby distract you, and destroy your comforts, and draw you in your perplexities, to dishonour God. Away therefore with these blasphemous and unseasonable motions; cast them from you, with abhorrence and disdain: it is no time now to be questioning your foundations; you have done this more seasonably, when you were in a fitter case. A pained, languishing body, and a disturbed, discomposed mind, is unfit upon a surprise, to go back and dispute over all our principles. Tell satan, you owe him not so much service, nor will you so cast away those few hours and thoughts, for which you have so much better work. You have the witness in yourselves, even the Spirit, and image, and seal of God. You have been converted and renewed by the power of that Word,

which he would have you question; and you have found it to be owned by the Spirit of grace, who hath made it mighty to pull down the strongest holds of sin. Tell satan you will not gratify him so much, as to turn your holy, heavenly desires, into a wrangling with him about those truths which you have so often proved. You will not question now, the being of that God who hath maintained you so long, and witnessed his being and goodness to you by a life of mercies; nor will you now question the being or truth of him that hath redeemed you, or of the Spirit or Word that hath sanctified, guided, comforted and confirmed you. If he tell you, that you must prove all things, tell him, that this is not now to do; you have long proved the truth and goodness of your God, the mercy of your Saviour, and the power of his holy Spirit and Word. It is now your work to live upon that Word, and fetch your hopes and comforts from it, and not to question it.

Tempt. II. Another dangerous temptation of satan is, 'When he would persuade you to despair, by causing you to misunderstand the tenor of the gospel, or by thinking too narrowly and unworthily of God's mercy, or of the satisfaction of Christ.' But because this temptation doth usually tend more to discomfort the soul, than to damn it, I shall speak more to it under Tit. 3.

Tempt. III. Another dangerous temptation is, 'When satan would draw you to overlook your sins, and overvalue your graces, and be proud of your good works; and so lay too much of your comfort upon yourselves, and lose the sense of your need of Christ, or usurp any part of his office or his honour.' I shall afterward shew you how far you must look at any thing in yourselves: but certainly, that which lifteth you up in pride, or encroacheth on Christ's office, or would draw you to undervalue him, is not of God. Therefore keep humble, in the sense of your sinfulness and unworthiness, and cast away

every motion which would carry you away from Christ, and make yourselves, and your works, and righteousness, as a Saviour to yourselves.

Tempt. IV. Another perilous temptation is, 'By causing the thoughts of death and the grave, and your doubts and fears about the world to come, to overcome the love of God, and (not only the comforts, but also) the desires and willingness of your hearts, to be with Christ.' It will abate your love to God and heaven, to think on them with too much estrangedness and terror. The Directions under Tit. 3. will help you against this temptation.

Tempt. V. 'Another dangerous temptation is fetched from the remnants of your worldlymindedness; when your dignity, or honour, your house, or lands, your relations and friends, or your pleasures and contentments, are so sweet to you, that you are loath to leave them; and the thoughts of death are grievous to you, because it taketh you from that which you over-love; and God and heaven are the less desired, because you are loath to leave the world.' Watch carefully against this great temptation: observe how it seeketh the very destruction of your grace and souls; and how it fighteth against your love to God and heaven, and would undo all that Christ and his Spirit have been doing so long. Observe what a root of matter it findeth in yourselves; and therefore be the more humbled under it. Learn now what the world is, and how little the accommodations of the flesh are worth; when you perceive what the end of all must be. Would you never die? would you enjoy your worldly things for ever? Had you rather have them, than to live with Christ in the heavenly glory of the New Jerusalem? If you had, it is your grievous sin and folly; and yet you know that it is a desire that you can never hope to attain. Die you must, whether you will or not! What is it then, that you would stay for? Is it till the world be grown less pleasant to you,

and your love and minds be weaned from it? When should that rather be than now? And what should more effectually do it, than this dying condition that you are in? It is time for you to spit out these unwholesome pleasures; and now to look up to the true, the holy, the unmeasurable, everlasting pleasures.

Tit. 2. Directions how to Profit by our Sickness

Whether it shall please God to recover you or not, it is no small benefit which you may get by his visitation, if you do your part, and faithfully improve it, according to these Directions following.

Direct. I. 'If you hear God's call to a closer trial of your hearts, concerning the sincerity of your conversion; and thereby are brought to a more exact examination, and come to a truer acquaintance with your state (be it good or bad) the benefit maybe exceeding great.' For if it be good, you may be much comforted, and confirmed, and fitted to give thanks and praise to God: and if it be bad, you may be awakened speedily to look about you, and seek for a recovery.

Direct. II. 'If in the review of your lives, you find out those sins which before you overlooked, or perceive the greatness of those sins which you before accounted small, the benefit may be very great:' for it will help to a more deep and sound repentance, and to a stronger resolution against all sins, if you recover. And affliction is a very great help to us in this: many a man hath been ashamed and deeply humbled for that same sin, when sickness did awake him, which he could make his play-fellow before, as if there had been neither hurt nor danger in it.

Direct. III. 'There is many a deep corruption in the heart, which affliction openeth and discovereth, which deceitfulness hid in the time of prosperity:' and the detecting of these is no small benefit to

the soul. When you come to part with wealth and honour, you shall better know how much you loved them, than you could before. Mark therefore what corruptions appear in your affliction, and how the heart discloseth its deceits, that you may know what to repent of, and reform.

Direct. IV. 'When affliction calleth you to the use and exercise of your graces, you have a great help to be better acquainted with the strength or weakness of them.' When you are called so loudly to the use of faith, and love, and patience, and heavenlymindedness, you may better know what measure of every one of these you have, than you could when you had no such help. Mark therefore what your hearts prove in the trial, and what each grace doth shew itself to be, in the exercise.

Direct. V. 'You have a very great help now to be thoroughly acquainted with the vanity of the world, and so to mortify all affections unto the things below.' Now judge of the value of wealth, and honour, of plenty, and high places. Are they a comfort to a dying man that is parting with them? Or is it any grief to a poor man when he is dying, that he did not enjoy them? Is it not easy now to rectify your errors, if ever you thought highly of these transitory things? O settle it now in your firm resolution, that if God should restore you, you would value this world at a lower rate, and set by it, and seek it, but as it deserveth.

Direct. VI. 'Also you have now a special help to raise your estimation of the happiness of the saints in heaven, and of the necessity and excellency of a holy life, and of the wisdom of the saints on earth; and to know who maketh the wisest choice.' Now you may see that it is nothing but heaven, that is worth our seeking, and that is finally to be trusted to, and will riot fail us in the hour of our distress: now you

may discern between the righteous and the wicked; between those that serve God and those that serve him not. Now judge whether a loose and worldly life, or a holy, heavenly life be better? And resolve accordingly.

Direct. VII. 'You have also now a very great help to discern the folly of a voluptuous life, and to mortify the deeds and desires of the flesh: when God is mortifying its natural desires, it may help you in mortifying its sinful desires.' Now judge what lust, and plays, and gaming, and feasting, and drunkenness, and swaggering, are worth? You see now the end of all such pleasures. Do you think them better than the joys of heaven, and worthy the loss of a man's salvation to attain them? Or better than the pleasures of a holy life?

Direct. VIII. 'Also now you have a great advantage, for the quickening of your hearts that have lost their zeal, and are cold in prayer, and dull in meditation, and regardless of holy conference.' If ever you will pray earnestly, sure it will be now; if ever you will talk seriously of the matters of salvation, sure it will be now. Now you do better understand the reason of fervent prayer, and serious religion, and circumspect walking than you did before: and you can easily now confute the scorns, or railings of the loose, ungodly enemies of holiness; even as you confute the dotage of a fool, or the ravings of a man beside himself.

Direct. IX. 'You have a great advantage more sensibly to perceive your dependance upon God alone: and what reason you have to please him before all the world, and to regard his favour or displeasure more, than all the things or persons upon earth.' Now you see how vain a thing is man! And how little the favour of all the world, can stand you in stead in your greatest necessity: now you see that it is God, and God alone, that is to be trusted to at last; and

therefore it is God that is to be obeyed and pleased, whatever become of all things in the world.

Direct. X. 'You have now a great advantage to discern the preciousness of time, and to see how carefully it should be redeemed, and to perceive the distractedness of those men, that can waste it in pastimes, and curiosity of dressings; and needless compliments and visits, and a multitude of such vanities as rob the world, of that which is more precious than gold or treasure.' Now what think you of idling and playing away your time? Now do you not think that it is wiser to spend it in a holy preparation for the life to come, than to cast it away upon childish fooleries, or any unnecessary worldly things?

Direct. XI. Also you have now a special help to be more serious than ever in your preparations for death, and in your thoughts of heaven; and so to be readier than you were before: and if sickness help you to be readier to die, and more to set your hearts above, whether you live or die, it will be a profitable sickness to you.'

Direct. XII. 'Let your friends about you be the witnesses of your open confessions and resolutions, and engage them, if God should restore you to your health, to remember you of all the promises which you have made, and to watch over you, and tell you of them whenever there is need.' By these means sickness may be improved, and be a mercy to you.

I might next have given some special Directions to them that are recovered from sickness; but because I would not be needlessly tedious, I refer such to what is here said already. 1. Let them but look over these twelve Directions, and see whether these benefits remain upon their hearts. 2. Let them call to their lively remembrance, the sense which they had, and the frame they were in, when they made these resolutions. 3. Let them remember that sickness will come

again, even a sickness which will have no cure. And 4. Let them bethink themselves, how terribly conscience will be wounded, and their souls dismayed, when the next sickness cometh, to remember that they were unthankful for their last recovery, and how falsely they dealt with God in the breaking of their promises. Foresee this, that you may prevent it.

Tit. 3. Directions for a Comfortable or Peaceable Death

Comfort is not desirable only as it pleaseth us, but also as it strengtheneth us, and helpeth us in our greatest duties. And when is it more needful than in sickness, and the approach of death? I shall therefore add such Directions as are necessary to make our departure comfortable or peaceful at the least, as well as safe.

Direct. I. 'Because I would make this treatise no longer than I needs must; in order to overcome the fears of death, and get a cheerful willingness to die, I desire the sick to read over those twenty considerations, and the following Directions which I have laid down in my book of "Self-denial." And when the fears of death are overcome, the great impediment of their comfort is removed.

Direct. II. 'Misunderstand not sickness, as if it were a greater evil than it is; but observe how great a mercy it is, that death hath so suitable a harbinger or forerunner.' That God should do so much before he taketh us hence, to wean us from the world, and make us willing to be gone; that the unwilling flesh hath the help of pain; and that the senses and appetite languish and decay, which did draw the mind to earthly things, and that we have so loud a call, and so great a help to true repentance, and serious preparation? I know to those that have walked very close with God, and are always ready, a sudden death may be a mercy; as we have lately known divers holy ministers and others, that have died either after sacrament, or in the evening of

the Lord's day, or in the midst of some holy exercise with so little pain, that none about them perceived when they died. But ordinarily it is a mercy to have the flesh brought down and weakened by painful sickness, to help to conquer our natural unwillingness to die.

Direct. III. 'Remember whose messenger sickness is, and who it is that calleth you to die.' It is he, that is the Lord of all the world, and gave us the lives which he taketh from us: and it is he, that must dispose of angels and men, of princes and kingdoms, of heaven and earth; and therefore there is no reason that such worms as we, should desire to be excepted. You cannot deny him to be the disposer of all things, without denying him to be God: it is he that loveth us, and never meant us harm in any thing that he hath done to us; that gave the life of his Son to redeem us; and therefore thinketh not life too good for us: our sickness and death are sent by the same love, that sent us a Saviour, and sent us the powerful preachers of his Word, and sent us his Spirit, and secretly and sweetly changed our hearts, and knit them to himself in love; which gave us a life of precious mercies for our souls and bodies, and hath promised to give us life eternal: and shall we think, that he now intendeth us any harm? Cannot he turn this also to our good, as he hath done many an affliction which we have repined at?

Direct. IV. 'Look by faith to your dying, buried, risen, ascended, glorified Lord.' Nothing will more powerfully overcome both the poison, and the fears of death, than the believing thoughts of him that hath triumphed over it. Is it terrible as it separateth the soul from the body? So it did by our Lord, who yet overcame it. Is it terrible as it layeth the body in the grave? So it did by our Saviour; though he saw not corruption, but quickly rose by the power of his Godhead. He died to teach us believingly and boldly to submit to death. He was buried, to teach us not overmuch to fear a grave. He

rose again to conquer death for us, and to assure those that rise to newness of life, that they shall be raised at last by his power unto glory; and being made partakers of the first resurrection, the second death shall have no power over them. He liveth as our head, that we might live by him; and that he might assure all those that are here risen with him, and seek first the things that are above, that though in themselves they are dead, "yet their life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." What a comfortable word is that, "Because I live, ye shall live alsoe." Death could not hold the Lord of life; nor can it hold us against his will, who hath the "keys of death and hell." He loveth every one of his sanctified ones much better, than you love an eye, or a hand, or any other member of your body, which you will not lose, if you are able to save it. When he ascended, he left us that message full of comfort for his followers. "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your Godg." Which, with these two following, I would have written before me on my sick bed. "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there also shall my servant be." And "Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradisei." O what a joyful thought should, it be to a believer, to think when he is a dying, that he is going to his Saviour, and that our Lord is risen and gone before us, to prepare a place for us, and take us in season to himself. "As you believe in God, believe thus in Christ; and then your hearts will be less troubledl." It is not a stranger that we talk of to you; but your Head and Saviour that loveth you better than you love yourselves, whose office it is there to appear continually for you before God, and at last to receive your departing souls; and into his hand it is, that you must then commend them, as Stephen did.

Direct. V. 'Choose out some promises most suitable to your condition, and roll them over and over in your mind, and feed and

live on them by faith.' A sick man is not (usually) fit to think of very many things; and therefore two or three comfortable promises, to be still before his eyes, may be the most profitable matter of his thoughts; such as those three which I named before. If he be most troubled with the greatness of his sin, let it be such as these. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." "And by him all that believe, are justified from all things; from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moseso." "For I will be merciful unto their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." If it be the weakness of his grace that troubleth him, let him choose such passages as these. "He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with youngq." "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast outs." "The apostles said unto the Lord, increase our faith." If it be the fear of death, and strangeness to the other world that troubleth you, remember the words of Christ before cited, and 2 Cor. 5:1–6. 8. "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: for we that are in this tabernacle do groan being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.—We are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." "For I am in a strait between to, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their

works do follow themx." "O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory!" "Lord Jesus receive my spiritz." Fix upon some such word or promise which may support you, in your extremity.

