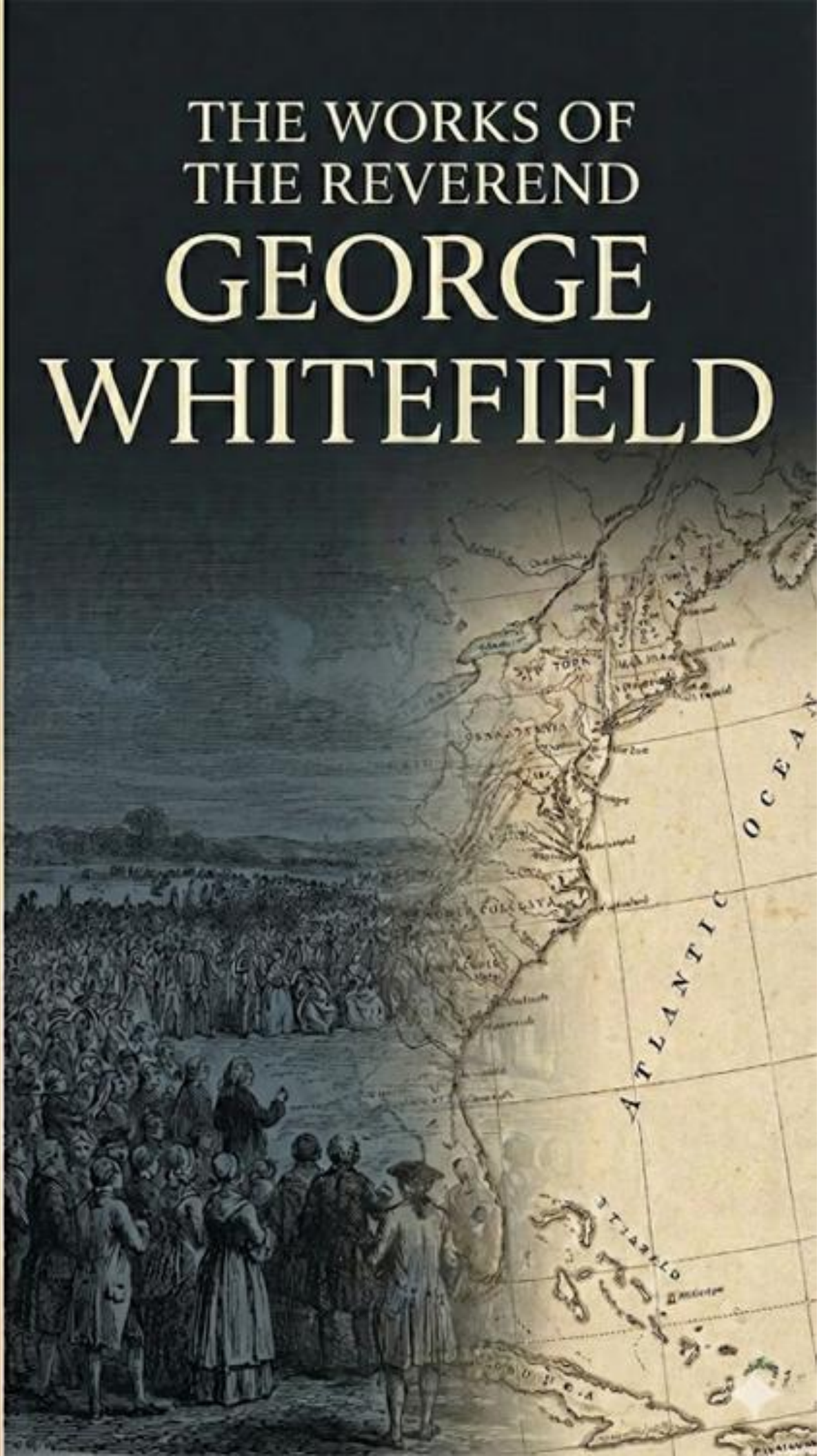
THE WORKS OF THE REVEREND GEORGE WHITEFIELD

VOLUME IV



THE WORKS OF THE REVEREND GEORGE WHITEFIELD, M.A.

VOLUME IV.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD

Monergism Books

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ANSWER TO THE BISHOP OF LONDON'S LAST PASTORAL LETTER.

My Lord,

I NEED make no apology for troubling your Lordship with this. As your Lordship was pleased to make me the chief subject matter of your *last Pastoral Letter*, I think it my duty to answer in the best manner I can.

Your Lordship is highly to be commended, for the care you have taken in watching over the souls of those, who are committed to your Lordship's charge. Lukewarmness and enthusiasm, are the two rocks against which even well-meaning people are in danger of splitting. All ought to be thankful to that pilot, who will teach them to steer a safe and middle course. I would gladly hope, that "a zeal for God in the discharge of your duty, and a hearty concern for the safety of souls," moved your Lordship to write. These are the principles, I trust, which now excite me, to direct this answer to your Lordship. And, blessed be God, that I can write with somewhat of that love and meekness, which becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ, and with

all that humility and reverence, which is due from a presbyter to a bishop of the church of God.

Lukewarmness and enthusiasm, my Lord, are certainly the bane of true Christianity. I thank your Lordship again for your kind cautions against them. The only query is, “Whether there was any occasion for your Lordship’s warning the people of your diocese, against running into either of these extremes, upon account of any thing, I have either spoken or written?” Your Lordship thinks there was, and quotes passages out of my Journal to prove it; if it can be proved, I will ask public pardon, both of your Lordship and them, with all my heart.

As for your Lordship’s cautions against *lukewarmness*, I am not much concerned in them. You do not seem to point at me in particular; unless it is, where your Lordship (page 10.) informs your people, “That a diligent attendance on the duties of the station wherein Providence has placed them, is, in the strictest sense, the serving of God.” None but those, who condemn me unheard, can justly charge me with affirming to the contrary.

However, I beg leave to observe, that your Lordship, (page 8.) calls that a very imperfect state of Christianity, which is *no state of Christianity* at all. St. *Paul*, writing to the *Corinthians*, *2 Corinthians* chapter xiii. verse 5, says, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownselves.” And that they might have a certain rule, whereby to judge whether they were in the faith, truly so called, or not; he immediately adds, “Know ye not your ownselves, how that Christ Jesus is in you, except ye be reprobates?” So that, according to St. *Paul*’s rule, “He that finds, he has hitherto contented himself with a bare bodily attendance upon the public worship of God, and with following his daily employment on other days, and with abstaining from the more gross and notorious acts of sin, and from

doing any hurt or injury to his neighbour, and has rested finally upon these, as the whole of what Christianity requires of him;" is so far from being in a very imperfect state, as your Lordship is pleased to affirm, page 8. that he is in no state of Christianity at all. No, my Lord, he is a *reprobate*, or, one who at present is out of a state of salvation, nor can he ever have any assurance that he is in a state of salvation, till he knows that Jesus Christ is in him, by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit. If I have mistaken your Lordship's expression, I will freely beg your Lordship's pardon.

Another thing, my Lord, to me seems darkly expressed, in page 18. (let not your Lordship be angry, for indeed I will endeavour to speak with all gentleness and humility): your Lordship's words are these: "Nor need they any other evidence besides those *good dispositions* they find in their hearts, that the Holy Spirit of God co-operates with their honest endeavours to subdue sin and grow in goodness." If by good dispositions, your Lordship only means *good inclinations* or desires, I deny that to be a sufficient evidence, that the Spirit of God co-operates with their honest endeavours to subdue sin and grow in goodness. For there is a great difference between good desires and good habits: many have one, who never attain the other. Many have good desires to subdue sin, and yet, resting in those good desires, sin has always had dominion over them. A person sick of a fever may desire to be in health, but that desire is not health itself. In like manner, many have good dispositions, or desires to be good, but that is not goodness itself. And consequently men need more evidence than good dispositions, to prove to themselves or others, "that the Holy Spirit of God co-operates with their honest endeavours to subdue sin." If by good dispositions, your Lordship means good habits wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God, such as peace, love, joy, long-suffering, goodness, truth, &c. I then agree a man

needs no other evidence: for these are the proper and genuine fruits of the Spirit itself.

Your Lordship immediately adds, “Nor that, persevering in their course, and praying to God for his assistance, and relying upon the merits of Christ for the pardon of all such sins, failings, and imperfections, as are more or less unavoidable in this mortal state.” I beg leave to ask your Lordship, whether this does not savour too much of the common divinity, That we are to do something for ourselves: or, in other words, that we have partly a righteousness of our own, and that Jesus Christ is to make up the deficiencies of that righteousness? What else can your Lordship mean, by saying, That we must rely on the merits of Christ for the pardon of “all such sins as are more or less unavoidable in this mortal state?” Did Jesus Christ come into the world, my Lord, only to save us from the guilt of such sins, as are more or less unavoidable in this mortal state? The scriptures every where affirm, that man hath no righteousness of his own, “That there is none righteous, no not one;—that all our righteousness is as filthy rags;” and that Jesus Christ died, not only to save us from the guilt of all such sins, failings, and infirmities, as are more or less unavoidable in this mortal state, but from all wilful sins, and also from that original corruption, which every man naturally engendered of the offspring of *Adam*, brings into the world with him. I hope I have not misunderstood, or overstrained your Lordship’s expression.

I come now to your Lordship’s caution against *enthusiasm*. For that, I suppose, your Lordship intended more particularly against me.

And here, my Lord, I beg leave to observe, That, in my opinion, your Lordship has by no means been clear enough in your definition of the word enthusiasm.

According to the fair rules of writing, was it not first incumbent on your Lordship to shew, that the word *enthusiast* had a good as well as a bad meaning: that it signifies no more than *a person in God*, and consequently every Christian, in the proper sense of the word, is an enthusiast? For St. *Peter* writes, "That to us are given exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature."

And our church says, "If we receive the sacrament worthily, we are one with Christ, and Christ with us: we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us." For which she has sufficient warrant from our Lord's prayer, *John* xvii. 20, &c. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, I in them, and they in me, that they may be made perfect in one: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them."

But indeed your Lordship's definition of *enthusiasm*, when examined, does not convey any ill idea at all. "Enthusiasm, is a strong persuasion on the mind, that they are guided in an extraordinary manner, by immediate impulses and impressions of the Spirit of God." Had your Lordship said, a strong but *groundless persuasion*, that they are guided in an extraordinary manner, it would have been to your Lordship's purpose. But to affirm, without any restriction, that a strong persuasion that we are guided in an extraordinary manner by immediate impulses, is enthusiasm in the worst sense of the word, when your Lordship yourself says, (page 54.) "There is no doubt, but God, when he pleases, can work upon the minds of men by extraordinary influences," to me seems a little inconsistent.

Your Lordship proceeds thus: "And this is owing chiefly to the want of distinguishing aright between the ordinary and extraordinary operations of

the Holy Spirit. The extraordinary operations were those, by which the apostles and others, who were entrusted with the first propagation of the gospel, were enabled to work miracles, and speak with tongues, in testimony, that their mission and doctrine were from God."

I suppose, by extraordinary operations, your Lordship means the same as being guided in an extraordinary manner, just above. And if so, according to your Lordship's own definition, I am no enthusiast. For I never did pretend to these extraordinary operations of working miracles, or speaking with tongues, in testimony that my mission and doctrine were from God; I only lay claim to the ordinary gifts and influences of the Spirit, which your Lordship (page 20.) says, "Still continue:" and what need was there then, my Lord, that the people of your Lordship's diocese should be cautioned against enthusiasm upon my account?

But your Lordship farther adds, "The ordinary gifts, however real and certain in themselves, are no otherwise discernible, than by their fruits and effects." Had your Lordship said, No otherwise discernible *to others*, than by their fruits and effects, it would have been right: but if your Lordship means, they are no otherwise discernible to ourselves, in my opinion, it is wrong; for it is possible, my Lord, for a person to feel and discern these ordinary gifts and influences of the Spirit *in himself*, when there is no opportunity of discovering them to others.

For instance, on supposition that your Lordship was assisted by the blessed Spirit, in writing your pastoral letter; might not your Lordship be sensible of an inward joy and complacency, wrought by that self-same Spirit, which was not then discernible to others? So is it possible for another to feel joy in the Holy Ghost, with the rest of his fruits, which at that time may not be discernible to others; and which they, who have never

experienced the like, may not believe, though a man declare it unto them. I hope, my Lord, these reasonings carry with them their own evidence.

But to proceed: (pages 21, 22, 23, 24, 25.) your Lordship has taken pains to collect several passages out of the public liturgy, to prove the doctrine of regeneration, or our new birth, to be the doctrine of the Church of *England*. Your reason for so doing, appears (page 25.) "to arm your people against any suggestions, as if our church were so regardless of the doctrine of regeneration and new birth, as if there were need for any member of it, to seek elsewhere for a more spiritual service." If this, my Lord, was intended to arm your people against any such suggestions made by me; indeed your Lordship does not do me justice. As your Lordship, I find, has done me the honour to peruse my Third Journal, your Lordship may remember this observation, (page 39.) that, after I had baptized an adult, I proved the necessity of the new birth, from the office of our church.

In my sermon, upon the *indwelling of the Spirit of God*, which I have made bold to send to your Lordship with this letter, you will find, I have quoted the expressions of our own church offices, to prove the doctrine of the new birth, as your Lordship does in your pastoral letter. My constant way of preaching is, first, to prove my propositions by scripture, and then to illustrate them by the articles and collects of the church of *England*. Those that have heard me, can witness, how often I have exhorted them to be constant at the public service of the church. I attend on it myself, and would read the public liturgy every day, if your Lordship's clergy would give me leave. What further satisfaction can your Lordship require, that I do not suggest to your Lordship's people, "as if our church were regardless of the doctrine of regeneration, and new birth, and as if there were need for any member of it, to seek elsewhere for a more spiritual service."

In the following paragraph, your Lordship has the same insinuation, as though I wanted to introduce *extempore prayer*, and to lay aside the public liturgy of our church. For after your Lordship had been speaking against praying by the Spirit, and affirming that the scripture no where tells us, that prayer is the single work of the Spirit, your Lordship says to your people, "you have great reason to be thankful to God, for a public service prepared to your hands." My Lord, I never said to the contrary. But does not your Lordship seem to insinuate at the same time, that we are not to depend on the Spirit of God, to enable us to pray extempore, either in public or private? That prayer is not the single work of the Spirit, without any co-operation of our own, I readily confess. But that the Spirit of God does assist true Christians to pray extempore, now, as well as formerly, is undeniable, if the scriptures be true. For what says the Apostle? "We know not what to pray for, as we ought; but the Spirit itself helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." And this is founded upon a general promise, made to all God's people, *Zachariah* xii. 10. "I will pour upon the house of *David*, and upon the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, the Spirit of grace, and of supplication." And I believe, my Lord, we may appeal to the experience of all true Christians, whether or no they did not find the Spirit of supplication, or a power of praying without a form, increase in proportion to the increase of God's Grace or Holy Spirit in their hearts. This is all, my Lord, that I pretend to: and where is the impropriety of this, when your Lordship confesses in the same page, that "the Spirit of God does particularly assist us, in a due performance of religious offices?"

Further, as your Lordship seems to deny the immediate assistance of the Holy Spirit, in our particular addresses at the throne of Grace, so your

Lordship seems to deny it also in our particular actions. “In like manner, (you say) we are firmly persuaded in general, that we live under the gracious influence of God’s Holy Spirit, and that he both excites and enables us to do good. But that this or that thought or action is an effect of the sole motion, or immediate impulse of the Spirit, without any co-operation of our own mind”—[My Lord, who ever affirmed, that there was no co-operation of our own minds, together with the impulse of the spirit of God?] Your Lordship adds, “or that the Holy Spirit, and our natural conceptions, do respectively contribute to this or that thought or action, in such a measure, or to such a degree; these are things we dare not say.” Indeed, my Lord, I do dare to say them. For if there be any such thing as a particular providence, why may we not expect particular direction from God’s Holy Spirit in particular cases? Does not our church, my Lord, teach us to pray, “that God’s Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts?” But your Lordship says, we dare not say this, because our Saviour has told us, that we know no more of the working of the Spirit, than we know of the wind, from whence it cometh, and whither it goeth. Neither need we know any more of them: but you must allow, that we know as much. Cannot your Lordship feel the wind then? Does not your Lordship know when it makes any impression upon your body? So easy it is for a spiritual man to know when the Holy Spirit makes an impression upon his soul. Without acknowledging this, all the expressions of being *led by the Spirit*, *walking by the Spirit*, and such like, must be only so many words without any real meaning. Your Lordship acknowledges, that the Holy Spirit does act in general, and why not in the particular actions of our lives also? For, can the one be without the other? Does it not frequently happen, my Lord, that the comfort and happiness of our whole lives, depend on one

particular action? And where then, my Lord, is the absurdity of saying, that the Holy Spirit may even, in the minutest circumstance, direct and rule our hearts? I have been the more particular, my Lord, on this part of your Lordship's letter, because if this be proved, many of your Lordship's objections against my Journals, will fall to the ground.

Page 27. Your Lordship has the following paragraph. "God forbid, that in this profane and degenerate age, every thing that has an appearance of piety and devotion, should not be considered in the most favourable light that it is capable of. But at the same time, it is surely very proper, that men should be called upon for some reasonable evidences of a *divine Commission*."

I take it for granted, that I am one of those men, whom your Lordship thinks should be called upon for some reasonable evidence of a *divine Commission*.

But, my Lord, what reasonable evidence does your Lordship require? Did I not receive letters dimissory from your Lordship's own hands to be ordained a priest? Did I not, when ordained deacon, affirm, "that I was inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon me that office and ministration?" Did not my Lord of *Gloucester*, when he ordained me priest, say unto me, "Receive thou the Holy Ghost now committed unto thee, by the imposition of our hands, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?" And is not this, my Lord, a reasonable evidence that I act by a *divine Commission*? If this be not true, must not all those whom your Lordship, or the other Bishops ordain, act only by a *human Commission*? Nay, to use the words of Bishop *Burnet* in his *Pastoral Letter*, "must not they who are ordained, lie not only unto man but unto God, by saying, they are inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit?"

If your Lordship in any wise disputes my acting by a *divine Commission*, you disclaim your own divine right and authority; nor can you possibly avoid the dilemma, of either allowing *my divine Commission*, or denying *your own*.

After your Lordship has insinuated a demand for the evidences of my *divine Commission*, immediately follows these words; "when they tell us of *extraordinary communications* they have with God."

If by extraordinary communications, your Lordship means the extraordinary operations of the Holy Spirit, as working miracles, and speaking with tongues; your Lordship may assure yourself, I never pretended to any such thing. If, by extraordinary communications, your Lordship means more assistance and comforts from God, at some times, than I have at others, (which is all I mean by extraordinary communications) I own the charge? And what is there, my Lord, *extraordinary* in that?

Again, your Lordship says, (page 28.) "When they talk in the language of those, who have a *special* and *immediate mission* from God."