Direct. VI. 'Look up to God, who is the glory of heaven, and the light, and life, and joy of souls, and believe that you are going to see his face, and to live in the perfect, everlasting fruition of his fullest love among the glorified.' If it be delectable here to know his works, what will it be to see the cause of all? All creatures in heaven and earth conjoined, can never afford such content and joy to holy souls, as God alone! O if we knew him whom we must there behold, how weary should we be of this dungeon of mortality? and how fervently should we long to see his face? The chicken that cometh out of the shell, or the infant that newly cometh out of the womb, into this illuminated world of human converse, receiveth not such a joyful change, as the soul that is newly loosed from the flesh, and passeth from this mortal life to God. One sight of God by a blessed soul, is worth more than all the kingdoms of the earth. It is pleasant to the eyes to behold the sun: but the sun is as darkness and useless in his glory. "And the city had no need of the sun, nor of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." "And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads: and there shall be no night there: and they need no candle, nor light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.b" If David in the wilderness so impatiently thirsted, to appear before God, the living God, in his sanctuary at Jerusalem, how earnestly should we long to see his glory in the heavenly Jerusalem? The glimpse of his back parts, was as much as Moses might beholdd; yet that much put a shining glory upon his face. The sight that Stephen had when men were ready to stone him, was a

delectable sightf. The glimpse of Christ in his transfiguration ravished the three apostles that beheld it. Paul's vision which wrapt him up into the third heavens, did advance him above the rest of mankind! But our beatifical sight of the glory of God, will very far excel all this. When our perfected bodies shall have the perfect glorious body of Christ to see, and our perfected souls shall have the God of truth, the most perfect uncreated light to know, what more is a created understanding capable of? And yet this is not the top of our felicity; for the understanding is but the passage to the heart or will, and truth is but subservient to goodness: and therefore though the understanding be capable of no more than the beatifical vision, yet the man is capable of more; even of receiving the fullest communications of God's love, and feeling it poured out upon the heart, and living in the returns of perfect love; and in this intercourse of love will be our highest joys, and this is the top of our heavenly felicity. O that God would make us foreknow by a lively faith, what it is to behold him in his glory, and to dwell in perfect love and joy, and then death would no more be able to dismay us, nor should we be unwilling of such a blessed change! But having spoken of this so largely in my "Saints' Rest," I must stop here, and refer you thither.

Direct. VII. 'Look up to the blessed Society of angels, and saints with Christ, and remember their blessedness and joy, and that you also belong to the same society and are going to be numbered with them. It will greatly overcome the fears of death, to see by faith the joys of them that have gone before us; and withal to think of their relation to us; as it will encourage a man that is to go beyond sea, if the far greatest part of his dearest friends be gone before him, and he heareth of their safe arrival, and of their joy and happiness. Those angels that now see the face of God are our special friends and guardians, and entirely love us, better than any of our friends on earth do! They rejoiced at our conversion, and will rejoice at our

glorification; and as they are better, and love us better, so therefore our love should be greater to them, than to any upon earth, and we should more desire to be with them. Those blessed souls that are now with Christ, were once as we are here on earth; they were compassed with temptations, and clogged with flesh and burdened with sin, and persecuted by the world, and they went out of the world by sickness and death, as we must do; and yet now their tears are wiped away, their pains, and groans, and fears are turned into inexpressible blessedness and joy; and would we not be with them? Is not their company desirable? and their felicity more desirable? The glory of the New Jerusalem is not described to us in vain. God will be all in all there to us, as the only sun and glory of that world; and yet we shall have pleasure, not only to see our glorified Redeemer, but also to converse with the heavenly society, and to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God, and to love and praise him in consort and harmony with all those holy, blessed spirits. And shall we be afraid to follow, where the saints of all generations have gone before us? And shall the company of our best, and most, and happiest friends, be no inducement to us? Though it must be our highest joy to think that we shall dwell with God, and next that we shall see the glory of Christy, yet is it no small part of my comfort to consider, that I shall follow all those holy persons, whom I once conversed with, that are gone before me, and that I shall dwell with such as Enoch and Elias, and Abraham and Moses, and Job and David, and Peter and John, and Paul and Timothy, and Ignatius and Polycarp, and Cyprian and Nazianzen, and Augustine and Chrysostom, and Bernard and Gerson, and Savonarola and Mirandula, and Taulerus and Kempisius, and Melancthon and Alasco, and Calvin and Bucholtzer, and Bullinger and Musculus, and Zanchy and Bucer, and Paræus and Grynæus, and Chemnitius and Gerhard, and Chamier, and Capellus, and Blondel and Rivet, and Rogers and Bradford, and Hooper and Latimer, and Hildersham and

Amesius, and Langley and Nicolls, and Whitaker and Cartwright, and Hooker and Bayne, and Preston and Sibbes, and Perkins and Dod, and Parker and Ball, and Usher and Hall, and Gataker and Bradshaw, and Vines and Ash, and millions more of the family of God. I name these for my own delight and comfort; it being pleasant to me to remember what companions I shall have in the heavenly joys, and praises of my Lord. How few are all the saints on earth, in comparison of those that are now with Christ? And, alas, how weak, and ignorant, and corrupt, how selfish, and contentious, and froward, are God's poor infants here in flesh, when above there is nothing but holiness and perfection? If knowledge, or goodness, or any excellency do make the creatures truly amiable, all this is there in the highest degree; but here, alas, how little have we? If the love of God, or the love of us, do make others lovely to us, it is there and not here that these and all perfections flourish. O how much now, do I find the company of the wise and learned, the godly and sincere, to differ from the company of the ignorant, brutish, the proud and malicious, the false-hearted and ungodly rabble? How sweet is the converse of a holy, wise, experienced Christian? O then what a place is the New Jerusalem; and how pleasant will it be with saints and angels to see and love and praise the Lord.

Direct. VIII. 'That sickness and death may be comfortable to you, as your passage to eternity, take notice of the seal and earnest of God even the spirit of grace which he hath put into your hearts.' That which emboldened Paul and such others to groan after immortality; and to "be most willing to be absent from the body and present with the Lord," was because God himself "had wrought or made them for it, and given them the earnest or pledge of his Spirit." For this is God's mark upon his chosen and justified ones by which they are "sealed up to the day of their redemption." "In whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promisek." "God hath

anointed us, and sealed us, and given the pledge or earnest of his Spirit into our hearts." "This is the pledge or earnest of our inheritancem." And what a comfort should it be to us, when we look towards heaven to find such a pledge of God within us? If you say, I fear I have not this earnest of the Spirit: whence then did your desires of holiness arise? what weaned you from the world, and made you place your hopes and happiness above? whence came your enmity to sin, and opposition to it, and your earnest desires after the glory of God, the prosperity of the Gospel, and the good of souls? The very love of holiness and holy persons, and your desires to know God and perfectly love him, do shew that heavenly nature or spirit within you, which is your surest evidence for eternal life: for that spirit was sent from heaven, to draw up your hearts, and fit you for it: and God doth not give you such natures, and desires, and preparations in vain. This also is called "The witness of the Spirit with (or to) our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." It witnesseth our adoption, by evidencing it; as a seal or pledge doth witness our title to that which is so confirmed to us. The nature of every thing is suited to its use and end; God would not have given us a heavenly nature or desire, if he had not intended us for heaven.

Direct. IX. 'Look also to the testimony of a holy life, since grace hath employed you in seeking after the heavenly inheritance.' It is unlawful and perilous to look after any works or righteousness of your own, so as to set it in whole or in part, instead of Christ, or to ascribe to it any honour that is proper to him; as to imagine that you are innocent, or have fulfilled the law, or have made God a compensation by your merits or sufferings, for the sin you have committed. But yet you must judge yourselves on your sick beds as near as you can, as God will judge you. And "he will judge every man according to his work;" and will recompense and reward men

according to their works. "Well done good and faithful servant! thou hast been faithful over a little, I will make thee ruler over much; come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you —for I was hungry and ye fed me, &c." "He is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey himp." "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man, that built his house upon a rock—" "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gate into the city; for without are dogsr," &c. "Thus must you rejoice in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," not only as he was crucified on it for you, but also as you are "crucified by it to the world, and the world to you." He that as a benefactor will give you that glory which you could never deserve of him, on terms of commutative justice, (for so no creature can deserve any thing of God,) will yet as a righteous governor and judge, deliver it you only on the terms of his paternal, governing, distributive justice; and all shall receive according to what they have done in the body. And therefore you may take comfort in that evangelical righteousness, which consisteth in your fulfilling the conditions of the new covenant, though you have no legal righteousness, (which consisteth in innocency, or freedom from the curse of the law,) but only in the merits and sacrifice of Christ. If you are accused as being impenitent, unbelievers, or hypocrites, Christ's righteousness will not justify you from that accusation; but only your repentance, faith, and sincerity (wrought in you by the Spirit of Christ). But if you can but shew the evidence of this evangelical righteousness, Christ then will justify you against all the other accusations of guilt that can be charged on you. (Of which more anon.) Seeing therefore the Spirit hath given you these evidences, to difference you from the wretched world, and prove your title to eternal life, if you overlook these, you resist your Comforter, and can see no other ground of comfort, than every graceless hypocrite may see. Imitate holy Paul, "For our rejoicing is

this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world—." "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearingx." To look back and see that in sincerity you have gone the way to heaven, is a just and necessary ground of assurance, that you shall attain it. If you say, 'But I have been a grievous sinner! I answer, so was Paul that yet rejoiced after in this evidence! Are not those sins repented of and pardoned? If you say 'But I cannot look back upon a holy life with comfort, it hath been so blotted and uneven!' I answer, hath it not been sincere, though it was imperfect? Did you not "first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness?" If you say, 'My whole life hath been ungodly, till now at last that God hath humbled me:' I answer, It is not the length of time, but the sincerity of your hearts and service, that is your evidence. If you came in at the last hour, if now you are faithfully devoted to God you may look with comfort on this change at last, though you must look with repentance on your sinful lives.

Direct. X. 'When you see any of this evidence of your interest in Christ, appeal to him to acquit you from all the sin that can be charged on you:' for all that believe in him are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Whatever sin a penitent believer hath committed, he is not chargeable with it; Christ hath undertaken to answer for it, and justify him from it; and therefore look not on it with terror, but with penitent shame, and believing thankfulness, as that which shall tend to the honour of the

Redeemer, and not to the condemnation of the sinner. He hath born our transgressions and we are healed by his stripes.

Direct. XI. 'Look back upon all the mercies of your lives, and think whence they came and what they signify.' Love tokens are to draw your hearts to him that sent them; these are dropt from heaven, to entice you thither! If God have been so good to you on earth, what will he be in glory? If he so blessed you in this wilderness, what will he do in the land of promise? It greatly emboldeneth my soul to go to that God, that hath so tenderly loved me, and so graciously preserved me, and so much abounded in all sorts of mercies to me, through all my life. Surely he is good that so delighteth to do good! And his presence must be sweet, when his distant mercies are so sweet! What love shall I enjoy when perfection hath fitted me for his love, who have tasted of so much in this state of sin and imperfection? The sense of mercy will banish the fears and misgivings of the heart.

Direct. XII. 'Remember' (if you have attained to a declining age) 'what a competent time you have had already in the world.' If you are grieved that you are mortal, you might on that account have grieved all your days; but if it be only that you die so soon, if you have lived well, you have lived long. When I think how many years of mercy I have had, since I was near to death, and since many younger than I are gone, and when I think what abundance of mercy I have had in all that time, ingenuity forbiddeth me to grudge at the season of my death, and maketh me almost most ashamed to ask for longer life. How long would you stay, before you would be willing to come to God? If he desired our company no more than we do his, and desired our happiness in heaven, no more than we desire it ourselves, we should linger here as Lot in Sodom! Must we be snatched away against our wills, and carried by force to our Father's presence?

Direct. XIII. 'Remember that all mankind are mortal, and you are to go no other way than all that ever came into the world, have gone before you (except Enoch and Elias).' Yea, the poor brute creatures must die at your pleasure, to satisfy your hunger or delight. Beasts, and birds, and fishes, even many to make one meal, must die for you. And why then should you shrink at the entrance of such a trodden path, which leadeth you not to hell, as it doth the wicked, nor merely to corruption, as it doth the brutes, but to live in joy with Christ and his church triumphant?

Direct. XIV. 'Remember both how vile your body is, and how great an enemy it hath proved to your soul; and then you will the more patiently bear its dissolution.' It is not your dwelling house, but your tent or prison that God is pulling down. And yet even this vile body, when it is corrupted, shall at last be changed "into the likeness of Christ's glorious body, by the working of his irresistible power." And it is a flesh that hath so rebelled against the spirit, and made your way to heaven so difficult, and put the soul to so many conflicts, that We should the more easily submit it to the will of justice, and let it perish for a time, when we are assured that mercy will at last recover it.

Direct. XV. 'Remember what a world it is that you are to leave, and compare it with that which you are going to; and compare the life which is near at end, with that which you are next to enter upon.' Was it not Enoch's reward when he had walked with God, to be taken to him from a polluted World? 1. While you are here, you are yourselves defiled; sin is in your natures, and your graces are all imperfect; sin is in your lives, and your duties are all imperfect; you cannot be free from it one day or hour. And is it not a mercy to be delivered from it? Is it not desirable to you to sin no more? and to be perfect in holiness? to know God and love him as much and more

than you can now desire? You are here every day lamenting your darkness, and unbelief, and estrangedness from God, and want of love to him. How oft have you prayed for a cure of all this! And now would you not have it, when God would give it you? Why hath God put that spark of heavenly life into you, but to fight against sin, and make you weary of it? And yet had you rather continue sinning, than have the victory and be with Christ! 2. It is a life of grief as well as sin: and a life of cares, and doubts, and fears! When you are at the worst, you are fearing worse! If it were nothing but the fears of death itself, it should make you the more willing to submit to it, that you might be past those fears. 3. You are daily afflicted with the infirmities of that flesh, which you are so loath should be dissolved. To satisfy its hunger and thirst, to cover its nakedness, to provide it a habitation, and supply all its wants, what care and labour doth it cost you! Its infirmities, sicknesses, and pains do make you often weary of yourselves: so that you "groan, being burdened," as Paul speaketh, 2 Cor. 5:3, 4. 6. And yet is it not desirable to be with Christ? 4. You are compassed with temptations, and are in continual danger through your weakness! And yet would you not be past the danger? Would you have more of those horrid and odious temptations? 5. You are purposely turned here into a wilderness, among wild beasts; you are as lambs among wolves, and through many tribulations you must enter into heaven. You must deny yourselves, and take up your cross, and forsake all that you have; and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution: in the world you must have trouble: the seed of the serpent must bruise your heel, before God bruise satan under your feet! And is such a life as this more desirable than to be with Christ? Are we afraid to land after such storms and tempests? Is a wicked world, a malicious world, a cruel world, an implacable world more pleasing to us than the joy of angels, and the sight of Christ, and God himself in the majesty of his glory? Hath God on purpose made the world so bitter to us, and permitted it to

use us unjustly and cruelly, and all to make us love it less, and to drive home our hearts unto himself? and yet are we so unwilling to be gone?