And does your Lordship, and the rest of the Bishops, ordain any, without obliging them first to give good proofs, that they have a special call or immediate mission from God to the work of the ministry? If ever you so do, my Lord, do not your Lordships lay hands too suddenly upon men?

Page 29. Your Lordship writes thus. "When they profess to think and act under the immediate guidance of a *divine Inspiration*."

And does not your Lordship think and act by the same rule? Why, otherwise, does your Lordship pray when you administer the holy Communion, "that God would cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit?"

Page 31. Your Lordship says, “when they speak of their preaching and expounding, and the effects of them, as the *sole work of a divine Power*.”

And would your Lordship have me ascribe any, the least thing to myself? The good that is done upon earth, doth not God do it himself? Does not the Apostle say, “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God?” And where then, my Lord, is the absurdity of ascribing the effects of expounding and preaching to the sole work of a divine Power?

Again, (page 33.) “When they boast of sudden and surprizing effects as wrought by the *Holy Ghost*, in consequence of their preaching.”

Where, my Lord, is the enthusiasm of such a pretension? Has your Lordship been a preacher in the church of *England*, for so many years, and have you never seen any sudden or surprizing effects, consequent upon your Lordship’s preaching? Was this my case, should I not have reason to doubt, my Lord, whether I had any more than a bare human commission? Or might I not take up the Prophet’s lamentation, “O my leanness, my leanness!” My Lord, the gospel, like its author, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and, if preached as it ought to be, will prick numbers to the heart, and extort the cry of the trembling goaler, “What must I do to be saved!” as surely now, as it did seventeen hundred years ago.

These then are the sudden and surprizing effects, my Lord, I always desire to have, and I heartily pray God, your Lordship and all your clergy may always see such effects in consequence of their preaching.

(Page 34.) “When they claim the spirit of *prophecy*.”

What I have said about my success, God has been pleased to fulfil already. What I have said about sufferings, they who without cause are my enemies are fulfilling daily. And as for the promises mentioned in my

Journal, I freely own there are some particular promises, which God has so strongly impressed, and does still impress on my heart, that I verily believe they will be fulfilled.

(Page 35.) “When they speak of themselves in the language, and under the character of *Apostles of Christ*, and even of Christ himself.”

If I am not to speak in an apostolical language, why did my Lord of *Gloucester* give me an apostolical commission, “whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained?” And I hope, my Lord, using the words which Jesus Christ used, is not taking upon me the character of Christ.

(Page 36.) “When they profess to plant and propagate a *new Gospel*, as unknown to the generality of ministers and people, in a Christian country.”

’Tis true, my Lord, in one sense, mine is a new gospel, and will be always unknown to the generality of ministers and people, even in a Christian country, if your Lordship’s clergy follow your Lordship’s directions. For what says your Lordship, (page 46.) “I hope, that when your ministers preach to you of *justification by faith alone*, which is asserted in the strongest manner by our church, they explain it in such a manner, as to leave no doubt upon your minds, whether good works are a *necessary condition* of your being justified in the sight of God.”

But pray, my Lord, where has the scripture made good works a necessary condition of our being justified in the sight of God? St. *Paul* says, “by grace ye are saved, through faith, not of works, and that, least any man should boast. For eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Your Lordship exhorts your clergy to preach *justification by faith alone*, and quotes the 11th article of our church, which tells us, “we are justified by faith only, and not for our own works or deservings.” At the same time,

your Lordship bids them to explain it in such a manner, as to leave no doubt upon their minds, whether good works are a necessary condition of their being justified in the sight of God." Your Lordship, in my opinion, could not well be guilty of a greater inconsistency. This, my Lord, is truly a *new Gospel*. I am sure it is not what the Apostles preached; and it is as contrary to the doctrine of the church of *England*, and the whole tenour of the gospel, as light is contrary to darkness. Had your Lordship insisted on your clergy's preaching up good works as a *necessary fruit* and consequence, instead of a necessary condition of our being justified, your Lordship would have used your authority aright. For we are commanded to shew forth or declare to others, that we have a true faith by our works. And the 12th article of our church says, that "good works *follow* after justification;" and how then, my Lord, are they a necessary condition of our justification? No, my Lord, salvation (if the gospel be true) is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ. Faith is the means whereby that salvation is applied to our hearts, and good works are the necessary fruits and proof of that faith.

This, my Lord, is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, this is the doctrine of the church of *England*, and it is, because the generality of the clergy of the church of *England* do not preach *this doctrine*, that I am resolved, God being my helper, to continue instant in season and out of season, to declare it unto all men, let the consequences, as to my own private person, be what they will.

As for your Lordship's blaming me for rashly censuring the clergy, for their practice, none are concerned, but my *indolent, earthly-minded, pleasure-taking brethren* (page 39.) And surely, your Lordship will not stand up in their defence. No, I hope your Lordship will not fail to rebuke them sharply. And as for your Lordship's suspicions, page 50. (For your

Lordship's sake I would not mention them) I hope my life and doctrine will always prove them to be groundless.

Would time permit, I could now proceed to satisfy your Lordship more particularly about the case of Mr. *Benjamin Seward*: but as that is done in a letter sent to my Lord of *Gloucester*, and as I am now to embark in a few hours, I hope your Lordship will excuse me, if I only add my hearty prayers for your Lordship's temporal and eternal welfare, and subscribe myself, my Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient, though unworthy son and servant,

G. W.

Blendon, Monday,

August 13, 1739.

The letter above mentioned, as sent to the Bishop of *Gloucester*, was occasioned by the Bishop's acquainting Mr. *Whitefield*, in a letter, "That he ought to preach only in that congregation to which he was lawfully appointed." This produced the following answer.

My Lord,

I THANK your Lordship for your Lordship's kind letter. My frequent removes from place to place prevented my answering it sooner. I am greatly obliged to your Lordship, in that you are pleased to watch over my soul, and to caution me against acting contrary to the commission given me at ordination. But if the commission we then receive, obliges us to preach no where but in that parish which is committed to our care, then all persons act contrary to their commission when they preach occasionally in any strange place: and consequently your Lordship equally offends, when you preach out of your own diocese. As for inveighing against the clergy, (without a cause) I deny the charge. What I say, I am ready to make good whenever

your Lordship pleases. Let those that bring reports to your Lordship about my preaching, be brought face to face, and I am ready to give them an answer. St. *Paul* exhorts *Timothy*, "Not to receive an accusation against an elder under two or three witnesses." And even *Nicodemus* could say, "The law suffered no man to be condemned unheard." I shall only add, that I hope your Lordship will inspect into the lives of your other clergy, and censure them for being *over-remiss*, as much as you censure me for being *over-righteous*. It is their falling from their articles, and not preaching the truth as it is in Jesus, that has excited the present zeal of (those whom they in derision call) *the Methodist preachers*. Dr. *Stebbing*'s sermon, (for which I thank your Lordship) confirms me more and more in my opinion, that I ought to be instant in season and out of season. For to me, he seems to know no more of the true nature of regeneration, than *Nicodemus* did, when he came to Jesus by night. Your Lordship may observe, that he does not speak a word of original sin, or the dreadful consequences of our fall in *Adam*, upon which the doctrine of the new birth is entirely founded. No: like other polite preachers, he seems to think in the very beginning of his discourse, that St. *Paul*'s description of the wickedness of the heathen is only to be referred to them of past ages: whereas I affirm, we are all included as much under the guilt and consequences of sin, as they were; and if any man preach any other doctrine, he shall bear his punishment, whosoever he be. Again, my Lord, the Doctor entirely mistakes us, when we talk of the sensible operations of the Holy Ghost. He understands us just as those carnal Jews understood Jesus Christ, who, when our Lord talked of giving them that bread which came down from heaven, said, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Indeed I know not that we do use the word *sensible*, when we are talking of the operations of the Spirit of God. But if

we do, we do not mean, that God's Spirit does manifest itself to our senses, but that it may be perceived by the soul, as really as is any sensible impression made upon the body. But to disprove this, the Doctor brings our Lord's allusion to the wind in the third of St. *John*, which is one of the best texts he could urge to prove it. For if the analogy of our Lord's discourse be carried on, we shall find it amounts to thus much: that although the operations of the Spirit of God can no more be accounted for, than how the wind cometh and whither it goeth; yet may they be as easily felt by the soul as the wind may be felt by the body. My Lord, indeed we speak what we know. But, says the Doctor, "These men have no proof to offer for their inward manifestations." What proof, my Lord, does the Doctor require? Would he have us raise dead bodies? Have we not done greater things than these? I speak with all humility; has not God by our ministry raised many dead souls to a spiritual life? Verily, if men will not believe the evidence God has given that he sent us, neither would they believe though one rose from the dead. Besides, my Lord, the Doctor charges us with things to which we are entire strangers, such as the denying men the use of God's creatures. Encouraging abstinence, prayer, &c. to the neglect of the duties of our stations. Lord, lay not this sin to his charge! Again, he says, "That I suppose Mr. *Benjamin Seward* to be a person believing in Christ, and blameless in his conversation, before what I call his conversion." But this is a direct untruth: for it was through the want of a living faith in Jesus Christ, which he now has, that he was not a Christian before, but a mere moralist. Your Lordship knows that our article says, "Works done without the Spirit of God, and true faith in Jesus Christ, have the nature of sin." And such were all the works done by Mr. *Benjamin Seward*, before the time mentioned in my Journal. Again, my Lord, the Doctor represents, that as my

opinion concerning quakers in general, which I only meant of those I had conversed with in particular. But the Doctor, and the rest of my reverend brethren, are welcome to judge me as they please.—Yet a little while, and we shall all appear before the great Shepherd of our souls. There, there, my Lord, shall it be determined, who are his true ministers, and who are only wolves in sheeps cloathing. Our Lord, I believe, will not be ashamed to confess us publicly in that day. I pray God we all may approve ourselves such faithful ministers of the New Testament, that we may be able to lift up our heads with boldness. As for declining the work in which I am engaged, my blood runs chill at the very thoughts of it. I am as much convinced, it is my duty to act as I do, as that the sun shines at noon-day. I can foresee the consequences very well. They have already in one sense thrust us out of the synagogues. By and by they will think it is doing God service to kill us. But, my Lord, if you and the rest of the bishops cast us out, our great and common Master will take us up. Though all men should deny us, yet will not he. And however you may censure us as evil doers, and disturbers of the peace, yet if we do suffer for our present way of acting, your Lordship at the great day will find, that we suffer only for righteousness sake. In patience therefore do I possess my soul. I willingly tarry the Lord's leisure. In the mean while I shall continually bear your Lordship's favours upon my heart, and endeavour to behave, so as to subscribe myself, my Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient Son, and obliged servant,

George Whitefield.

A LETTER TO THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES OF ENGLAND.

WRITTEN DURING THE VOYAGE TO *PHILADELPHIA*, 1739; AND PARTICULARLY RECOMMENDED TO THOSE WHO HAD THEN LATELY FORMED THEMSELVES INTO RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES IN *SCOTLAND*.

A LETTER, &c.

My dear Brethren in Christ,

THE Apostle in his epistle to the *Hebrews*, chapter x. 23. exhorts them to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering; and soon after adds, as a most effectual means to so desirable an end, “Let us consider one another to provoke unto love, and to good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.”

As Christianity was not then the national religion, I suppose the assemblies here intended, were not such as our public congregations, but rather little private societies, or associations, or churches, as was the custom of the primitive Christians, who, we are told, continued stedfastly in the Apostle’s doctrine, and in fellowship one with another.

This was the Apostle's exhortation to the Christians of those times; and I am fully persuaded there never was more occasion for renewing it, than the age wherein we live.

Nothing hath of late more alarmed the enemies of the cross of Christ, than the zeal that God hath stirred up in the hearts of many to put in practice this apostolical injunction. Balls, plays, horse-races, and such like unchristian and fatal entertainments, are countenanced and supported by public authority. And few as yet have had courage to speak, preach, or write for the suppressing them, so plainly and publicly as they ought; but, if the children of God meet (as they are required) to build up each other in their most holy Faith, almost every one's mouth is opened against them. Nay, with grief it must be spoken, even many of our masters in *Israel*, who ought to be patterns, and promote every good word and work, are not content with countenancing the polite and sinful diversions of the age by their presence and approbation, but are generally most bitter in their invectives against religious societies. The former, though directly contrary to our baptismal vow, are deemed innocent, if not useful, by them: the latter, they are continually crying down (especially if any life or divine power be amongst them) as schismatical, seditious, and tending to destroy the present established constitution.

For these, and many such like reasons, I, as present with you in spirit, though absent in body, thought it my duty to put you in mind, zealously to persist in your obedience to the forementioned injunction once delivered to the saints; and so much the more, as in all probability the day of persecution nearer and nearer approaches.

God has given an harvest, and there has been a gathering in: a winnowing time will come. His fan is already in his hand. Yet a little while, and (if the

work lately begun be carried on) I am persuaded he will throughly purge his flour. The shepherds must first be smitten; and next, endeavours will be used to scatter the sheep. The religious societies Satan has undoubtedly desired to have, that he may sift them as wheat. My brethren, watch and pray one for another, that you may be enabled to stand in such an hour of temptation, and having done all, to stand.

Be not ashamed of that wherein you ought to glory. Religious society is of divine extraction. As God made man, so God said, "It is not good that man should be alone: I will make a help meet for him." Meet, as I take it, not merely for his body (man had few corporal wants in paradise) but chiefly and primarily for his better part the soul, that he might have one to converse with of his own species, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh.

It is true, man is now a fallen, but yet he is a social creature: and as the end of his coming into this world was to prepare for a better; so without doubt the chief end of society in general, and of religious society in particular, is, that we may be helps meet for each other in the great work of our salvation.

Upon this account it was, that the first Christians so frequently assembled themselves together, when obliged to shut the doors for fear of the *Jews*; and their continuing in fellowship with each other, was one main reason why they continued stedfast in the apostles doctrine.

Take then, my brethren, the primitive Christians for your examples: their practices are recorded for our learning. No power on earth can lawfully forbid or hinder your imitating them. In all such cases we must obey God rather than man; otherwise, we so far deny our holy profession, and are enemies to the cross of Christ: and though, because you have got a little out of the formal way, some blind zealots may brand you as schismatical; yet if

you fear God, and truly honour the King, and are of the number of those who are quiet in the land, there is no reason can be urged against your societies, which will not equally hold good against all assembling together for religious purposes.

In this respect, a private prelate has no more authority than a private presbyter. If it be lawful for more than five to meet in a private vestry, it is equally lawful for more than five to meet in a private house; as is the practice of some of the societies who are under the government of those called the Twelve Stewards. If it be enquired of you, by what authority you use sometimes to pray without a premeditated form of words; you may enquire, "By what authority any one reads the church forms, who is not commissioned so to do, and that in any place but in the church," where only they are appointed to be read, and only by one so commissioned? If they reply, "We have Doctor *Woodward*'s form;" you may answer them with this question, "What difference is there, in respect to others, between a person's reading a form, which few that hear it know beforehand, and a person's praying extempore, as the Holy Spirit gives him utterance?" If they laugh at the mention of "praying by the Spirit," brethren, I hope you know better. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free; and be not afraid, by such a practice, to make innovations in the church, which does not confine its members to forms, but within the church walls, nor even there altogether. In private assemblies, such as yours, all are left to their liberty; and therefore, as many as would hinder you in this, at once discover their pitiable ignorance of that constitution they pretend to promote, and an unhappy estrangement from the spirit and privileges of the gospel.

How to improve your meetings, so as best to promote God's glory, and the good of your own souls, ought to be your constant and chief concern: for as Christians in general, so members of religious societies in particular, are as cities built upon a hill; and therefore it more highly concerns them to let their light so shine before men, that they seeing their good works, may glorify our Father who is in heaven.

Not that a communion of perfect saints is to be expected here on earth: or that you ought to be immediately offended, if some of your brethren should be overtaken with a fault. In this world, tares will be always springing up amongst the wheat. Many that are first, will be last, and the last first. Nay, it is well if some, like *Judas*, do not at length lay aside their profession, and openly betray our Master.

To prevent this, you ought to be *very cautious*, my brethren, whom you admit into fellowship with you. Examine them again and again, not barely whether they receive the sacrament, and go to church; but whether they be in the faith. Set them upon proving their own selves; and by no means receive them into your brotherhood, unless they can produce sufficient evidences of their having tasted the good word of life, and felt the powers of the world to come. This, some may object, is not a very good way to increase and multiply you as to number; but it is the best, the only way, to establish and increase a communion of true saints. And such a society, consisting of a few solid Christians, is far preferable to one that is filled with a multitude of such as do not bring forth fruit unto holiness, but have only the fig-leaves of an outward profession. Formal hypocrites will do any society more harm than good: and however they may endure for a while, and receive the word with joy; yet, having no root in themselves, in time of temptation they will shamefully fall away.

Next to your care about admitting others, I think it highly concerns you, whenever you assemble, to *remember the end* of meeting, yourselves; and then (to use the words of the wise son of *Sirach* on another occasion) "you will never do amiss." Now, the end of your meeting, brethren, is not that you may think yourselves more holy than your neighbours, much less to form a sect or party, or promote a schism or sedition in the church or state. No: such thoughts, I trust, are far from you: for they are earthly, sensual, devilish. And, if ever such designs should be set on foot, I earnestly pray God the abettors of them may be detected, and all their schemes, though never so plausibly concerted, fall to the ground. The only end which, I hope, you all propose by your assembling yourselves together, is the same for which you were redeemed, "The renewing of your depraved natures, and promoting the hidden life of Jesus Christ in your souls." These terms, however foolishness to others, I trust, my brethren, are not so to you. I take it for granted, you are not only desirous of, but already in some measure blessed with, a saving experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ in your hearts: for unless a man be born again from above, and made a partaker of the divine nature by the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit, he can in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whoever denies this to be true in the most literal, real, and absolute sense of the words, knows nothing yet as he ought to know: for it is grounded on a self-evident truth, that we are fallen from God in *Adam*, and must be renewed in the spirit of our minds, ere we can be restored to that blissful communion with him, which is the free gift of God and eternal life.

The only way to this, is faith in Jesus Christ; faith in contradistinction to, though necessarily productive of, good works. "I am the way, the truth, and the life: whosoever believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he

live," says Christ himself. And I think it my bounden duty, to exhort you at this time, to contend earnestly for the doctrine of *Justification by faith only*, because so many blind guides are lately gone out into the world. My brethren, it is much to be feared that many of our present preachers are no better than doctrinal papists. And however this, to those who having eyes see not, may be judged an uncharitable censure; yet surely they cannot justly blame me for want of candour, who consider, that one of the most reputed orthodox prelates in the kingdom, in a late pastoral letter advises his clergy, "So to explain the doctrine of justification in the sight of God by faith only, as to make good works a necessary condition." Such advice from a *Roman* cardinal would be no more than we might expect; but, coming from a bishop of the Church of *England*, is surprising, and much to be lamented.