Direct. XVI. 'Settle your estates betimes, that worldly matters may not distract or discompose you.' And if God have endowed you with riches, dispose of a due proportion to such pious or charitable uses, in which they may be most serviceable to him that gave them you. Though we should give what we can in the time of life and health, yet many that have but so much as will serve to their necessary maintenance, may well part with that to good uses at their death, which they could not spare in the time of their health: especially they that have no children, or such wicked children, as are like to do hurt with all that is given them above their daily bread.

Direct. XVII. 'If it may be, get some able, faithful guide and comforter to be with you in your sickness, to counsel you, and resolve your doubts, and pray with you, and discourse of heavenly things, when you are disabled by weakness for such exercises yourselves.' Let not carnal persons disturb you with their vain babblings. Though the difference between good company and bad, be very great in the time of health, yet now in sickness it will be more discernible. And though a faithful friend and spiritual pastor be always a great mercy, yet now especially in your last necessity. Therefore make use of them as far as your pain and weakness will permit.

Direct. XVIII. 'Be fortified against all the temptations of satan by which he useth to assault men in their extremity:' stand it out in the last conflict, and the crown is yours. I shall instance in particulars.

Directions for resisting the Temptations of Satan, in the time of Sickness

Tempt. I. The most ordinary temptation against the comfort of believers, (for I have already spoken of those that are against their safety) is to doubt of their own sincerity, and consequently of their part in Christ. Saith the tempter, 'All that thou hast done, hath been but in hypocrisy; thou wast never a true believer, nor ever didst truly repent of sin, nor truly love God; and therefore thou art unjustified, and shalt speedily be condemned.'

Against this temptation a believer hath two remedies. The first is, to confute the tempter by those evidences which will prove that he hath been sincere (such as I have often mentioned before). And by repelling those reasonings, by which the tempter would prove him to have been an hypocrite. As when it is objected, 'Thou hast repented and been humbled but slightly and by the halves;' Answ. Yet was it sincerely; and weak grace is not no grace. Obj. 'Thou hast been a lover of the world, and a neglecter of thy soul, and cold in all that thou didst for thy salvation.' Answ. Yet did I set more by heaven than earth, and I first sought the kingdom of God and his righteousness, as esteeming it above all the riches of the world. Object. 'Thou hast kept thy sins while thou wentest on in a profession of religion.' Answ. I had no sin but what in the habitual, ordinary temper of my soul, I hated more than I loved it, and had rather have been delivered from it, than have kept it, and none but what I unfeignedly repented of. Object. 'Thou didst not truly believe the promises of God, and the life to come; or else thou wouldst never have doubted as thou hast done, nor sought such a kingdom with such weak desires.' Answ. Though my faith was weak, it overcame the world: I so far believed the promise of another life, as that I preferred it before this life, and was resolved rather to forsake all the world, than to part with my hopes of that promised blessedness: and that faith is sincere (how weak soever) that can do this. Object. 'But thou hast done thy works to be seen of men, and been troubled when men have not approved thee,

nor honoured thee; and what was this but mere hypocrisy?' Answ. Though I had some hypocrisy, yet was I not a hypocrite, because it was not in a reigning and prevalent degree; though I too much regarded the esteem of men, yet I did more regard the esteem of God. Thus if a Christian discern his evidences, the false reasonings of satan are to be refuted.

2. But ordinarily it is a readier way to take the second course, which is, at present, to believe, and repent, and so confute satan that saith you are not penitent believers. But then you must truly understand what believing and repenting are; or else you may think that you do not believe and repent when you do. Believing in Christ, is a believing that he is the Saviour of the world, and a consent of will that he be your Saviour, to justify you by his blood, and sanctify you by his Spirit. To repent, is to be so sorry that you have sinned, that if it were to do again, you would not do it (as to gross sin and a state of sin); and the smallest infirmities, your will is so far set against, that you desire to be delivered from them. Believing to justification, is not the believing that you are already justified, and your sins forgiven you; and repenting consisteth not in such degrees of sorrow as some expect; but in the change of the mind and will, from a life of sensuality to a life of holiness. When you know this, then answer the tempter thus, 'If I should suffer thee to deprive me of the comfort of all my former uprightness, yet shalt thou not so deprive me of the comfort of my present sincerity, and of my hopes; I am now too weak and distempered to try all that is past and gone. Past actions are now known but by remembering them; and they are seldom judged of, as indeed they then were; but according to the temper and apprehension of the mind when it revieweth them: and I am now so changed and weakened myself, that I cannot tell whether I truly remember the just temper and thoughts of my heart in all that is past or not. Nor doth it most concern me now, to know what I have been,

but to know what I am. Christ will not judge according to what I was; but according to what he findeth me; never did he refuse a penitent, believing soul, because he repented and believed late: I do now unfeignedly repent of all my sins, and am heartily willing to be both pardoned, and cleansed, and sanctified by Christ, and here I give up myself to him as my Saviour, and to this covenant I will stand; and this is true repenting and believing.' Thus a poor Christian in the time of sickness, may ofttimes much easier clear it up to himself, that he repenteth now, than that he repented formerly; and it is his surest way.

Tempt. II. And yet sometimes he cometh with the quite contrary temptation, and must be resisted by the contrary way. When he findeth a Christian so perplexed, and distempered with sickness, that his understanding is disabled from any composed thoughts, then he asketh him, 'Now where is thy faith and repentance? If thou hast any, or ever hadst any, let it now appear.' In this case a Christian is to take up with the remembrance of his former sincerity, and tell the tempter, 'I am sure that once I gave up myself unfeignedly to my Lord; and those that come to him he will in no wise cast out; and if now I be disabled from a composed exercise of grace, he will not impute my sickness to me as my sin.'

Tempt. III. Another ordinary temptation is, that 'It is now too late; God will not now accept repentance; the day of grace is past and gone; or at least, a deathbed repentance is not sincere'. To this the tempted soul must reply, 1. That if faith and repentance were not accepted at any time in this life, then God's promise were not true, which saith, that "whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." There is a time in this life, in which some resisters of the truth are given up to their own lusts, to the love of sin, and hatred of holiness, so that they will not repent; but there was

never a time in this life, in which God refused to justify a true repenting sinner, upon his belief in Christ. 2. That if a deathbed repentance do truly turn the heart from the world to God, and from sin to holiness, so that the penitent person, if he should recover, would lead a new and holy life, then that repentance hath as sure a promise of pardon and salvation, as if it had been sooner; and yet delay must be confessed to be dangerous to all, and casteth men under very great difficulties, and their loss is exceeding great, though at last they repent and are forgiven.

Tempt. IV. Sometimes the tempter saith, 'Thou art not elected to salvation; and God saveth none but his elect,' and so puzzleth the ignorant by setting them on doubting of their election. To this we must answer, that every soul that is chosen to faith, and repentance, and perseverance, is certainly chosen to salvation: and I know that God hath chosen me to faith and repentance, because he hath given them me: and I have reason enough to trust on him for that upholding grace, which will cause me to persevere.

Tempt. V. 'But, saith the tempter, Christ did not die for thee; and no one can be saved that Christ did not die for' To this it must be answered, 'That Christ died for all men, so far as to be a sufficient sacrifice for their sins, and to make a promise of pardon and salvation to all that will accept him and his gift; and he entreateth all that hear the Gospel to accept it; and accordingly he will save all that consent unto his covenant.' I am a sinful child of Adam, and therefore am one that Christ became a sacrifice for; and I consent unto his covenant, and therefore I am one that Christ by that covenant doth justify and will save.

Tempt. VI. Sometimes the tempter troubleth the soul with temptations to blasphemy and infidelity: and asketh him, 'How

knowest thou that there is a God, or a life to come, or that souls are immortal, or that the Scripture is true?' Of this I spake before. To this we must then answer, 'I abhor thy suggestions: these things I have seen proved long ago; and I will not so far gratify thee in my weakness and extremity, as to question and dispute these sealed fundamental truths, no more than I will dispute whether there be a sun or earth.

Tempt. VII. Sometimes the tempter will say, 'At best thou hast no assurance of salvation, and how canst thou choose but tremble to think of dying, when thou knowest not whether thou shalt go to heaven or hell?' To this, the soul that hath not assurance must answer, 'It is my own mistake or weakness that keepeth me unassured:' and I will neither take part with my infirmities, nor increase them by their effects. My hopes are such as should draw up my desires, though I want full assurance. The child delighteth in the company of the mother, and every man of his friend; though he is not certain that the mother or friend will not hurt him, or take away his life. Why should I trouble myself with improbabilities? or fear that which I have no sound reason to fear? Rather I should be glad to die, that death may perfect my assurance, and put an end to all my doubts and fears.

Tempt. VIII. 'But, saith the tempter, how strange art thou to God and the life to come? Thou never sawest it: is it not dreadful to enter upon an unchangeable life, in a world which thou art so great a stranger to?' Answ. But Christ is not a stranger to it; he seeth it for me, and I will implicitly trust him. Where should my eyes be, but in my head? I shall never see it till I come thither. When I have been there a while, this darkness, and fear, and strangeness will be gone: I was as strange to this world before I came into it, and more: and all those holy souls in heaven were strange to it once, as well as I: I

should therefore long to be with Christ, that I may be strange to him no more.

Tempt. IX. 'But, saith the tempter, thy fear and unwillingness is a sign that thou hast no love to God, nor heavenly mind; and how then canst thou hope to come to heaven.' Answ. My fears come from strangeness, and weakness of faith, and a natural enmity to death. If I could come to Christ in joy and glory, and be perfected in holiness without dying, I should not be unwilling of it. God looketh not that my nature should be willing to die; but that grace make me willing to be with Christ, and patiently submit to so dark a passage. Even Christ himself prayed, "That if it were possible, that cup might pass from him."

Tempt. X. 'But what will thy wife and children do, when thou art gone?' Answ. God hath more interest in them than I have; he will look to his own without my care: doth all the world depend upon him, and is he not to be trusted with my wife and children?

Tempt. XI. 'But thou wilt never more be serviceable to the church: all thy work will for ever be at an end; and there are many things which thou mightest have done before thou diest, which will all be lost.' Answ. 1. I shall have higher, and holier, and sweeter work: whether it will any thing conduce to the good of those on earth, I know not; but I know it will more conduce to the highest, most desirable ends. 2. As my work will be done, so my trouble, and weariness, and fears, and sufferings from a malignant, unthankful world will all be done. 3. And when my work is done, my reward and everlasting rest begin. 4. And God needeth not such a worm as I! the work is his, and it is reason that he should choose his workmen.

Tempt. XII. 'But when thou hast said all, death will be death, the king of terrors.' Answ. And when thou hast said all, God will be God, and

heaven will be heaven, and Christ will be Christ, that hath conquered death, and hath the keys or power of death and hell: and the promise will be sure: and those that trust on him shall never be ashamed or confounded. And therefore "the Spirit is willing, though the flesh be weak."

Tit. 4. Directions for doing good to others in our Sickness

The whole life of a Christian should be a serving of his God; and though his body in sickness seem to be unserviceable, yet it is not the least or lowest of his services, which he is then at last to do: partly by his holy example, and partly by his speeches; which are both more observed in dying men, than in any others. For now all suppose, that if there were before any mask of hypocrisy, it is laid aside, and the soul that is going to the bar of God will deal sincerely. And now it is supposed, that we are delivered much from all the befooling delusions of prosperity, and therefore fitter to be counsellors to others. And every Christian should be very desirous to do good to the last, and be found so doing.

Direct. I. 'Shew not a distempered, impatient mind.' Though pain will be pain, and flesh will be flesh, yet shew men that you have also reason and spirit: and that it calmeth your soul, though it ease not your body. Speak good of God, as beseemeth one that indeed believeth that it is good for us when we are afflicted by him, and that all shall work together for good to us. Speak not a repining word against him. "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." And speak not too peevishly and impatiently to those about you; though weakness incline you to it, yet let the power of grace appear.

Direct. II. 'Let those that are about you see, that you take the life to come for a reality, and that you verily expect to live with Christ in joys for ever. Let them see this in your holy joy and confidence, and

your thankfulness to God for the grace and hopes which he hath given through Christ.' I know that a pained, languishing body, is undisposed to express the comforts of the soul: but yet as long as the soul is the commander, they may be expressed in some good measure, though not with such vivacity and alacrity as in health. Behave yourselves before all, as those that are going to dwell with Christ. If you shew them that you take heaven for a real felicity, it will do much to draw them to do so too; shew them the difference between the death of the righteous, and of the wicked; and that may so draw them to desire to die the death of the righteous, that it may draw them also to resolve to live their lives. How many souls might it win to God, if they saw in his dying servants, such confidence and joy as beseemeth men that are entering into a world of joy, and peace, and blessedness! If we went out of the body, as from a prison into liberty; and from a tedious journey, to our desired home, it would invite sinners to seek after the same felicity, and be a powerful sermon to convert the inconsiderate.