God forbid, my brethren, that you should so learn Christ! If the scriptures are true, such a doctrine is absolutely false. The lively oracles no where declare good works to be a necessary condition of our justification in the sight of God; on the contrary, they every where affirm, that "Salvation is the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord: that we are saved by grace through faith; and that it is not of works, lest any man should boast." No, my brethren, in the great mystery of man's redemption by Jesus Christ, boasting is entirely excluded.

We must not expect to be saved, or any way recommend ourselves to God, by any or all the works of righteousness which we have done, or shall, or can do. The Lord Christ is our righteousness,—our whole righteousness: imputed to us, instead of our own. "We are compleat in him," says the scripture. "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, by faith," saith the eleventh article of our church.

And if so, how are good works, my brethren, a necessary condition of our justification in the sight of God? The law indeed says, “Do this, and live:” but the gospel brings us the glad tidings, that “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Christ, by his sacrifice, and perfect obedience, has every way fulfilled the law for us; and God will not require to be paid twice. Christ bought our justification with a great price, even with his own blood. It comes to us freely, without any regard to works past, present, or to come. This is the constant language of Christ and his apostles; and therefore, to use the words of the forementioned article, “That we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.” Observe, my brethren, justified *by* or *through* faith, and not *for* faith; for faith is only a means or instrument whereby the whole righteousness of Jesus Christ is applied to the sinner’s soul: and whosoever does thus believe in his heart, setting to his seal that God is true, may be assured that his pardon is sealed in heaven; notwithstanding he has lived in an open breach of God’s commandments all his life-time before. “Believe, (says the apostle to the trembling jailor,) and thou shalt be saved:” “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.” So that this faith will not be dead, idle or inactive: for ’tis not a faith of the head, or a bare assent to things credible as credible; the devils thus believe and tremble: but it is a faith of the heart, a living principle of new life, infused into the soul by the spirit of God, applying that inwardly, which was wrought for him outwardly by the obedience and death of Jesus Christ, and continually exciting the possessor of it to shew it forth by his works; not as necessary conditions, but as proofs of his justification in God’s sight; and as so many tokens of his gratitude and love for what God has done for his soul. This is what the apostle stiles a “Faith working by love.”

I cannot conclude this better than in the words of a truly evangelical writer now before me. “The law (sayst thou) must be obeyed.” I answer, “Christ Jesus hath done that in his own person, and justified me thereby; and, for my own part, I will not labour now to fulfil the law for justification, lest I should undervalue the merits of the man Christ Jesus, and what he hath done without me; and yet will I labour to fulfil, if possible, ten thousand laws if there were so many: and O let it be out of love to my sweet Lord Jesus. For the love of Christ constrains me.”

You see, my brethren, this is a topic which I love to dwell upon. A divine fire kindles in my heart, whilst I am musing on, and writing to you about it: and I should here enlarge, but I must hasten to recommend to you another thing of unspeakable importance to the well-being of Christian society, a *spirit of universal love*. Let not bigotry or party-zeal be so much as once named amongst you; for it becometh not saints. Our Lord was a stranger to it. Whosoever did the will of his father, the same was his brother, his sister, his mother. Wherever he saw the marks of true faith, though in a centurion or a *Syrophenician*, who were aliens to the commonwealth of *Israel*, and strangers to the covenant of promise, how did he publish and commend it? Be followers then of him, my brethren, as dear children; and love all who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth, although they should not in all things follow with us. Pharisees and Sadducees, the self-righteous and free-thinkers of this generation, all the children of the devil, whether rich or poor, high or low, however they may differ in other respects, yet agree in one thing, even to conspire against the Lord and against his Christ. Why should not the children of God, notwithstanding their little differences, unite in one common interest against spiritual wickednesses in high places? O that all who call themselves Christians, were thus minded! How should we

see the kingdom of Christ come with power, and Satan like lightning fall from heaven! From the beginning, it hath been his policy to divide Christians into sects and parties, hoping not only to weaken their interest, but to make them thereby believe, that religion wholly consists in being of this or that particular communion: and this subtilty of that old serpent hath so prevailed, that though we all profess to hold one Lord, one faith, one baptism; yet numbers look upon those who differ from them, and that only in externals, almost as creatures of another species, and forbid us with such even to eat. This was once the state of the *Jewish*, as it is now of the Christian church;—but God shewed his dislike of such a temper, by convincing *Peter* in a miraculous manner, that he was henceforward to call nothing common or unclean, but freely to converse with all who feared him and worked righteousness, for that all such were accepted of him. My brethren, be not you disobedient to this heavenly vision: for our sakes no doubt it was written, and for as many as the Lord our God shall call. The self-righteous, and perhaps some who are weak in faith, will censure and condemn your conduct (as the brethren did *Peter*) when they behold your free conversation in Christ: but *Peter* has furnished you with an answer, "Forasmuch as God hath given to them the like gift as to us, who believed on Jesus, what are we, that we should withstand God?" How dare we make a difference, when God has made none? How dare we not freely converse with those who have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we?

Further, my brethren, content not yourselves with reading, singing and praying together; but set some time apart to confess your faults and communicate your experiences one to another. For want of this (which I take to be one chief design of private meetings) most of the old societies in *London*, I fear, are sunk into a dead formality, and have only a name to live.

They meet on a sabbath evening, read a chapter, and sing a psalm; but seldom, if ever, acquaint each other with the operations of God's spirit upon their souls; notwithstanding this was the great end and intention of those who first began these societies. Hence it is that they have only the form of godliness left amongst them, and continue utter strangers to the state of one another's hearts. How love, or the power of religion can subsist in such a lukewarm and superficial way of proceeding, is very hard to conceive. My brethren, let not your coming together be thus altogether in vain, but plainly and freely tell one another what God has done for your souls. To this end, you would do well, as others have done, to form yourselves into little companies of four or five each, and meet once a week to tell each other what is in your hearts; that you may then also pray for and comfort each other, as need shall require. None but those that have experienced it can tell the unspeakable advantages of such a union and communion of souls. By this means, brotherly love will be excited and increased amongst you, and you will learn to watch over one another for good. This will teach you the better how to pray, and to give thanks for each other in your private retirement, and happily prevent and deliver you from many snares of the devil: for Satan loves that we should keep his temptations to ourselves, but cares not so much to meddle with those, who he knows will discover his devices to their brethren. Besides, this is a most effectual means for each to try the sincerity of his own heart, as well as another's. No one, I think, that truly loves his own soul, and his brethren as himself, will be shy of opening his heart, in order to have their advice, reproof, admonition, and prayers, as occasions require. A sincere person will esteem it one of the greatest blessings; nor do I know a better means in the world to keep hypocrisy out from amongst you. Pharisees and unbelievers will pray, read, and sing

psalms; but none, save an Israelite indeed, will endure to have his heart searched out. “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

Finally, my brethren, expect a large share of contempt; for Christ’s servants were always the world’s fools. “As for this sect or heresy, (said the *Jews* to *Paul*,) we know it is every where spoken against.” And *Paul* himself, before converted, had authority from the chief priests, to bring as many as he found of this way before them. Thus were the disciples of the Lord treated in the infancy of the church; and as it was formerly, so it is and will be now. In our days, to be a true Christian, is really to become a scandal. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but if you are not of the world, and Christ has chosen you out of the world, for this very cause the world most assuredly will hate you. However it may seem strange to the natural man, yet there never was a true saint, who was not, like his Saviour, accounted beside himself. And they that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must to the end of time suffer persecution for his name’s sake.

But, God forbid, my brethren, that a little, nay, that all the contempt in the world, should anywise move you away from the stedfast profession of the hope of the gospel. Our Lord was despised before us; and you know the servant must not presume to be above his master. No; it is sufficient if he be as his master, “Made perfect through sufferings.” Be stedfast therefore, my brethren, quit yourselves like men, be strong; yea, “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” Be not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, but follow your master without the camp, bearing his sacred reproach. When you are reviled, revile not again. Bless, my brethren, and curse not. Be subject to the higher power in all lawful things, and beware of all who would turn religion into faction. Remember again and again, that the

weapons of our warfare are not carnal; and that it is our glory, when called to it, patiently to suffer for the truth's sake.

Thus, my brethren, out of the fulness of my heart have I written unto you. Many of you I never yet saw, and perhaps never may see in the flesh; however, I love you in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and heartily beseech God to bless what I trust his spirit has now enabled me to write unto you.

You see, my brethren, I have confined myself to such particulars as relate to the improving your societies, and making them truly Christian. I hope you will in like manner take heed to your ways in common life, and never give the adversary room justly, to speak reproachfully of your conduct. My brethren, the eyes of all men are upon you. Indeed it highly concerns you to walk exceedingly circumspect towards those that are without. I am sure you will not be offended, if, out of love, I remind you to perform all relative duties with the utmost cheerfulness, and with a single eye to the glory of God. Let your obedience be constant, universal and uniform, founded on a living faith in Christ Jesus, that by well-doing you may put to silence the slanders of foolish and evil men. Let your speech, and all your actions, manifest whose disciples you are. Confess your Lord publicly before men, and be not afraid to tell those that have ears to hear, what God has done for your souls. It is good to keep close the secrets of a king, but it is honourable to reveal the works of the Almighty. Above all things, my brethren, have fervent charity among yourselves. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Be pitiful, be courteous, be tender-hearted; and let it be said of you as of the primitive saints, See how these Christians love one another. Fulfil all righteousness, by constantly attending on every ordinance of God. Use, but not abuse the means of grace, by resting on them; knowing that "The kingdom of God is not meats and drinks, but righteousness,

peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Think that day lost, wherein you do not make an advance in some of these. The work of regeneration, though instantaneous at first, is progressive afterwards. The seed sown in the heart must be continually watered, otherwise it will not grow into a great tree. I pray God therefore to sanctify you throughout, in spirit, soul and body, and preserve you blameless till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints. Then all tears shall be wiped away from your eyes, and we shall spend an endless eternity in singing praises to him that sitteth upon the throne, even unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to preserve you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. *Amen!*

A LETTER TO THE INHABITANTS OF MARYLAND, VIRGINIA, NORTH AND SOUTH-CAROLINA.