Direct. III. 'Now tell poor sinners of the vanity of the world, and of all its glory, wealth, and pleasure; and of the mischief and deceitfulness of sin.' Say to them, 'O sirs, you may see in me what the world is worth: if you had all the wealth and pleasure that you desire, thus it would turn you off, and forsake you in the end: it will ease no pain: it will bring no peace to a troubled soul: it will not lengthen your lives an hour: it will not save you from the wrath of God: it maketh your death the sadder, because you must be taken from it: your account will be the more dreadful. O love not such a vain, deceitful world! sell not your souls for so poor a price! Forsake it before you are forsaken by it! O make not light of any sin! Though the wanton flesh would have you take it for a harmless thing, you cannot imagine, when the pleasure is gone, how sharp a sting is left behind. Sin will be then no

jesting matter, when your souls are going hence, into the dreadful presence of the most Holy God.'

Direct. IV. 'Now tell those about you of the excellency and necessity of the love of God, of heaven, of Christ, and of a holy life.' Though these may be made light of at a distance, yet a soul that is drawing near them, will be more awakened to understand their worth. Say to them, 'O friends, I find now more than ever I did before, that it is only God, that is the end and happiness of souls: nothing but his favour through Jesus Christ, can comfort and content a dying man; and none but Christ can reconcile us to God, and answer for our sins, and make us acceptable; and no way but, that of faith and holiness will end in happiness. Opinions and customary forms in religion will not serve the turn; to be of this or that party, or church, or communion, will not save you. It is only the soul that is justified by Christ, and sanctified by his Spirit, and brought up to the love of God and holiness, that shall be saved. Whatever opinion, or church you are of, without holiness you shall never see God to your comfort, as without faith it is impossible to please him. O now what a miserable case were I in, if I had all the wealth and honour in the world, and had not the favour of God, and a Christ to purchase it, and his Spirit to witness it, and prepare me for a better life. Now I see the difference between spending time in holiness, and in sin; between a godly, and a worldly, fleshly, careless life. Now I would not for a thousand worlds, that I had spent my life in sensuality and ungodliness, and continued a stranger to the life of faith. Now, if I had a world, I would give it to be more holy! O sirs, believe it, when you come to die, sin will be then sin indeed, and Christ, and grace, will be better than riches, and to die in an unregenerate, unsanctified state, will be a greater misery than any heart can now conceive.'

Direct. V. 'Endeavour also to make men know the difference between the godly and the wicked' Tell them, 'I now see who maketh the wisest choice. O happy men, that choose the joys which have no end, and "lay up their treasure in heaven, where rust and moths do not corrupt, and thieves do not break through and steal, and labour for the food that never perisheth." O foolish sinners, that for an inch of fleshly, filthy pleasure, do lose everlasting rest and joy! "What shall it profit them that win all the world, and lose their souls?" '

Direct. VI. 'Labour also to convince men of the preciousness of time, and the folly of putting off repentance, and a holy life, till the last.' Say to them, 'O friends, it is hard for you in the time of health and prosperity, to judge of time according to its worth: but when time is gone, or near an end, how precious doth it then appear! Now if I had all the time again, which ever I spent in unnecessary sleep, or sports, or curiosities, or idleness, or any needless thing, how highly should I value it, and spend it in another manner than I have done! Of all my life that is past and gone, I have no comfort now in the remembrance of one hour, but what was spent in obedience to God. O take time to make sure of your salvation, before it is gone, and you are left under the tormenting feeling of your loss.'

Direct. VII. 'Labour also to make them understand the sinfulness of sloth, and of loitering in the matters of God, and their salvation; and stir them up to do it with all their might.' Say to them, 'I have often heard ungodly people, deride or blame the diligence, and zeal, and strictness of the godly: but if they saw and felt, what I see and feel, they could not do it. Can a man that is going into another world, imagine that any thing is so worthy of his greatest zeal and labour, as his God and his salvation? Or blame men for being loath to burn in hell? Or for taking more pains for their souls, than for their bodies? O friends, let fools talk what they will, in their sleep and phrenzy, as

you love your souls, do not think any care, or cost, or pains too great for your salvation! If they think not their labour too good for this world, do not you think yours too good for a better world. Let them now say what they will, when they come to die, there is none of them all, that is not quite forsaken of sense and reason, but will wish that they had loved God, and sought and served him, not formally, in hypocritical compliment, but with all their heart, and soul, and might.'

Direct. VIII. 'Labour also to fortify the minds of your friends, against all fears of suffering for Christ, and all impatience in any of their afflictions.' Say to them, 'The sufferings as well as the pleasures of this life are so short, that they are not worthy once to be compared with the durable things of the life to come. If I have passed through a life of want and toil, if my body hath endured painful sickness, if I have suffered never so much from men, and been used cruelly for the sake of Christ, what the worse am I now, when all is past? Would an easy, honourable, plentiful life, have made my death either the safer or the sweeter? O no! it is the things eternal that are indeed significant and regardable. Neither pleasure nor pain, that is short, is of any great regard. Make sure of the everlasting pleasures, and you have done your work. O live by faith, and not by sense; look not at the temporal things which are seen. It is not your concernment, whether you are rich or poor, in honour or dishonour, in health or sickness; but whether you be justified, and sanctified, and shall live with God in heaven for ever.' Such serious counsels of dying men, may make their sickness more fruitful than their health.

CHAPTER XXXI

Directions to the Friends of the Sick, that are about them

Direct. I. WHEN you see the sickness or death of friends, take it as God's warning to you, to prepare for the same yourselves.' Remember that thus it must be with you: thus are you like to lie in pain; and thus will all the world forsake you, and nothing of all your honour or wealth, will afford you any comfort. This will be the end of all your pleasures, of your greatness, and your houses, and lands, and attendance; and of all your delicious meats and drinks; and of all your mirth, and play and recreations. Thus must your carcases be forsaken of your souls, and laid in a grave, and there lie rotting in the dark; and your souls appear before your Judge, to be sentenced to their endless state. This certainly will be your case: and O how quickly will it come! Then, what will Christ and grace be worth? Then, nothing but the favour of God can comfort you. Then, whether will it be better to you, to look back on a holy, well-spent life, or upon a life of fleshly ease and pleasure? Then had you rather be a saint, or a sensualist? Lay this to heart, and let the house of mourning make you better, and live as one that looks to die.

Direct. II. 'Use the best means for the recovery of the sick, which the ablest physicians shall advise you to, as far as you are able.' Take heed of being guilty of the pride and folly of many self-conceited, ignorant persons, who are ready to thrust every medicine of their own, upon their friends in sickness, when they neither know the nature of the sickness, or the cure. Many thousands are brought to their death untimely, by the folly of their nearest friends, who will needs be medicining them, and ruling them, and despising the physician; as if they were themselves much wiser than he, when they are merely ignorant of what they do. As ignorant sectaries despise divines, and set up themselves as better preachers, so many silly women despise physicians; and when they have got a few medicines,

which they know not the nature of, nor how to use, they take themselves for the better physicians, and the lives of their poor friends must pay for their pride and folly. No means must be trusted to instead of God, but the best must be used in subservience unto God. And one would think that a small measure of wit and humility might serve to make silly women understand, that they that never bestowed one year in the study of physic, are not so likely to understand it, as those that have studied and practised it a great part of their lives. It is sad to see people kill their dearest friends in kindness; even by that ignorance and proud self-conceitedness, which also maketh them the destroyers of their own souls.

Quest. I. 'But seeing God hath appointed all men's time, what good can physic do? If God hath appointed them to live, they shall live; and if he have appointed them to die, it is not physic that can save them.'

Answ. This is the foolish reasoning of wicked people about their salvation. If God have appointed me to salvation, I shall be saved; if he have not, all my diligence will do no good. But such people know not what they talk of. God hath made your duty more open and known to you, than his own decrees: and you separate those things which he hath joined together: as God hath appointed no man to salvation simply, without respect to the means of salvation; so God hath appointed no man to live, but by the means of life. His decree is not, 'Such a man shall be saved,' or, 'Such a man shall live so long,' only; but this is his decree, 'Such a man shall be saved, in the way of faith and holiness, and in the diligent use of means,' and, 'Such a man shall live so long, by the use of those means which I have fitted for the preservation of his life.' So that as he that liveth a holy life, may be sure he is chosen to salvation, (if he persevere) and he that is ungodly, may be sure that he is in the way to hell; so he that

neglecteth the means of his health and life, doth shew that it is unlike that God hath appointed him to live: and he that useth the best means is more likely to recover, (though the best will not cure incurable diseases, nor make a man immortal.) The reasoning is the same, as if you should say, 'If God have appointed me to live so long, I shall live though I neither eat or drink: but if he have not, eating and drinking will not prolong my life.' But you must know, that God doth not only appoint you to live, that is but half his decree, but he decreeth, 'That you shall live by eating and drinking.'

Direct. III. 'Mind your friends betimes to make their wills, and prudently by good advice to settle their estates, that they may leave no occasion of contending about it, when they are dead.' This should be done in health, because of the uncertainty of life: but if it be undone till sickness, it should then be done betimes. The neglect of it, oft causeth much sinful contending about worldly things, even among those near relations, who should live in the greatest amity and peace.

Direct. IV. 'Keep away vain company from them, as far as you can conveniently' (except it be such as must needs be admitted, or such as are like to receive any good by the holy counsel of the sick). It is a great annoyance to one that is near death, to hear people talk to little purpose, about the world, or some impertinencies; when they are going speedily to their endless state, and have need of no more impediments in their way; but of the best assistance that their friends can afford them. Procure some able, faithful minister to be with them, to counsel them about the state of their souls: and get some holy, able Christians to be much about them, who are fit to pray with them, and instruct them.

Direct. V. 'Bear with their impatience, and grudge not at any trouble that they put you to.' Remember that weakness is froward, and as you bear with the crying of children, so must you with the peevishness of the sick; and remember, that shortly it is like to be your own case, and you must be a trouble to others, and they must bear with you. Be not weary of your friends in sickness; but loving, and tender, and compassionate, and patient.

Direct. VI. 'Deal faithfully and prudently with them about the state of their souls.' Your faithfulness must be shewed in these two points. 1. That you do not flatter them with vain hopes of life, when they are more likely to die. 2. That you do not flatter them with false persuasions that their state is safe, when they are yet unsanctified, nor put them in hopes of being saved without regeneration.

Your prudence must be manifested, 1. In suiting your counsel, and speeches, and prayers to their state; and not using the same words to the ungodly, as you would to the godly. 2. In so contracting your counsel for the conversion of the ungodly, as not to overwhelm them with more than they can bear; and yet not to leave out any point of absolute necessity to salvation. Alas, how much skill doth such a work require? And how few Christians, (that I say not, pastors) are fit for it.

Quest. I. 'But is it a duty when the sick are like to die, to make it known to them?'

Answ. Sometimes it is, and sometimes not. 1. Some sicknesses are such, as will be so increased with fear, that the patient that before was in hope of a recovery, will be put almost past hope. And some sicknesses are much different, and are not like to be so increased by it. And some are past all hope already. 2. Some are so prepared to die, that they have the less need to be acquainted with their danger:

and some are unconverted, and in so dangerous a case, that the absolute necessity of their souls may require it. When the soul is in so sad a case, and yet the body may be endangered by the fear of the sentence of death, it is the safest course to tell them, 'That though God may recover them, yet their disease is so dangerous, as calleth for their speedy and serious preparation for death; which will not be lost, if God restore them.' So that they may have so much hope, as to keep their fear from killing them, and so much acquaintance with their danger, as may put them upon their duty. But in case there be already little or no hope, or in case the disease will be but little increased by the fear (which is the case of the most) the danger should not at all be hid.

Quest. II. 'Am I always bound to tell a wicked man of his sin and misery, when it may exasperate his disease, and offend his mind?'

Answ. If it were a sickness that is void of danger, in case his mind be quiet, and be like to kill him if his mind be disturbed, then it were the most prudent course to call him so far to repentance and faith, as you can do it without any dangerous disturbance of him; because it is most charity to his soul to help him to a longer time of repentance, rather than to lay all the hopes of his salvation upon the present time. But this is not an ordinary case; therefore ordinarily it is a duty to acquaint the sick person, that is yet in his sin, and unregenerate state, with the truth of his danger, and the necessity of renovation. Alas! it is a lamentable kind of friendship, to flatter a poor soul into damnation, or to hide his danger till he is past recovery. When he is in a state of inexpressible misery, and hath but a few days or weeks time left, to do all that ever must be done for his salvation. What horrid cruelty is it then, to let him to go to hell for fear of displeasing or disquieting him!

Object. 'But I am afraid I shall cast him into despair, if I tell him plainly that he is in a state of damnation.'

Answ. If you let him alone a little longer, he will be in remediless despair. There is no despair remediless, but that in hell. But now you may help to save him, both from present and endless desperation. He must needs despair of ever being saved without a Christ, or without the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, or without true faith and repentance, and love to God, and holiness. But need he despair of attaining all these, while Christ is offered him so freely, and a full remedy is at hand? He must know his sin and misery, or else he is never like to escape it: but he must also be acquainted with the true remedy; and that is your way to keep him from despair, and not by flattering him into hell.

Quest. III. 'But what should one do in so short a time, and with dead-hearted sinners? Alas! what hope is there? If it were nothing but their ignorance, it cannot be cured in a moment. And is there then any hope in so short a space, to bring them to knowledge, and repentance, and a changed heart, to love God and holiness; and that when pain and weakness do disable them?'

Answ. The case indeed is very sad; but yet while there is life, there is some hope: and while there is any hope, we should do our best, when it is for the saving of a soul; and the difficulty should but stir us up to use our utmost skill and diligence. But as it is the misery of such to delay conversion till so unfit a time, so is it too frequently the sin of believers, that they delay their serious endeavours to convert men, till such a time as they almost despair of the success.

Quest. IV. 'But what shall we do in a doubtful case, when we know not whether the person be renewed and truly penitent, or not; which is the case of most that we have to deal with?'

Answ. You can tell whether the grounds of your hope, or of your fear concerning them, be the greater; and accordingly your speech must be mixed and tempered, and your counsels or comforts given with the conditions and suppositions expressed.

Quest. V. 'But what order would you have us observe in speaking to the ignorant and ungodly, when the time is so short?'

Answ. 1. Labour to awaken them to a lively sense of the change which is at hand, that they may understand the necessity of looking after the state of their souls. 2. Then shew them what are the terms of salvation, and who they are that the Gospel doth judge to salvation or damnation. 3. Next advise them to try which of these is their condition, and to deal faithfully, seeing self-flattery may undo them, but can do them no good. 4. Then help them in the trial; q. d. 'If it have been so or so with you, then you may know that this is your case.' 5. Then tell them the reasons of your fears, if you fear they are unconverted, or of your hopes, if you hope indeed that it is better with them. 6. Then exhort them conditionally (if they are yet in a carnal, unsanctified state,) to lament it, and be humbled, and penitent for their sinful and ungodly life. 7. And then tell them the remedy, in Christ and the Holy Ghost, and the promise or covenant of grace. 8. And lastly, tell them their present duty, that this remedy may prove effectual to their salvation. And if you have so much interest or authority as maketh it fit for you, excite them by convenient questions so far to open their case, as may direct you, and as by their answers may shew whether they truly resolve for a holy life, if God restore them, and whether their hearts indeed be changed, or not.

Direct. VII. 'If you are not able to instruct them as you should, read some good book to them, which is most suitable to their case:' such

as "Mr. Perkins's Right Art of Dying Well;"—"The Practice of Piety in the Directions for the Sick;"—"Mr. Edward Lawrence's Treatise of Sickness;" or what else is most suitable to them. And because most are themselves unable for counselling the sick aright, and you may not have a fit book at hand, I shall here subjoin a brief form or two for such to read to the sick that can endure no long discourse. And other books will help you to forms of prayer with them, if you cannot pray without such help.

Direct. VIII. 'Judge not of the state of men's souls, by those carriages in their sickness, which proceed from their diseases or bodily distemper.' Many ignorant people judge of a man by the manner of his dying: if one die in calmness and clearness of understanding, and a few good words, they think that this is to die like a saint. Whereas in consumptions, and oft in dropsies, and other such chronical diseases, this is ordinary with good and bad: and in a fever that is violent, or a frenzy or distraction, the best man that is, may die without the use of reason: some diseases will make one blockish, and heavy, and unapt to speak: and some consist with as much freedom of speech, as in time of health. The state of men's souls must not be judged of by such accidental, unavoidable things as these.

Direct. IX. 'Be neither unnaturally senseless at the death of friends, nor excessively dejected or afflicted.' To make light of the death of relations and friends, be they good or bad, is a sign of a very vicious nature; that is so much selfish, as not much to regard the lives of others: and he that regardeth not the lives of his friends is little to be trusted in his lower concernments. I speak not this of those persons whose temper alloweth them not to weep: for there may be as deep a regard and sorrow in some that have no tears, as in others that abound with them. But I speak of a naughty, selfish nature, that is little affected with any one's concernments but its own.

Yet your grief for the death of friends, must be very different both in degree and kind. 1. For ungodly friends you must grieve for their own sakes, because if they died such, they are lost for ever. 2. For your godly friends, you must mourn for the sake of yourselves and others, because God hath removed such as were blessings to those about them. 3. For choice magistrates, and ministers, and other instruments of public good, your sorrow must be greater, because of the common loss, and the judgment thereby inflicted on the world. 4. For old, tried Christians, that have overcome the world, and lived so long till age and weakness make them almost unserviceable to the church, and who groan to be unburdened and to be with Christ, your sorrow should be least, and your joy and thanks for their happiness should be greatest. But especially abhor that nature that secretly is glad of the death of parents, (or little sorrowful) because that their estates are fallen to you, or you are enriched, or set at liberty by their death. God seldom leaveth this sin unrevenged, by some heavy judgments even in this life.

Direct. X. 'To overcome your inordinate grief for the death of your relations, consider these things following.' 1. That excess of sorrow is your sin: and sinning is an ill use to be made of your affliction. 2. That it tendeth to a great deal more: it unfitteth you for many duties which you are bound to, as to rejoice in God, and to be thankful for mercies, and cheerful in his love, and praise, and service: and is it a small sin to unfit yourselves for the greatest duties? If you are so troubled at God's disposal of his own, what doth your will but rise up against the will of God; as if you grudged at the exercise of his dominion and government, that is, that he is God! Who is wisest, and best, and fittest to dispose of all men's lives? Is it God or you? Would you not have God to be the Lord of all, and to dispose of heaven and earth, and of the lives and crowns of the greatest princes? If you would not, you would not have him to be God. If you would, is it not

unreasonable that you or your friends only should be excepted from his disposal? 4. If your friends are in heaven, how unsuitable is it for you to be overmuch mourning for them, when they are rapt into the highest joys with Christ; and love should teach you to rejoice with them that rejoice, and not to mourn as those that have no hope. 5. You know not what mercy God shewed to your friends, in taking them away from the evil to come, you know not what suffering the land or church is falling into, or at least, might have fallen upon themselves; nor what sins they might have been tempted to. But you are sure that heaven is better than earth, and that it is far better for them to be with Christ. 6. You always knew that your friends must die; to grieve that they were mortal, is but to grieve that they were but men. 7. If their mortality or death be grievous to you, you should rejoice that they are arrived at the state of immortality, where they must live indeed and die no more. 8. Remember how quickly you must be with them again. The expectation of living long yourselves, is the cause of your excessive grief for the death of friends. If you looked yourselves to die to-morrow, or within a few weeks, you would less grieve that your friends are gone before you. 9. Remember that the world is not for one generation only; others must have our places when we are gone; God will be served by successive generations, and not only by one. 10. If you are Christians indeed, it is the highest of all your desires and hopes to be in heaven; and will you so grieve that your friends are gone thither, where you most desire and hope to be.

Object. 'All this is reason, if my friend were gone to heaven; but he died impenitently, and how should I be comforted for a soul that I have cause to think is damned?'

Answ. Their misery must be your grief; but not such a grief as shall deprive you of your greater joys, or disable you for your greater

duties. 1. God is fitter than you to judge of the measures of his mercy and his judgments, and you must neither pretend to be more merciful than he, nor to reprehend his justice. 2. All the works of God are good; and all that is good is amiable; though the misery of the creature be bad to it, yet the works of justice declare the wisdom and holiness of God; and the more perfect we are, the more they will be amiable to us. For 3. God himself, and Christ, who is the merciful Saviour of the world, approve of the damnation of the finally ungodly. 4. And the saints and angels in heaven do know more of the misery of the souls in hell, than we do; and yet it abateth not their joys. And the more perfect any is, the more he is like-minded unto God. 5. How glad and thankful should you be to think that God hath delivered yourselves from those eternal flames? The misery of others should excite your thankfulness. 6. And should not the joys of all the saints and angels be your joy, as well as the sufferings of the wicked be your sorrows? But above all, the thoughts of the blessedness and glory of God himself, should overtop all the concernments of the creature with you. If you will mourn more for the thieves and murderers that are hanged, than you will rejoice in the justice, prosperity, and honour of the king, and the welfare of all his faithful subjects, you behave not yourselves as faithful subjects. 7. Shortly you hope to come to heaven: mourn now for the damned, as you shall do then; or at least, let not the difference be too great, when that, and not this, is your perfect state.

A Form of Exhortation to the Ungodly in their Sickness, (or those that we fear are such)

Dear Friend: The God that must dispose of us and all things, doth threaten by this sickness, to call away your soul, and put an end to the time of your pilgrimage; and therefore your friends that love and pity you, must not now be silent, if they can speak any thing for your

preparation and salvation, because it must be now or never: when a few days are past, they must never have any such opportunity more: if now we prevail not with you, you are likely to be quickly out of hearing, and past our advice and help for ever. And because I know your weakness bids me be but short, and your memory is not to be burdened with too much, and yet your necessity must not be neglected, I shall reduce all that I have to say to you, to these four heads: 1. Of the change which you seem near to, and the world which you are going to. 2. Of the preparation that must be made by all that will be saved, and who they be that the gospel doth justify or condemn. 3. I would fain help you to understand which of these conditions you are in, and what will become of your soul, if it thus goeth hence: and 4. If your case be bad, I would direct you how you may come out of it, and what is yet to be done while there remaineth any time and hope. And I pray you set your heart to what I say; for I will speak nothing but the certain truth of God, revealed to the world by his Son and Spirit, expressed in the Scripture, and believed by all the church of Christ.

I. God knoweth, the change is great, which you are near. You are leaving this world, where you have spent the days of your preparation for eternity, and leaving this flesh to corrupt and turn to common earth, and must here converse with man no more. You are going now to see that world, which the Gospel told you of, and you have often heard of, but neither you nor we did ever see. Before your friends have laid your body in the grave, your soul must enter into its endless state, and at the resurrection your body be joined with it. Either heaven or hell must be your lot for ever. If it be heaven, you will there find a world of light, and love, and peace; a world of angels and glorified souls, who are all made perfect in knowledge and holiness, living in the perfect flames of love to their glorious Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator: and with them you will be thus

perfected yourself: your soul will see the glory of God, and be rapt up in his love, and filled with his joys, and employed triumphantly in his praises, and this for ever. If hell should be your portion, you will there be thrust away as a hated thing from the face of God, and there you will find a world of devils, and unholy, damned, miserable souls; among whom you must dwell, in the flames of the wrath of God, and the horrors of your own conscience, remembering with anguish the mercy which you once rejected, and the warnings and time which once you lost: and at the resurrection your soul and body must be re-united, and live there in torment and despair for ever. I know these things are but half believed by the ungodly world, while they profess to believe them: and therefore they must feel that which they refused to believe: but God hath revealed it to us, and we will believe our Maker. You are now going to see the great difference between the end of holiness and of sin; between the godly and the ungodly; and to know by your own experience those joys and torments, which the wicked will not know by faith. And O what a preparation doth such a change require!

II. You are next to know what persons they are, and how they differ, who must abide for ever in these different states. As we are the children of Adam, we are all corrupted; our minds are carnal, and set upon this world, and savour nothing but the things of the flesh; and the further we go in sin, the worse we are; being strangers to the life of faith, and to the love of God and the life to come, taking the prosperity and pleasure of the flesh, for the felicity which we most desire and seek. The name of this state in Scripture is, carnal, and ungodly, and unholy; because such men live in a mere fleshly nature or disposition for fleshly ends, in a fleshly manner, and are not at all devoted to God, and carried up to heavenly desires and delights; but live chiefly for this life, and not for the life to come: and though they may take up some kind of religion, in a second place and upon the

by, for fear of being damned when they can keep the world no longer; yet is it this world which they principally value, love, and seek, and their religion is subject to their worldly and fleshly interest and delights. And though God hath provided and offered them a Saviour, to teach them better, and reclaim and sanctify them by his Word and Spirit, and forgive them if they will believe in him and return, yet do they sottishly neglect this mercy, or obstinately refuse it, and continue their worldly, fleshly lives, till time be past, and mercy hath done, and there is no remedy. These are the men that God will condemn, and this is the true description of them. And it will not stand with the governing justice, and holiness and truth of God to save them.

But on the other side, all those that God will save, do heartily believe in Jesus Christ, who is sent of God to be the Saviour of souls; and he maketh them know (by his Word and Spirit) their grievous sin and misery in their state of corrupted nature; and he humbleth them for it, and bringeth them to true repentance, and maketh them loathe themselves for their iniquities; and seeing how they have cast away and undone themselves, and are no better than the slaves of satan, and the heirs of hell, they joyfully accept of the remedy that is offered them in Christ: they heartily take him for their Saviour and King, and give up themselves in covenant to him, to be justified and sanctified by him; whereupon he pardoneth all their sin, and further enlighteneth and sanctifieth them by his Spirit: he sheweth them by faith, the infinite love of God, and the sure, everlasting, holy joys, which they may have in heaven with him: and how blessed a life they may there obtain (through his purchase and gift) with all the blessed saints and angels: he maketh them deliberately to compare this offer of eternal happiness, with all the pleasures and seeming commodities of sin, and all that this deceitful world can do for them: and having considered of both, they see that there is no comparison

to be made, and are ashamed that ever they were so mad as to prefer earth before heaven, and an inch of time before eternity, and a dream of pleasure before the everlasting joys, and to love the pleasures of a transitory world, above the presence, and favour, and glory of God: and for the time to come, they are firmly resolved what to do; even to take heaven for their only happiness, and there to lay up their hopes and treasure, and to live to God, as they have done to the flesh; and to make sure of their salvation, whatever become of their worldly interest. And thus the Spirit doth dwell and work in them, and renew their hearts, and give them a hatred to every sin, and a love to every holy thing, even to the holy Word, and worship, and ways, and servants of the Lord: and in a word, he maketh them new creatures; and though they have still their sinful imperfections, yet the bent of their hearts and lives is holy and heavenly, and they long to be perfect, and are labouring after it, and seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and live above the world and flesh: and shortly Christ will make them perfect, and justify them in the day of their judgment, and give them the glorious end of all their faith, obedience, and patience. These are the persons, and none but these (among us, that have the use of reason) that shall live with God.

III. Now this being the infallible truth of the Gospel, and this being the true difference between the righteous and the wicked, the justified and condemned souls, O how nearly doth it now concern you, to try which of these is your own condition! Certainly it may be known: for God will judge the world in righteousness, by the same law or covenant by which he governeth them. Know but whom the law of Christ condemneth or justifieth, and you may soon know whom the Judge will condemn and justify: for he will proceed according to this law. If you should die in an unrenewed state in your sins, your hopes of heaven would all die with you: and if you should think never so well of yourself till death, and pretend never so

confidently to trust on Christ and the mercy of God, one hour will convince you to your everlasting woe, that God's mercy and Christ's merits did never bring to heaven an unsanctified soul. Self-flattery is good for nothing, but to keep you from repenting till time be past, and to quiet you in satan's snares till there be no remedy: therefore presently, as you love your soul, examine yourself, and try which of these is the condition that you are in, and accordingly judge yourself, before God judge you. May you not know if you will, whether you have most minded earth or heaven, and which you have preferred and sought with the highest esteem and resolution, and whether your worldly or heavenly interest have borne sway; and which of them it is that gave place unto the other? Cannot a man tell if he will, what it is which his very soul hath practically taken for his chief concernment, and what it is that hath had most of his love and care? and what hath been next his heart, and which he hath preferred when they came to the parting, and one was set against the other? Cannot you tell whether you have lived principally to the flesh, for the prosperity of this world, and the pleasures of sin; or whether the Spirit of Christ by his Word, hath enlightened you, and shewed you your sin and misery; and humbled you for it, and shewed you the glory of the life to come, and the happiness of living in the love of God, and hereupon hath united your heart unto himself, and turned it from sin to holiness, from the world to God, and from earth to heaven, and made you a new creature, to live for heaven as you did for earth: surely this is not so small and indiscernible a work or change, but he that hath felt it on himself may know it. It is a good work to bring a sinner to feel his unrighteousness and misery, and to apply himself to Christ for righteousness and life: it is a great work to take off the heart from all the felicity of this world, and to set it unfeignedly upon God, and to cause him to place and seek his happiness in another world, whatever become of all the prosperity or pleasure of the flesh. It is thus with every true believer, for all the remnant of his sins and

weaknesses: and may you not know whether it be thus or not with you? One of these is your case: and it is now time to know which of them it is, when God is ready to tell you by his judgment. If indeed you are in Christ, and his Spirit be in you, and hath renewed you, and sanctified you, and turned your heart and life to God, I have then nothing more than peace and comfort to speak to you, (as in the following exhortation:) but if it be otherwise, and you are yet in a carnal state, and were never renewed by the Spirit of Christ, will you give me leave to deal faithfully with you, as is necessary with one in your condition, and to set before you at once your sin and your remedy, and to tell you what yet you must do if you will be saved.