A LETTER, &c.

Savannah, January 23, 1740.

AS I lately passed through your provinces, in my way hither, I was sensibly touched with a fellow-feeling of the miseries of the poor negroes. Could I have preached more frequently among you, I should have delivered my thoughts to you in my public discourses: but, as business here required me to stop as little as possible on the road, I have no other way to discharge the concern which at present lies upon my heart, than by sending you this letter. How you will receive it, I know not; whether you will accept it in love, or be offended with me, as the master of the damsel was with *Paul* for calling the evil spirit out of her, when he saw the hope of his gain was gone, is uncertain: but whatever be the event, I must inform you, in the meekness and gentleness of Christ, that I think God has a quarrel with you, for your abuse of and cruelty to the poor negroes. Whether it be lawful for Christians to buy slaves, and thereby encourage the nations from whence they are brought to be at perpetual war with each other, I shall not take upon me to

determine; but sure I am it is sinful, when bought, to use them as bad as, nay worse than brutes: and whatever particular exceptions there may be, (as I would charitably hope there are some) I fear the generality of you that own negroes, are liable to such a charge; for your slaves, I believe, work as hard, if not harder, than the horses whereon you ride.

These, after they have done their work, are fed and taken proper care of; but many negroes, when wearied with labour in your plantations, have been obliged to grind their own corn after they return home.

Your dogs are caressed and fondled at your tables; but your slaves, who are frequently stiled dogs or beasts, have not an equal privilege: they are scarce permitted to pick up the crumbs which fall from their masters tables; nay, some, as I have been informed by an eye-witness, have been, upon the most trifling provocation, cut with knives, and have had forks thrown into their flesh: not to mention what numbers have been given up to the inhuman usage of cruel task-masters, who by their unrelenting scourges have ploughed upon their backs, and made long furrows, and at length brought them even to death itself.

'Tis true, I hope, there are but few such monsters of barbarity suffered to subsist amongst you: some, I hear, have been lately executed in *Virginia* for killing slaves; and the laws are very severe against such who at any time murder them.

And perhaps it might be better for the poor creatures themselves, to be hurried out of life, than to be made so miserable as they generally are in it. And indeed, considering what usage they commonly meet with, I have wondered, that we have not more instances of self-murder among the negroes, or that they have not more frequently risen up in arms against their

owners. *Virginia* has been once, and *Charles-Town* more than once, threatned in this way.

And though I heartily pray God, they may never be permitted to get the upper hand; yet, should such a thing be permitted by providence, all good men must acknowledge the judgment would be just. For is it not the highest ingratitude, as well as cruelty, not to let your poor slaves enjoy some fruits of their labour?

When passing along, whilst I have viewed your plantations cleared and cultivated, many spacious houses built, and the owners of them faring sumptuously every day, my blood has frequently almost run cold within me, to consider how many of your slaves had neither convenient food to eat, nor proper raiment to put on, notwithstanding most of the comforts you enjoy, were solely owing to their indefatigable labours. The scripture says, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." Does God take care of oxen? And will he not take care of the negroes also? Undoubtedly he will. "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." Behold the provision of the poor negroes which have reaped down your fields, which is by you denied them, crieth, and the cries of them who reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. We have a remarkable instance of God's taking cognisance, and avenging the quarrel, of poor slaves, *2 Samuel* xxi. 1. "Then there was a famine in the days of *David*, three years, year after year; and *David* enquired of the Lord. And the Lord answered, It is for *Saul* and his bloody house, because he slew the *Gibeonites*." Two things are here very remarkable; first, that these *Gibeonites* were only hewers of wood and drawers of water, or, in other words, slaves like yours. Secondly, that this plague was sent by God, many years after the injury, the cause of the plague, was committed. And for what

end was this and such like examples recorded in holy scripture? Without doubt for our learning, upon whom the ends of the world are come: for God is the same to-day, as he was yesterday, and will continue the same for ever. He does not reject the prayer of the poor and destitute, nor disregard the cry of the meanest negroes: their blood which has been spilt, for these many years in your respective provinces, will ascend up to heaven against you; I wish I could say, it would speak better things than the blood of *Abel*. But this is not all. Enslaving or misusing their bodies, comparatively speaking, would be an inconsiderable evil, was proper care taken of their souls: but I have great reason to believe, that most of you on purpose keep your negroes ignorant of Christianity; or otherwise, why are they permitted through your provinces openly to profane the Lord's day, by their dancing, piping, and such like? I know the general pretence for this neglect of their souls, is, that teaching them Christianity would make them proud, and consequently unwilling to submit to slavery. But what a dreadful reflection is this upon your holy religion? What blasphemous notions must those have, that make such an objection, of the precepts of Christianity! Do you find any one command in the gospel, that has the least tendency to make people forget their relative duties? Do you not read, that servants, and as many as are under the yoke of bondage, are required to be subject in all lawful things to their masters, and that not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward? Nay, may not I appeal to your own hearts, whether deviating from the laws of Jesus Christ, is not the cause of all the evils and miseries mankind now universally groan under, and of all the vices we find both in ourselves and others? Certainly it is. And therefore the reason why servants generally prove so bad is, because so little care is taken to breed them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But some will be so bold perhaps as

to reply, “That a few of the negroes have been taught Christianity, and notwithstanding have been remarkably worse than others.” But what Christianity were they taught? They were baptized, and taught to read and write: and this they may do, and much more, and yet be far from the kingdom of God; for there is a vast difference between civilizing and Christianizing a negroe. A black as well as a white man, may be civilized by outward restraints, and afterwards break through those restraints again; but I challenge the world to produce a single instance of a negroe’s being made a thorough Christian, and thereby made a worse servant; it cannot be. But further, if the teaching slaves Christianity has such a bad influence upon their lives, why are you generally desirous of having your children taught? Think you, they are any way better by nature, than the poor negroes? No, in nowise. Blacks are just as much, and no more, conceived and born in sin, as white men are: both, if born and bred up here, I am persuaded are naturally capable of the same improvement. And as for the grown negroes, I am apt to think, whenever the gospel is preached with power amongst them, that many will be brought effectually home to God. Your present and past bad usage of them, however ill-designed, may thus far do them good, as to break their wills, increase the sense of their natural misery, and consequently better dispose their minds to accept the redemption wrought out for them by the death and obedience of Jesus Christ. Not long since, God hath been pleased to make some of the negroes in *New-England*, vessels of mercy; and some, I hear, have been brought to cry out “What shall we do to be saved?” in the province of *Pensylvania*. Doubtless there is a time, when the fulness of the Gentiles will come in and then, I believe, if not before, these despised slaves will find the gospel of Christ to be the power of God to their salvation, as well as we. But I know, all arguments to

prove the necessity of taking care of your negroes souls, though never so conclusive, will prove ineffectual, till you are convinced of the necessity of securing the salvation of your own. That you yourselves are not effectually convinced of this, I think is too notorious to want evidence. A general deadness as to divine things, and not to say a general profaneness, is discernible both in pastors and people.

Most of you are without any teaching priest. And whatever quantity of rum there may be, yet I fear but very few bibles are annually imported into your different provinces. God has already begun to visit for this, as well as for other wicked things. For near two years last past, he has been in a remarkable manner contending with the people of *South-Carolina*: their houses have been depopulated with the small pox and fever, and their own slaves have risen up in arms against them. These judgments are undoubtedly sent abroad, not only that the inhabitants of that, but of other provinces, should learn righteousness: and unless you all repent, you all must in like manner expect to perish. God first generally corrects us with whips: if that will not do, he must chastise us with scorpions. A foreign enemy is now threatning to invade you; and nothing will more provoke God, to give you up as a prey into their teeth, than impenitence and unbelief. Let these be removed, and the sons of violence shall not be able to hurt you: no; your oxen shall be strong to labour; there shall be no decay of your people by epidemical sickness; no leading away into captivity from abroad; and no complaining in your streets at home. Your sons shall grow up as young plants, and your daughters be as the polished corners of the temple: and, to sum up all blessings in one, “Then shall the Lord be your God.” That you may be the people who are in such a happy case, is the earnest prayer of,

Your sincere well-wisher and servant in Christ,

G. W.

A LETTER TO SOME CHURCH-MEMBERS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN PERSUASION, IN ANSWER TO CERTAIN SCRUPLES LATELY PROPOSED, IN PROPER QUERIES RAISED ON EACH REMARK.

A LETTER, &c.

New-York, November 1, 1740.