IV. And first, will you here lay to heart your folly, and unfeignedly lament your sinful life before the Lord? Not only this or that particular sin, but principally your fleshly heart and life: that in the main, you have lived to this corruptible flesh, and loved, and sought, and served the world, before your God, and the happiness of your soul. Alas, friend, did you not know that you had an immortal soul, that must live in joy or misery for ever? Did you not know that you were made to love, and serve, and honour your Maker; and that you had the little time of this life given you, to try and prepare you for your endless life; and that as you lived here, it must go with you in heaven or hell for ever. If you did not believe these things, why did you not come, and give your reasons against them, to some judicious divine that was able to have shewed you the evidence of their truth? If you did believe them, alas, how was it possible that you could forget them? Could you believe a heaven and a hell, and not regard them, or suffer any transitory worldly vanity, to be more regarded by you? Did you know what you had to do in the world, and yet is it all undone till now? Were you never warned of this day? Did never preacher, nor Scripture, nor book, nor friend, nor conscience, tell you of your end? and tell you what would be the fruit of sin, and of

your contempt and slighting of Christ and of his grace? Did you know that you must love God above the world, if ever you would be saved, and that you must to that end, be partaker of Christ, and renewed by his Spirit, and yet would you let out your heart upon the world, and follow the brutish pleasures of the flesh, and never earnestly seek after that Christ and Spirit that should thus renew and sanctify you? Do you not think now that it had been wiser to have sought Christ and grace, and set your affections first on things above, and to have made sure work for your soul against such a day as this, than to have hardened your heart against God's grace, and despised Christ, and heaven, and your salvation, for a thing of naught? You see now what it was that you preferred before heaven; what have you now got by all your sinful love of the world? where now is all your fleshly pleasure? Will it all now serve turn to save you from death, or the wrath of God, and everlasting misery? will it now go with you to another world? Or do you think it will comfort a soul in hell, to remember the wealth which he gathered and left behind him on earth? Would it not now have been much more comfortable to you, if you could say, 'My days were spent in holiness, in the love of my dear Redeemer, and in the hearty service of my God; in praising him and praying to him, in learning and obeying his holy Word and will; my business in the world was to please God, and seek a better world; and while I followed my lawful trade or calling, my eye was chiefly on eternal life; instead of pleasing the flesh, I delighted my soul in the love, and praise, and service of my Redeemer, and in the hopes of my eternal blessedness; and now I am going to enjoy that God and happiness which I believed and sought.' Would not this be more comfortable to you now, than to look back on your time as spent in a worldly, fleshly life, which you preferred before your God and your salvation? Christ would not have forsaken you in the time of your extremity, as the world doth, if you had cleaved faithfully to him. You little know what peace and comfort you might have found, even on earth, in a holy

life; how sweet would the Word of God have been to you! How sweet would prayer, and meditation, and holy conference have been! Do you think it is not more pleasant to a true believer, to read the promises of eternal life, and to think and talk of that blessed state, when they shall dwell with God in joy for ever, than it was to you to think and talk of worldly trash and vanity? If you had used the world as a traveller doth the necessaries of his journey, the thought of heaven would have afforded you solid, rational comfort all the way. O little do you know the sweetness of the love of God in Christ, and how good a Christian findeth it, when he can but exercise and increase his knowledge, and faith, and love to God, and thankfulness for mercy, and hopes of heaven, and walk with God in a heavenly conversation. Do you not wish now that this had been your course? But that which is done cannot be undone, and time that is past can never be called back: but yet there is a sure remedy for your soul, if you have but a heart to entertain and use it. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Jesus Christ being God and man, is the Mediator between God and man; his death is a sufficient sacrifice for our sins; it is his office to save all those that come to God by him: do but unfeignedly repent of your sinful life, and yet set your heart upon the life to come, and love God and holiness, better than the world and fleshly pleasure, and trust your soul on Christ as your Redeemer, and he will certainly forgive you, and reconcile you unto God, and present you justified and spotless in his sight. Think of your sin till you abhor yourself: and think of your sin and misery till you feel that you are undone if you have not a Saviour: and then think what love God hath shewed you in Christ, in giving him to be incarnate and die for sinners, and offering you freely to pardon all that ever you have done, and to justify and save you, and bring you to endless glory with himself, if yet at last you will but give up yourself to Christ, and accept his mercy and return to God.

What joyful tidings is here now for a sinful, miserable soul; yet this is the certain truth of God. This is his very covenant of grace, which is founded in the blood of Christ, and which he is now ready to make with you, and seal to you by his Spirit within, and his sacrament without, if you do but heartily and unfeignedly consent: believe in Christ, and turn to God, from the world and the flesh, and resolve upon a holy life if you should recover, and then I can assure you from the Word of God, that he will freely pardon you, and take you for his child, and save your soul in endless glory. As late as it is, he will certainly receive you, if you return to him by Christ with all your heart: and doth not your heart now rejoice in this unspeakable mercy, which is willing to save you after all the sin that you have committed, and after all the time that you have lost? Do you not love that God that is so abundant in goodness and in love? and that Saviour who hath purchased you this pardon and salvation? Is it not better think you to love, and praise, and serve him, than to live in fleshly lusts and pleasures? and is it not better to dwell in heaven with him, in endless joys, than to live awhile in the vain delights of sinners, and thence to pass to endless misery? O beg of God now to give you a new heart to believe in Christ, and repent of sin, and love him that is most holy, good and gracious: and take heed that you slight not his grace any longer; and that you do not now take on you in a fear, to be that which you are not, or to do that which you would not hold to, if you should recover. And to make all sure, will you now sincerely enter into a covenant with Christ; I mean but the same covenant which you made in baptism and the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and which would have saved you, if you had sincerely made and kept it. Let me therefore help you both to understand it, and to do it by these Questions, which I entreat you to answer sincerely as one that is going to the presence of God.

Quest. I. 'Do you truly believe that you are a rational creature, differing from brutes, being made to love and serve your Maker, and have an immortal soul, which must live in heaven or hell for ever? and that there is indeed a heaven of joys, and a hell of punishments when this life is ended?'

Quest. II. 'Do you believe that in heaven, the souls of the justified at death, and the body also at the resurrection, shall be joined with the angels, and shall dwell with Christ, and see the glory of God, and be perfected in holiness, and filled with the sense of the love of God, and with the greatest joys that our nature can receive, and shall live in the most delightful love and praise of God for ever?'

Quest. III. 'Seeing you are certain that all the pleasures of this life are short, and will end in death, and leave the flesh which desired them, in corruption, do you not firmly believe that the joys of heaven are infinitely better, and more to be desired and sought, than all the pleasures and profits of this life? and that it is most reasonable that we should love God above all creatures, even with all our heart, and soul, and might?'

Quest. IV. 'Seeing then that the love of God is both our duty and happiness, is it not reason that we should be kept from the love of any thing in the world, which would steal away our hearts from God, and hinder us from loving him, and desiring, and seeking him? and that we should mortify the love of worldly riches, honours, and delights; so far as they are against the love of God?'

Quest. V. 'Seeing God is the absolute Lord and Ruler of the world, is it not reason that we obey him, whatsoever he commandeth us, though we did not see the reason why he doth command it? And yet is it not plainly reasonable, that he command us to love, and honour, and worship him; and to love one another, and to deal justly with all,

and do as we would be done by, and to be careful of our souls, and temperate for our bodies; and not to neglect or dishonour our Maker, nor to neglect our own salvation, nor abuse our bodies by beastly filthiness or excess; nor to wrong our neighbours, nor deny to do them any good that is in our power. This is the sum of all God's laws; and this is the nature of holiness and obedience. And do you not from your heart believe, that all this is very reasonable and good?'

Quest. VI. 'When the sinful World was fallen from happiness into misery, by turning away from God and holiness to sensuality, and God sent his Son to be their Redeemer and Saviour; to be a sacrifice for sin, and a teacher and pattern of a holy and obedient life, and to make a new covenant with them, in which he giveth them the pardon of all sin, and everlasting happiness, if they will but give up themselves to him as their Saviour, and Sanctifier, and by true repentance turn to God: do you not verily believe that miserable sinners should gladly and thankfully accept of such an offer? And abundantly love that God and Saviour, that hath so tenderly loved them, and so freely redeemed them from the flames of hell, and so freely offered them everlasting life? And do you not believe that he, who after all this, shall slight all his mercy, and refuse to be renewed by sanctifying grace, and shall neglect his God, and soul, and this salvation, and rather choose to keep his sins; doth not deserve to be utterly forsaken, and to be punished more than if a Saviour and salvation had never been offered to him?'

Quest. VII. 'Hath not this been your own case? Have you not lived a fleshly, worldly life; neglecting God and your salvation; and minding more these lower things? and have you not refused the Word and Spirit of Christ, which would have brought you to repentance, and a holy life? and consequently rejected Christ as a Saviour, and the Holy

Ghost as a Sanctifier; and all the mercy which he offered you on these terms?'

Quest. VIII. 'If this hath been your case, are you now unfeignedly grieved for it? Not only because it hath brought you so near to hell, but also because it hath displeased God, and deprived you of that holy and comfortable life, which you might all this while have lived, and endangered all your hopes of heaven? Do you, so far repent, as that your very heart and love are changed: so that now you had rather have a holy life on earth, and the sight and enjoyment of God in the heavenly joys for ever, than to have all the pleasure and prosperity of this world? Do you hate your sins, and loathe yourself for them, and truly desire to be made holy? Are you firmly resolved, that if God do recover you to health, you will live a new and holy life? that you will forsake your fleshly, worldly life, and all your wilful sins; and will set yourself to learn the will of God, and call upon him, and live in the holy communion of saints, and make it your chief care to please God, and to be saved?'

Quest. IX. 'Are you willing to these ends, to give up yourself absolutely now to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as your reconciled Father, your Saviour, and your Sanctifier, to be sanctified and justified, and saved from your sins, and from the wrath of God, and live to God in love and holiness? And are you willing to bind yourself to this, by entering into this covenant with God, renouncing the flesh, the world, and the devil? Either your heart is willing: and sincere in this resolution and covenant, or it is not. If it be not, there is no hope that your sin should be pardoned, and your soul be saved upon any other, or easier terms! And for all that God is merciful, and Christ died for sinners, it was never his intent to save one impenitent, unsanctified soul. But if your heart unfeignedly consent to this, I have the commission of Christ himself to tell you, that God

will be your reconciled God and Father; and Christ will be your Saviour, and the Holy Spirit will be your Sanctifier and Comforter, and your sins are pardoned, and your soul shall be saved, and you shall dwell in heaven with God for ever. God did consent before you consented; he shewed his consent in purchasing, and making, and offering you this covenant. Shew your unfeigned consent now by accepting it, and giving up yourself unreservedly to him, and you have Christ's blood, and Spirit, and sacrament, to seal it to you. The flesh and the world have deceived you; but trust in Christ upon his covenant terms, and he will never deceive you.

And now, alas, what pity it is, that a soul that is in so miserable a case, and is lost for ever, if it have not help, and speedy help, should be deprived of all this grace and glory, and only for want of repenting and consenting. What pity is it that a soul, that is ready to go into another world, where mercy shall never more be offered it, should rather go stupidly on to hell, than return to God, and accept his mercy. Do but truly repent and consent to this covenant, and all the mercies of it are certainly yours. God will be your God, and Christ, and the Spirit, and pardon, and heaven, and all are yours. The Lord open and persuade your heart, that you may not be undone, and lost for ever, for want of accepting the mercy that is offered you!

And now I know it would be comfortable to you, if you could be fully assured that you are forgiven, and shall be saved. In a matter of such unspeakable moment, how joyful would a well-grounded certainty be, to any man that hath the right use of his understanding? I tell you therefore from God, that there is no cause of your doubting on his part, but only on your own. There is no doubt to be made, whether God be merciful, nor whether Christ be a sufficient Saviour, and sacrifice for your sins; nor whether the covenant be sure, and promise of pardon and salvation to all true penitent believers be true.

All the doubt is, whether your faith and repentance be sincere, or not: and for that, I can but tell you how you may know it, and I shall open the truth to you, that I may neither deceive you, nor causelessly discomfort you.

If this repentance and change which you now profess, and this covenant which you have made with God, 1. Do come only from a present fear, and not from a changed, renewed heart. 2. And if your resolutions be such as would not hold you to a holy life, if you should recover; but would die and fade away, and leave you as you were before, when the fear is past, then is it but a forced, hypocritical repentance, and will not save you, if you so die. Though a minister of Christ should absolve you of all your sins, and seal it by giving you the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ; for all this you are lost for ever, if you have no more: for absolution and the sacrament, are given you but on supposition, that your faith and repentance be sincere: and if this condition fail in you, the action of the holiest minister in the world, will never save you.

But, 1. If your repentance and covenant come not only from a present fear, but from a renewed heart, which now loveth God, and Christ, and heaven, and holiness, better than all the honours, and riches, and pleasures of the flesh and world, and had rather have them, even on God's terms. 2. And if this change be such, as if you should recover would hold you to a holy life, and not die, or dwindle into hypocritical formality, when the fright is over, then I can assure you from the Word of God, that if you die in this repentance, you shall certainly be saved. And though late repentance have so many difficulties that it too seldom proveth true and sound, and it is an unspeakable madness to cast our salvation on so great a hazard; and to defer that till such a day as this, which should be the principal work of all our lives; and for which, the greatest care and diligence is

not too much: yet for all that, when conversion is indeed sincere, it is always acceptable, how late soever: and a returning prodigal shall find better entertainment with God, than he could possibly expect; and never will Christ cast out one soul that cometh to him, in sincerity of heart. The Lord give you such a heart, and all is yours. Amen.

A Form of Exhortation to the Godly in their Sickness

Dear friend: Though nature teacheth us to have compassion on your flesh, which lieth in pain; yet faith teacheth us to see the nearness of your happiness, and to rejoice with you in hope of your endless joys, which seem to be at hand. We must rejoice with you as your friends that love you, and therefore are partakers of your welfare: and we must rejoice with you as your fellow-travellers and fellow-soldiers, that are going along with you to the same felicity; and if we are left behind for a little while, yet hope ere long to overtake you, and never to be separated from you more. This is the day for which Christ hath been so long preparing you; and which you have so long foreseen, and have been so long preparing for yourself. This is the day which you thought on in all your prayers, and patience, in all your labours and sufferings, your self-denial and mortification, since God did bring you to yourself and him. Now you are going to see the things which you have believed; and to possess the things which you have sought and hoped for: to see the final difference between the righteous and the wicked; between a holy, and a worldly life, between the vessels of mercy, and of wrath. Your time is hastening to an end, and endless blessedness must succeed it. O now, what a mercy is it to have a Christ! That you are not to encounter an unconquered death; nor to go to God without a Mediator: but that death is by Christ disarmed of its sting; and that you may boldly resign your soul into the hands of your Redeemer, and commend it to him as a member of

himself. Now, what a case had your soul been in, if you had no intercessor? If you had been to answer for your sins, yourself only; and had not a Saviour to be your advocate, and answer for you? Now you may better perceive than ever you have done, what God did for you when he opened your eyes, and humbled, and changed, and renewed your heart: and how great a mercy it is to be a penitent believer. You may now see more fully than ever heretofore, what God intended for you when he converted you: when he forgave all your sins, and justified you by his grace, and adopted you for his child, and ah heir of life, and sealed you with his Spirit, and sanctified and separated you to himself. Now what a case were you in, if you were yet in your sins, and in the bondage of satan, and had not this evidence of your title to eternal life? If you had your heart to soften, and to humble, and to convert, and your faith and justification all to seek, and all your preparations for heaven to make; if you had all this to do, with a pained body, and a distracted mind, in so short a time, with God, and eternity, and death before you, ready with terror to overwhelm your souls? If now you were to seek for an interest in Christ, and for the pardon of all your sins, and your peace with God were yet to make? If you had all your life past to look back upon, as consumed in sin; and when time is at an end, must cry out of all that is past, as lost? this is the case that God in justice might have left you to. But what an unspeakable mercy is it, that you have already been reconciled to that God that you are going to? and that the sins which now would have been your terror, are all forgiven through the blood of Christ? That you can look back upon your time, since the day of your conversion, as spent in faithful devotedness to God, and in a believing preparation for your endless life; and in godly sincerity, notwithstanding your manifold sinful imperfections, which Christ hath undertaken to answer for himself. Though you have nothing of your own to boast of; and no works that will justify you according to the law, at the bar of God, but you need a Saviour, and a pardon, for

the failings, even of the best that ever you did; yet must you with thankfulness remember that grace which hath begun eternal life within you, and prepared and sealed you to the full possession of it. For all the mercy that is in God, and for all the glory that is in heaven, and for all the merits and satisfaction of Christ, and for all the fulness and freeness of the promise; if God had not given you a believing, penitent heart, and sanctified and sealed you by the Spirit of his Son, all this could have afforded you little comfort, but would have aggravated your misery, as it did your sin. Seeing then that many of the wicked, would be glad to die the death of the righteous; and when it is too late, they would all be glad, if their latter end might be like his; how glad should you be, that God by such a life, hath prepared you for such an end? And though a humble soul hath still an eye upon its own unworthiness, and satan is ready to aggravate our sins, in order to our discouragement and fear; yet must you remember what an honorable victory grace hath had over them; and look on them as Christ did, as the advantage of his grace; that "where sin abounded, there grace hath superabounded." You have had something to humble you, and to shew you that you were a child of Adam; and you have had something for grace to contend with, and to conquer; and for Christ to pardon; bless him through whom you have had the victory. Had you not deserved hell, Christ could not have saved you from a deserved hell; and the song of the Lamb would not have been so sweet to you, in the everlasting remembrance, and experience of his grace. You have sinned as a man, and he hath pardoned as God; you have been weak and nothing, but his grace hath been sufficient for you, and by his strength you can do all things. He hath as dear a love to you now in his exaltation, as he had upon the cross, when he was bleeding for your sins. And will he suffer a chosen soul to perish, for whom he hath paid so dear a price? A Christ in heaven that had never been on earth, would have seemed a stranger to us, and one that never was acquainted with our

miseries, nor had testified his love at so dear a rate, as might have convinced, and encouraged, and won our hearts. And a Christ on earth, that had not passed for us into heaven, would have seemed to us but an insufficient conquered friend; and were unfit to provide us a mansion with the Father, and to receive our souls, when they are separated from the flesh. But "now we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, and was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin;" and therefore "can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: and therefore we may come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." This is your time of need, and here is a supply for all your needs. As we may come boldly through our high priest to the throne of grace, so may we boldly pass by his conduct into the presence of God in glory. For he is purposely gone before "to prepare a place for us, that where he is, there we may be alsob." O what a joy is it to our departing souls, that we have our head and Saviour already in possession of the kingdom, which we are passing to! What a support and joy is it, to receive this message from our ascending Head, "Say to my brethren, I ascend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God." What a joy is it to read his promise, "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant bed." You have served him, and are following him, and now are going to be with him where he is.

There you shall be delivered from the darkness of this world. How dimly did we see through the lanthorn of the flesh! How little did we know! And how much were we ignorant of! And what pains did our little knowledge cost us! But there, one sight of the face of God will put an end to this longsome night; and will shew you that, which all the reading and study of a thousand years could never satisfactorily have shewn you. There you shall understand the works of God; the frame of the creation; the place, and office, and reason of all things,

which here you knew not. The mysteries of the Gospel, which angels pry into, will be there much more unfolded to you, than the clearest divines were able to explain them. All sciences there shall be one pansophy; and all things knowable shall appear to you, in their wondrous perfect harmony. What welcome will those blessed angels give you, that here disdained not to minister for you, and bear you up in all your ways, and interested themselves in your concernments, rejoicing before God at your conversion! How glad then will they be of your safe arrival at the promised harbour of felicity with themselves! What joy will it be to you to be presently entertained, and welcomed into the acquaintance of those blessed spirits, and of all the holy souls that are delivered from this flesh and world; and to see their order, and be numbered with their society, and to be employed in their joyful work. O how much better company is that than the best below! There is no ignorance, and therefore no error; no want of love, and no contention; nor narrow, private interests to contend for, but all made happy in perfect love in him that is their universal end and happiness. There is no dissention, nor perverse disputes; no ignorant zeal, nor blinding passions; no proud or covetous designs, and therefore no hurtful means to prosecute them; no seeming necessity to hurt our brethren, to advance, or enrich, or save ourselves; no slanderers there condemn the souls whom Christ doth justify, nor take away the righteousness of the righteous from him; no cruel mockings, imprisonments, or banishments; no wandering destitute, afflicted or tormented; no more suffering for the sake of righteousnesss, but having suffered with Christ they are now reigning with him; and those, of whom the world was not worthy, are taken to God from an unworthy world. There are no troublesome mutations or confusions; no wars, nor rumours of wars, because no lusts to war in their members; but united souls in the harmony of love, do without any discord, praise the Lord. The church is not there divided into sects and factions, either through the pride

or peevishness of its members; none scrupleth communion with the rest; none silence others from speaking the praises of their Redeemer; nor drive away others from their brotherhood and communion. There is neither unrighteous law, nor disobedient subject, nor unpeaceable neighbour, nor unfaithful friend, nor hurtful or malicious enemy! There is no afflicted friend to mourn for; nor any disconsolate soul to grieve with; no ignorant person to instruct, nor obstinate heart to persuade or pray for; no fearful, doubting Christian to be comforted, nor weak and wavering soul to be confirmed; no imprudent, scandalous actions of the godly to be lamented; no remnants of pride, self-conceitedness, or any delusion to keep out the light; no blemishes in them for the enemies to reproach, nor any malignant enemies to reproach them; no misrepresentations of things or persons; no raising or receiving false reports; no sin of our own to grieve for, or to strive against; and no sin of others to trouble the society, or be lamented. There we shall have no suffering friend to suffer with; none labouring of want, while you have plenty; nor any groaning in pain and sickness, while you are well. As no want or pain of your own will afflict you! so no suffering of your friends will interrupt your joy. Your comforts shall not be, turned into lamentations, for the madness and obstinate wickedness of a sodomitical generation about you; nor your righteous soul be vexed with their filthy and sottish conversation. You shall not dwell in a world where the most part is drowned in heathenism and infidelity, nor in a church defiled with papal tyranny, cruelty, covetousness, or profaneness. The whole society will shine in light, and flame in love, and none through any weakness or corruption, will be a clog or hindrance to another.

You shall above all this behold the person of your glorified Redeemer! You shall see that body, in its glorious change, which once was humbled to the Virgin's womb, and to a life of poverty, and

to the scorns of sinners; to be spit upon, and buffetted, and crowned with thorns, and first made a laughing-stock, and then hanged up to die upon a cross, at the will of proud, malicious persecutors. You shall there see that person whom God hath chosen to advance above the whole creation; and in whom he will be more glorified than in all the saints. The wonderful condescension of his incarnation, and the wonderful mystery of the hypostatical union, will there be better understood.

And, which is all in all, you shall see the most blessed God himself; whether in his essence, or not, yet undoubtedly in his glory, in that state or place, which he hath prepared to reveal his glory in, for the glorifying of holy spirits. You shall see him whose sight will perfect your understandings, and love him, and feel the fulness of his love, which is the highest felicity that any created being can attain. Though this will be in different measures, as souls are more or less amiable and capacious (or else the human nature of Christ would be no happier than we), yet none shall have any sinful or troublesome imperfection, and all their capacities shall be filled with God.

O dear friend, I am even confounded and ashamed to think, that I mention to you such high and glorious things, with no more sense and admiration! And that my soul is not drawn up in the flames of a more fervent love; nor lifted up in higher joys, nor yet drawn out into more longing desires, when I speak of such transcendent happiness and joy! O had you and I but a glimpse with blessed Stephen or Paul, of these unutterable pleasures, how deeply would it affect us! And how should we abhor this life of sin! And be weary of this dark and distant state; and be glad to be gone from this prison of flesh; and to be delivered from this present evil world.

This is the life that you are going to live; though a painful death must open the womb of time, and let you into eternity, how quickly will the pain be over. And though nature make death dismal to you, and sin have made it penal, and you look at it now with backwardness and fear; yet this will all be quickly past, and your souls will be born into a world of joy, which will make you forget all your fears and sorrows. It is meet that as the birth of nature had its pains, and the birth of grace had its penitent sorrows; so the birth of glory should have the greatest difficulties, as it entereth us into the happiest state. O what a change will it be to a humbled, fearful soul, to find itself in a moment dislodged from a sinful, painful flesh, and entered into a world of light, and life, and holy love, unspeakably above all the expressions and conceptions of this present life. Alas! that our present ignorance and fear should make us draw back from such a change! That whilst all our brethren that died in faith, are triumphing in these joys with Christ, our trembling souls should be so loath to leave this flesh, and be afraid to be called to the same felicity! O what an enemy is the remnant of unbelief, to our imprisoned and imperfect souls! That it can hide such a desirable glory from our eyes, that it should no more affect us, and we should no more desire it, but are willing to stay so long from God! How wonderful is that love and mercy, that brings such backward souls to happiness! And will drive us away from this beloved world, by its afflicting miseries! And from this beloved flesh, by pain and weariness! And will draw us to our joyful blessedness, as it were, whether we will or not! And will not leave us out of heaven so long, till we are willing ourselves to come away!

You seem now to be almost at your journey's end. But how many a foul step have those yet to go, whom you leave behind you in this dirty world. You have fought a good fight, and kept the faith; and shall never be troubled with an enemy or temptation when this one concluding brunt is over. You shall never be so much as tempted to

unbelief, or pride, or worldlymindedness, or fleshly lusts, or to any defects in the service of your Lord. But how many temptations do you leave us encompassed with! And how many dangers and enemies to overcome! And alas! how many falls and wounds may we receive! You seem to be near the end of your race, when those behind you have far to run. You are entering into the harbour, and leave us tossed by tempests on the waves. Flesh will no more entice or clog your soul. You will no more have unruly senses to command, nor an unreasonable appetite to govern, nor a straggling fantasy, or wandering thoughts, or headstrong lusts, or boisterous passions to restrain. You will no longer carry about a root of corruption, nor a principle of enmity to God: it will no more be difficult or wearisome to you to do good. Your service of God will no more be mixed and blemished with imperfections. You shall never more have a cold, or hard, or backward heart, or a careless, customary duty to lament. That primitive holiness, which consisteth in the love of God, and the exercise and delights thereof will be perfected: and those subservient duties of holiness, which consist in the use of recovering means, will cease as needless. Preaching, and studying, and books, will be necessary no more: sacraments, and church discipline, and all such means have done their work: repentance and faith have attained their end. As your bodies after the resurrection will have no need of food, or raiment, or care, or labour; so your souls will be above the use of such creatures and ordinances, as now we cannot be without: for the glass will be unnecessary, when you must see the Creator face to face. Will it not be a joyful day to you, when you shall know God as much as you desire to know him? And love him as much as you desire to love him? And be loved by him as much as you can reasonably desire to be loved? And rejoice in him as much as you desire to rejoice? Yea, more than you can now desire? I open you but a casement into the everlasting mansions; and shew you but a dark and distant prospect of the promised land, the heavenly Jerusalem.

The satisfying sight is reserved for the time, when thereby we shall have that satisfying fruition.