My dear Friends,

LAST night and this morning I read your queries and scruples. Whether they were compiled by church-members, or ministers of the presbyterian persuasion, I shall not take upon me to determine. I think I may say with *David*, though on another occasion, "*Joab*'s hand is in this." If your ministers were really the authors, and you only their representatives, they have not acted simply. They had better have spoken out. I should as readily have answered them as you. *Solomon* says, "He that hateth reproof, is brutish." And if I know any thing of my own heart, I should think myself obliged to any one that convinces me of an error, either in principle or practice. I therefore assure you, that I do not find the least resentment

stirring in my soul against those (whoever they be) that proposed the queries, or against the reverend presbytery that advised you to send them to me in a public manner: no, I rejoice in it; because it gives me an opportunity of doing what my friends know I have for some time proposed, the correcting some passages in my printed sermons. I think it no dishonour, to retract some expressions that formerly dropped from my pen, before God was pleased to give me a more clear knowledge of the doctrines of grace. St. *Austin*, I think, did so before me. The Lord's dealing with me was somewhat out of the common way. I can say, to the honour of rich free distinguishing grace, that I received the Spirit of adoption before I had conversed with one man, or read a single book, on the doctrine of "Free justification by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ." No wonder then, that I was not so clear in some points at my first setting out in the ministry. Our Lord was pleased to enlighten me by degrees; and I desire your prayers, that his grace may shine more and more in my heart, till it breaks forth into perfect day.

But to come to the exceptionable passages in my sermons. You blame me for saying,

Volume II. page 17. "That *Adam* was adorned with all the perfections of the Deity." It is a wrong expression: I would correct it thus: "All the *moral communicable* perfections of the Deity." Again, "Man was the perfection of the *moral* and *material* world: let it stand thus: "The perfection of all the *visible* world."

Volume II. page 22 and 23. "Washes the guilt of sin away by the tears of a sincere repentance, joined with faith in the blood of Jesus Christ." This is false divinity: I would now alter it thus: "Recovers his former peace, by renewing his acts of faith on the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ."

Volume I. page 79. “And which alone can render any of our actions acceptable in God’s sight.” It should be, “And without which, any of our actions cannot be acceptable in God’s sight.”

Volume I. page 16. “Who vainly depend on their own righteousness, and not on the righteousness of Jesus Christ, imputed to, and inherent in them, as necessary for their eternal salvation.” To avoid all mistakes, I would express myself in this manner, “Who have neither Christ’s righteousness imputed to them, for their justification in the fight, nor holiness wrought in their souls as the consequence of that, in order to make them meet for the enjoyment of God.”

Volume I. page 7. For, “To qualify us for *being savingly in* Christ,” read, “To qualify us for *living eternally with* Christ.”

The seeming contradiction in my sermon, Volume II. page 128. compared with page 137. I think may be reconciled by that passage of the Apostle, “After you believed, you were sealed by the Spirit of promise.” Your arguing on this head, page 21. section vii. I think is not so clear. Might you not as reasonably have blamed Jesus Christ for saying to a dead man, “*Lazarus*, come forth?” However, instead of *quickening Spirit*, volume II. page 137. let it be read, “sanctifying Spirit.”

Volume II. page 33. “The man Christ Jesus is spiritually formed in your hearts.” I would alter it thus, “That Christ is formed within you.”

Volume I. page 53. “The many souls that are nourished weekly by the spiritual body and blood of Jesus Christ by your means.” Let it be altered for these words, “Nourished weekly at the Lord’s supper by your means.”

I see no reason to alter my explanation of the words, “Baptizing them into the nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;” and, “Christ spiritually conceived in the heart of *Eve*:” I mean no more by these expressions than

the Apostle, when he says, “Know ye not that Christ is in you, unless you be reprobates?” And again, “No one can call Christ, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.” And again, “We are made partakers of a divine nature.” Volume II. page 128. these words [in the Lord’s prayer] may be left out: though, if the word *name* signifies God’s attributes, according to your own confession, why may it not signify his essence? What are God’s attributes but God himself?

Volume I. page 14. After, “essential ones too,” insert, “if persons are capable of performing them.”

These, if I mistake not, are all the passages in my sermons, which you object against. And now to convince you, that I am not ashamed to own my faults, I can inform you of other passages as justly exceptionable. In my sermon on *justification*, I seem to assert *universal redemption*, which I now absolutely deny. In my *almost Christian*, I talk of works *procuring* us so high a crown. In my sermon on the *marks of the new-birth*, I say, “We shall endure to the end, *if we continue so*”. These, and perhaps some other passages, though capable of a candid interpretation, I now dislike; and in the next edition of my sermons, God willing, I propose to alter them. In the mean while, I shall be thankful to any that will point out my errors; and I promise, by divine assistance, they shall have no reason to say, “That I am one who hates to be reformed.” “Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, and it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.”

As for your insinuating, that I countenance Mr. *Wesley* in his errors, it is no such thing. I prefaced *Halyburton*’s Memoirs before I saw what Mr. *Wesley* had written; and since I have seen it, have more than once said, “If I had known what Mr. *Wesley* had written, I would not have prefaced

Halyburton at all. I do not understand Mr. *Wesley* in his interpretation of these words, “He that is born again of God, sinneth not;” and therefore have torn off that part of his preface, out of several of those books which I have given away lately, and have acquainted him in what I think in this particular he errs, by sundry letters.

You wrong me, if you think I am an *Antinomian*. For when I say, “God made no second covenant with *Adam*,” I mean no more than this: “God made no second covenant with *Adam* in his own person in behalf of his posterity; nor did man’s acceptance in the sight of God, after the fall, depend, either wholly or in part, on his works, as before the fall.” Whoever reads the author of *The Whole Duty of Man*, will find he thinks otherwise; and I believe your friends in *Scotland* will not thank you for defending that book, as you seemingly have done in your late queries.

Your objections, concerning my favourable opinion of some particular quakers that I have conversed with; and also about some particular promises, which I think have been made me, you may find satisfied in my “Answer to the Bishop of *London*’s last Pastoral Letter,” and in a “Letter to the Bishop of *Gloucester*.”

I am no friend to casting lots; but I believe, on extraordinary occasions, when things can be determined no other way, God, if appealed to, and waited on by prayer and fasting, will answer by lot now, as well as formerly.

Do not condemn me for preaching *extempore*, and for saying, I am helped often *immediately* in that exercise; when thousands can prove, as well as myself, that it has been so. Neither should you censure me as one that would lay aside reading. I am of Bishop *Sanderson*’s mind: “Study without prayer, is atheism; prayer without study, presumption.” Blame not me, for

the warmth of some of my adherents, as you call them. One of your ministers knows, how sharply I rebuked one of them for his warmth, at *Forks-Manor*. I am for loving as brethren, and wish all would copy after the lowly Jesus. But then I cannot discommend those (supposing they do it in the spirit of meekness) who exclaim against dry, sapless, unconverted ministers. Such surely are the bane of the Christian church. But my other affairs will not permit me to enlarge.

Some of the latter part of your queries, for your own, and not my own sake, I shall not mention. I hope I can say with more sincerity than *Hazael*, "Is your servant a dog, that he should do" what you suggest! But I pray God to forgive you. He knows my heart. My one design is to bring poor souls to Jesus Christ. I desire to avoid extremes, so as not to be a bigot on the one hand, or confound order and decency on the other. And I could heartily wish the reverend presbytery, when they advised you to publish your queries, had also cautioned you against dipping your pen in so much gall. Surely your insinuations are contrary to that charity, which hopeth and believeth all things for the best. And I appeal to your own hearts, whether it was right, especially since you heard the constant tenor of my preaching in *America* has been *calvinistical*, to censure me as a *Papist* or *Arminian*, because a few unguarded expressions dropped from my pen, just as I came from the university of *Oxford*. Could Archbishop *Tillotson*, or the *Author* of *The Whole Duty of Man*, say so? But I have done. The Lord be with you! I am a poor frail creature. And as such I beseech you to pray for

Your affectionate friend and servant,

George Whitefield.

A LETTER TO THE REVEREND MR. JOHN WESLEY: IN ANSWER TO HIS SERMON, ENTITULED FREE-GRACE.

But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the Face, because he was to be blamed.

Galatians ii. 11.

A LETTER TO THE REV. MR. JOHN WESLEY.

PREFACE.

I AM very well aware, what different effects the publishing this Letter against the dear Mr. Wesley's Sermon will produce. Many of my friends, that are strenuous advocates for universal Redemption, will immediately be offended. Many that are zealous on the other side, will be much rejoiced. They that are luke-warm on both sides, and are carried away with carnal reasoning, will wish this matter had never been brought under debate. The reasons I have given at the beginning of the letter, I think are sufficient to satisfy all, of my conduct herein. I desire therefore, that they who hold Election would not triumph, or make a party on one hand; (for I detest any such thing) and that they who are prejudiced against that doctrine, be not too much concerned or offended on the other. Known unto God are all his

ways from the beginning of the world. The great day will discover, why the Lord permits dear Mr. Wesley and me to be of a different way of thinking. At present, I shall make no enquiry into that matter, beyond the account which he has given of it himself in the following letter, which I lately received from his own dear hands.

London, August 9, 1740.

My dear Brother,

I THANK you for yours, May the 24th. The case is quite plain. There are bigots both for predestination and against it. God is sending a message to those on either side. But neither will receive it, unless from one who is of their own opinion. Therefore, for a time you are suffered to be of one opinion, and I of another. But when his time is come, God will do what man cannot, namely, make us both of one mind. Then persecution will flame out, and it will be seen whether we count our lives dear unto ourselves, so that we may finish our course with joy. I am, my dearest brother,

Ever yours,

J. Wesley.

Thus my honoured friend, I heartily pray God to hasten the time, for his being clearly enlightened into all the doctrines of divine revelation, that we may thus be closely united in principle and judgment, as well as heart and affection. And then if the Lord should call us to it, I care not if I go with him to prison, or to death. For like Paul and Silas, I hope we shall sing praises to God, and count it our highest honour to suffer for Christ's sake, and to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Bethesda in *Georgia*,

December 24, 1740.