And is there any such thing to be hoped for on earth? Will health or wealth, will the highest places, or the greatest pleasures make men happy? You know it will not! Or if it would, the happiness would be so short, as maketh it little worthy of our regard. Have you not seen an end of all perfection? Have you not observed and tried what a deluding dream and shadow of felicity the world puts off its followers with? How they act their parts as players on a stage; and they that in a dream or mask, did yesterday seem princes, lords, or conquerors, to-day are buried in a darksome grave! And they that yesterday seemed great and rich, to-day have no more of their furniture or possessions, than a coffin and a winding-sheet, and a place to hide their loathsome flesh! And they that yesterday were merry, and jovial, and in health, and honour, to-day lie groaning in painful misery, and are leaving their dear-bought, beloved riches, never to be delightful to them any more. How little doth it concern them, that must dwell in heaven or hell for ever, whether they live in wealth or poverty, in honour or shame, in a palace or a cottage, in pain or pleasure, for so short a time as this transitory life, which is almost at an end as soon as it is begun! How many millions of dying parents have cried out of the world as Vanity and Vexation! And yet their besotted posterity admire it, and through the love of it lose their souls and everlasting hopes! They boast or rejoice in the multitude of their riches, as if their houses would continue for ever: though in their honour they abide not, but are like the beasts that perish; and death feedeth on them, when like sheep they are laid in the grave; and though this their way is their folly, yet their posterity approve their sayings, and follow them by the same sin to the same perdition. And is this a world for a holy soul to be in love with? Hath it merited our affections? Doth it love us so much, or use us so well, that we

should be loath to leave itf? As it loved our Lord, it will love his followers: as it used him, it will use us, if he restrain it not. Is a blinded, bedlam world, a malicious, cruel, and ungodly world, a false, perfidious, deceitful world, a place for a saint to be loath to leave? O blessed be that love, that blood, that grace, which hath provided better for us! And shall we be unwilling to go to so sweet a feast? and to partake of a happiness which cost so dear?

Come on then, dear friend, and faint not at the last; and fear not to encounter with the king of fears! It is the last enemy, and it is a conquered enemy! Conquer this and you have no more to conquer! Lift up your head, and look to your victorious, reigning Lord: gird up the loins of your mind, and let faith and patience hold out yet a little while, and play well this last part, and all is your own.

If the tempter now assault your faith, and sinking flesh do give him any advantage, abhor his blasphemies, and cry for help to him that conquered him. Do you think yonder high and spacious mansions are uninhabited? When every part of sea and land hath its inhabitants? Why have those blessed angels been so long employed in ministering for you, but to let you know that your souls are not so distant from them, but that they are glad of familiarity with you, and you may be like them, or equal with them in felicity? Nature hath put you out of doubt, that there is a God of infinite, eternal being, power, wisdom, and goodness, who is the efficient, dirigent, and final cause of all; the Creator and Governor of the world. And the same nature hath put you out of doubt, that all that his creatures have or can do, is due to him from whom they have it; and that so far as you are capable to know, and love, and serve him, that you should employ your faculties herein: and nothing is more undeniable to you, than that it is our duty to love and serve our God, with all our heart, and soul, and might. And it is as clear to you, that neither are these powers given us

in vain, nor this duty required of us in vain, nor yet that man's natural, highest duty, is made to be the way of his misery and undoing. And sure that way, which turneth the mind from sensual pleasures, and casteth a man on the malice and cruelty of the world, and engageth him in so much duty, which both the flesh and the world are utter enemies to, would be his misery and torment, if there were no rewards and punishments hereafter, and no future judgment to set all straight, that seemed crooked in the judgments of men. If all the intrinsic evidences of credibility in the sacred Word were not sufficient; if all the antecedent evidences of prophecy were too little; if the concomitant evidence of all the miracles of Christ, and his apostles, and other of his servants, with his own resurrection and ascension did seem too distant from you; yet mark what subsequent, continued evidences it hath pleased God to bring even to your very sense, to assure you of the truth of his Gospel, and of the life to come. Whence cometh that universal unreasonable enmity, which in all generations and nations of the world, from Cain and Abel till this day, is found in the carnal against the spiritual, holy seed? Even a Seneca telleth us of it among heathens, against that remnant of virtue, and temperance, and sobriety that was found in the better sort of men. Could all mankind be thus infected, and hate a saint that never hurt them, much more than those that themselves confess to be most vicious, if the fall of Adam were not true? Have we a whole world before our eyes, that are visibly polluted with that irrational leprosy, and yet shall we doubt whether our common father was sick of that disease? And do you not see that the Gospel, wherever it is heartily entertained, doth renew the soul, and change the life, and make the man to be another man, not only amending some little things that were amiss; but making us new creatures, and turning the bent of heart and life another way? Though the carnal, nominal Christian, that never heartily received the Gospel, do differ from a heathen but in opinion and formality; yet serious Christians are

other men, and so transformed, as that their holy desires and endeavours do contain the seed of life eternal, and are such a preparation for it as cannot be in vain. Would God concur thus with any word, which is not true, and holy, and good, to make it effectual for the renovation of so many millions of souls? Have you not found that his work of grace is carried on by heavenly wisdom, love, and power? and is a witness of his special providence? and containeth his own image upon the soul? And shall we then question the author of the seal, when we see that the image and superscription which it imprinteth is divine? And have you not had such experiences yourself of the fulfilling of this Word, in the answer of prayers, manifest both on men's souls and bodies, which are enough to confute the tempter, that would shake your faith, when he seeth you in your weakness, unfit to call up all those evidences, which at another time you have discerned? For my own part, I must bear this witness to the truth, that I have known, and felt, and seen, and heard such wonders wrought upon fervent prayer, as have many a time convinced me of the truth of the promises, and the special providence of God to his poor petitioners. I have oft known the acute and chronical diseases of afflicted ones relieved by prayer without any natural means. Some of the most violent cured in an hour; and some by more slow degrees. Besides the effects upon men's souls, and estates, and public affairs, which plainly demonstrated the means and cause. And shall a promise thus sealed to us, be ever questioned again? Nay, have you not the witness in yourself? Even the Spirit of Christ, which is the pledge and earnest of your inheritance, and the seal and mark of God upon you? In a word, it is an unquestionable truth, that the rational world neither is, nor ever was, nor can be governed agreeably to its nature, without an end to move and rule them, which is beyond this life; and without the hopes and fears of a reward and punishment hereafter. Were this but taken out of the world, man would no longer live like man, but as the most

odious, noxious creature upon earth. And it is as sure that it agreeth not with the omnipotence, wisdom, and goodness of God, to govern so noble a creature by a lie, and to make a nature that must be so governed. And it is as certain that all other revelation is defective, and that life and immortality, the end and the way, were never so brought to light, as they are in the Gospel, by Christ, and by his Spirit.

Say then to the malicious tempter, ' "The Lord rebuke thee, O satan! even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee." "O full of all subtlety and mischief! thou enemy of God and righteousness! wilt thou not cease to be a lying spirit, and to pervert the truth and right ways of the Lordk?" Lift up your soul to God, and say, I believe, Lord help mine unbelief! Though satan stand to resist me at my right hand, am I not a brand plucked out of the fire? Am I not thine? and have I not resigned this soul to thee? and didst thou not accept it in thy holy covenant? O then defend it as thy own! Plead thou my cause, and confirm thy work, and justify both thy truth and me, against the malicious enemy of both. O let the intercession of my Saviour prevail, that my faith fail not. And take away the filthy garments from me, and cause mine iniquities to pass away. And though my soul be troubled, what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But then what passage shall I have into thy presence? I was born a mortal wight, and go but the way as all generations have gone before me; and follow my Lord and all his saints: Father, receive and glorify thy servant, that thy servant may glorify thy name for ever! Receive, O Father, the soul which thou hast made! Receive, O Saviour, the soul which thou hast so dearly bought, and loved to the death, and washed in thy blood! Receive the soul which thou hast regenerated by thy Spirit, and in some measure quickened by the immortal seed! Behold, thou hast made my days as an hand breadth: my age before thee is as nothing: and every man at his best estate is vanity. When

thy rebukes correct us for iniquity, thou makest our beauty to consume as a moth. And now O Lord, what wait I for? is not my hope alone in thee? Deliver me from my transgressions, and impute not to me the sins which I have done. Remember not against me the sins of my youth; and forgive the iniquities of my riper years. Charge not upon me my grieving of thy Spirit, and neglects and resistances of thy grace. Forgive my sins of ignorance and of knowledge, my sins of slothfulness, rashness, and presumption, especially those which I have wilfully committed, against thy warnings and the warnings of my conscience. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret sins. O pardon my unprofitableness, and abuse of thy mercies, and my sluggish loss of precious time! that I have served thee no better, and loved thee no more, and improved no better the day of grace! Though folly and sin have darkened my light, and blemished my most holy services, and my transgressions have been multiplied in thy sight, yet is the sacrifice sufficient which thou hast accepted from our great High Priest, who made his soul an offering for sin. In him thou art well pleased: he is our peace: in him I trust: he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners: he did no iniquity: he fulfilled all righteousness: and by once offering of himself, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified: he is able to save to the utmost them that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Accept me, O Father, in him thy well beloved: let my sinful soul be healed by his stripes, who bare our sins in his body on the cross. Let me be found in him, not having any legal righteousness of my own, but that which is through the faith of Christ; that being made conformable unto his death, I may attain to the resurrection of the dead, and may by him be presented without spot or blemish. My God, thou hast encouraged my fearful soul, by the multitude of thy mercies, as well as by thy promises, to trust thee, and yield itself to thee. Thou hast filled up all my days with mercy: every place that I have lived in, and every relation, and all that I have

had to do with in the world, are the witnesses of thy love and mercy to me. Thy eyes beheld my substance being yet imperfect, and all my members were written in thy book. My parents were instructed by thee to educate me, and all things commanded by thee to serve for my preservation, comfort, and salvation. Thou hast brought me forth in a land and age of mercies, and caused me to hear and see the things which others have not seen or heard. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places: my life hath not been spent in a howling wilderness, nor in banishment from thy sanctuary, or the communion of thy saints; nor hath it been wholly consumed in darkness, and sorrow, and unserviceable barrenness. But often have I heard the joyful sound, and I have gone with the multitude to the house of God, and there have seen the light of thy countenance, and drank of the rivers of thy pleasure, even of the waters of life, and have been solaced with the voice of joy and praise. How oft have I cried unto thee in my trouble, and thou hast delivered me out of my distresses? When for my folly and transgression I was afflicted, thou broughtest me out of darkness and the shadow of death. Thou renewedst my age as Hezekiah's, and causedst the shadow of my dial to go back! and hast set me at liberty to praise thee for thy goodness, and declare thy works to the children of men. In the day of trouble I called upon thee, and thou didst deliver me that I might glorify thee. Thou causedst me to receive the sentence of death, that I might trust in God that raiseth the dead. My Shepherd hath led me in his pleasant pastures, by the silent streams: he restored my soul, and conducted me in the paths of righteousness. How precious are thy thoughts unto me O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand! And will that mercy now forsake me, which hath abounded to me, and supported me so long? Thou hast said, I will never fail thee nor forsake thee? Having loved thy own, that are in the world, thou wilt love them to the end; for thy mercy is great and reacheth to the heavens, and it

endureth for ever. O therefore when I awake, let me be with thee! And as thy loving-kindness is better than life; and to depart and be with Christ, is far better than the best condition upon earth; so let thy servant depart in peace, his eye of faith beholding thy salvation: and when my earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, let me have that building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Let my present burden of sin and suffering make me more earnestly to groan, not to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life; that being absent from the body, I may be present with the Lord. And seeing this cup may not pass from me, and I must not look for the chariot of Elias, to carry me unto heaven; let thy will be done, and let me rest therein, and let death be the gain and advantage of my soul: and while this outward man is perishing, let the inner man be renewed from day to day: for what am I better than my fathers, and all thy saints, and the generations of mankind, that I should think of any other passage, than this of death to the world of immortality? O let this fainting heart be glad, and let my glory rejoice, and in love and joy, in thankfulness and praise, let me pass into the world of love and joy, where thanksgiving and praise shall be my work for ever. And though my flesh and heart will fail, be thou the strength of my heart, O God, and my portion for ever. Though I must walk through the valley of the shadow of death, let me fear no evil; but be thou still with me, and let me be comforted by thy rod and staff: let the goodness and mercy which have followed me thus far all my days, receive me at the last, that I may dwell with thee for ever. For it is the will of my Redeemer, that those which thou hast given him, be with him where he is, to behold the glory which thou hast given him. And that his servants should follow him, that where he is, there also may his servants be. Amen, Lord Jesus! good is thy will and the word which thou hast spoken! Into thy hands I commend my spirit which thou hast redeemed: receive it, and let me be with thee in paradise. O thou

that hast called us thy brethren, when thou didst ascend to thy Father and our Father, and to thy God and our God, take up this poor unworthy soul, to the mansions which thou hast prepared for us, that I may be with thee where thou art. And though this flesh must perish, let it rest in hope, and be but sowed as a grain of wheat; till thy powerful call shall raise it from the dust, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, and this natural body shall be raised a spiritual body, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. For though I be dead, my life is hid with Christ in God: and when thou appearest who art my life, then let me appear with thee in glory. O hasten that appearance, and come with thy holy, glorious angels, to be glorified in thy saints, and admired in and by believers! When thou wilt change our vile bodies, and make them like to thy glorious body, by the mighty working, by which thou canst subdue even all things to thyself. Hast thou not said, "Behold I come quickly?" Even so come Lord! and let the great marriage day of the Lamb make haste, when thy spouse shall be presented spotless, unblamable, and glorious; and the glory of God in the New Jerusalem, shall be revealed to all his holy ones, to delight and glorify them for ever. In the meantime, remember Lord thy promise, "Because I live, therefore shall ye live also:" and let the dead that die in thee be blessed: and thou that art made a quickening Spirit, and art the Lord and Prince of life, and hast said that not a hair of our heads shall perish; gather our departing souls unto thyself, into the heavenly Jerusalem and Mount Sion, the city of the living God, and to the myriads of holy angels, and to the general assembly and church of the first-born, and to the perfected spirits of the just; where thou wilt make us kings and priests to God, whom we shall see, and love, and praise for ever. For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; and for his pleasure they are, and were created. And O thou the blessed God of love, the Father of spirits and King of saints, receive this unworthy member of thy Son, into the heavenly

choir which sing thy praise! who rest not saying, night and day, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, who is, and was, and is to come! For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

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A Christian Directory, Part 2: Christian Economics, Richard Baxter,
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