Reverend and very dear Brother,

GOD only knows, what unspeakable sorrow of heart I have felt on your account, since I left *England* last. Whether it be my infirmity or not, I frankly confess, that *Jonah* could not go with more reluctance against *Nineveh*, than I now take pen in hand to write against you. Was nature to speak, I had rather die than do it; and yet if I am faithful to God, and to my own and other's souls, I must not stand neuter any longer. I am very apprehensive, that our common adversaries will rejoice to see us differing among ourselves. But what can I say? The children of God are in danger of falling into error. Nay, numbers have been misled, whom God has been pleased to work upon by my ministry, and a greater number are still calling aloud upon me, to shew also my opinion; I must then shew, that I know no man after the flesh, and that I have no respect to persons, any further than is consistent with my duty to my Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

This letter, no doubt, will lose me many friends: and for this cause, perhaps God has laid this difficult task upon me, even to see whether I am willing to forsake all for him, or not. From such considerations as these, I think it my duty to bear an humble testimony, and earnestly to plead for the truths, which I am convinced, are clearly revealed in the word of God. In the defence whereof I must use great plainness of speech, and treat my dearest friends upon earth with the greatest simplicity, faithfulness and freedom, leaving the consequences of all to God.

For some time before, and especially since my last departure from *England*, both in public and private, by preaching and printing, you have been propagating the doctrine of *universal redemption*. And when I remember, how *Paul* reproved *Peter* for his dissimulation, I fear I have been sinfully silent too long. O then be not angry with me, dear and

honoured Sir, if now I deliver my soul, by telling you, that I think in this you greatly err.

'Tis not my design to enter into a long debate on God's decrees. I refer you to Dr. *Edwards* his *Veritas Redux*, which, I think, is unanswerable, except in a certain point, concerning a *middle sort* between elect and reprobate, which he himself in effect afterwards condemns.

I shall only make a few remarks upon your sermon, entitled *Free-Grace*. And before I enter upon the discourse itself, give me leave to take a little notice of what, in your preface, you term an indispensible obligation, to make it public to all the world. I must own, that I always thought you were quite mistaken upon that head. The case (you know) stands thus: When you was at *Bristol*, I think you received a letter from a private hand, charging you with not preaching the gospel, because you did not preach up election. Upon this you drew a lot: the answer was "*preach and print*." I have often questioned, as I do now, whether in so doing, you did not tempt the Lord. A due exercise of religious prudence, without a lot, would have directed you in that matter. Besides, I never heard that you enquired of God, whether or not election was a gospel doctrine? But I fear, taking it for granted, it was not, you only enquired, whether you should be silent, or preach and print against it? However this be, the lot came out "*preach and print*;" accordingly you preached and printed against election. At my desire, you suppressed the publishing the sermon whilst I was in *England*; but soon sent it into the world after my departure. O that you had kept it in! However, if that sermon was printed in answer to a lot, I am apt to think, one reason, why God should so suffer you to be deceived, was, that hereby a special obligation might be laid upon me, faithfully to declare the scripture doctrine of election, that thus the Lord might give me a fresh

opportunity of seeing what was in my heart, and whether I would be true to his cause or not; as you could not but grant, he did once before, by giving you such another lot at *Deal*. The morning I sailed from *Deal* for *Gibraltar*, you arrived from *Georgia*. Instead of giving me an opportunity to converse with you, though the ship was not far off the shore; you drew a lot, and immediately set forwards to *London*. You left a letter behind you, in which were words to this effect. "When I saw God, by the wind which was carrying you out, brought me in, I asked counsel of God. His answer you have enclosed." This was a piece of paper, in which were written these words. "Let him return to *London*."

When I received this, I was somewhat surprized. Here was a good man telling me, he had cast a lot, and that God would have me return to *London*. On the other hand, I knew my call was to *Georgia*, and that I had taken leave of *London*, and could not justly go from the soldiers, who were committed to my charge. I betook myself with a friend to prayer. That passage in the first book of *Kings*, chapter 13. was powerfully impressed upon my soul, where we are told, "That the Prophet was slain by a lion, that was tempted to go back, (contrary to God's express order) upon another Prophet's telling him God would have him do so." I wrote you word, that I could not return to *London*. We sailed immediately. Some months after, I received a letter from you at *Georgia*, wherein you wrote words to this effect. "Though God never before gave me a wrong lot, yet, perhaps, he suffered me to have such a lot at that time, to try what was in your heart." I should never have published this private transaction to the world, did not the glory of God call me to it. It is plain you had a wrong lot given you here, and justly, because you tempted God in drawing one. And thus I believe it is in the present case. And if so, let not the children of God, who

are mine and your intimate friends, and also advocates for *universal redemption*, think that doctrine true, because you preached it up in compliance with a lot given out from God.

This, I think, may serve as an answer to that part of the preface, to your printed sermon, wherein you say, "nothing but the strongest conviction, not only that what is here advanced is the truth as it is in Jesus, but also that I am indispensibly obliged to declare this truth to all the world." That you believe what you have written to be truth, and that you honestly aim at God's glory in writing, I do not in the least doubt. But then, honoured Sir, I cannot but think you have been much mistaken, in imagining that your tempting God, by calling a lot in the manner you did, could lay you under an *indispensible obligation* to any action, much less to publish your sermon against the doctrine of *predestination to life*.

I must next observe, that as you have been unhappy in printing at all, upon such an *imaginary warrant*, so you have been as unhappy in the choice of your text. Honoured Sir, how could it enter into your heart, to chuse a text to disprove the doctrine of election, out of the 8th of the *Romans*, where this doctrine is so plainly asserted, that once talking with a quaker upon this subject, he had no other way of evading the force of the Apostle's assertion, than by saying, "I believe *Paul* was in the wrong." And another friend lately, who was once highly prejudiced against election, ingenuously confessed, "that he used to think St. *Paul* himself was mistaken, or that he was not truly translated."

Indeed, honoured Sir, it is plain, beyond all contradiction, that St. *Paul*, through the whole eighth of the *Romans*, is speaking of the privileges of those only who are really in Christ. And let any unprejudiced person read what goes before, and what follows your text, and he must confess the word

ALL only signifies those that are in Christ; and the latter part of the text plainly proves, what, I find, dear Mr. *Wesley* will, by no means, grant, I mean the *final perseverance* of the children of God. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, (*i. e.* all Saints) how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.” Grace, in particular, to enable us to persevere, and every thing else necessary to carry us home to our Father’s heavenly kingdom.

Had any one a mind to prove the doctrine of *election*, as well as of *final perseverance*, he could hardly wish for a text more fit for his purpose, than that which you have chosen to disprove it. One that does not know you, would suspect you yourself was sensible of this: for after the first paragraph, I scarce know whether you have mentioned it so much as once, through your whole sermon.

But your discourse, in my opinion, is as little to the purpose as your text, and instead of warping, does but more and more confirm me in the belief of the doctrine of God’s *eternal election*.

I shall not mention how illogically you have proceeded. Had you written clearly, you should first, honoured Sir, have proved your proposition, “that God’s grace is free to all,” and then by way of inference, exclaimed against what you call the *horrible decree*. But you knew that people (because *arminianism*, of late, has so much abounded among us) were generally prejudiced against the doctrine of *reprobation*, and therefore thought if you kept up their dislike of that, you could overthrow the doctrine of election entirely. For, without doubt, the doctrine of election and reprobation must stand or fall together.

But passing by this, as also your equivocal definition of the word *grace*, and your false definition of the word *free*, and that I may be as short as

possible, I frankly acknowledge, I believe the doctrine of reprobation, in this view, that God intends to give saving grace, through Jesus Christ, only to a certain number, and that the rest of mankind, after the fall of *Adam*, being justly left of God to continue in sin, will at last suffer that eternal death, which is its proper wages.

This is the established doctrine of scripture, and acknowledged as such in the 17th article of the church of *England*, as Bishop *Burnet* himself confesses; yet dear Mr. *Wesley* absolutely denies it.

But the most important objections, which you have urged against this doctrine, as reasons why you reject it, being seriously considered, and faithfully tried by the word of God, will appear to be of no force at all. Let the matter be humbly and calmly reviewed, as to the following heads.

First, you say, "if this be so (*i. e.* if there be an election) then is all preaching vain: it is needless to them that are elected; for they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be saved. Therefore, the end of preaching to save souls is void, with regard to them. And it is useless to them that are not elected; for they cannot possibly be saved; they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be damned. The end of preaching is therefore void, with regard to them likewise. So that in either case our preaching is vain, and your hearing also vain." Page 10th, paragraph the 9th.

O dear Sir, what kind of reasoning, or rather sophistry is this! Hath not God, who hath appointed salvation for a certain number, appointed also the preaching of the word, as a means to bring them to it? Does any one hold election in any other sense? And if so, how is preaching needless to them that are elected; when the gospel is designed by God himself, to be the power of God unto their eternal salvation? And since we know not who are

elect, and who reprobate, we are to preach promiscuously to all. For the word may be useful, even to the non-elect, in restraining them from much wickedness and sin. However, it is enough to excite to the utmost diligence in preaching and hearing, when we consider, that by these means, some, even as many as the Lord hath ordained to eternal life, shall certainly be quickened and enabled to believe. And who, that attends, especially with reverence and care, can tell but he may be found of that happy number?

Secondly, you say, "that it, [the doctrine of election and reprobation] directly tends to destroy that holiness, which is the end of all the ordinances of God." For, (says the dear mistaken Mr. *Wesley*) "it wholly takes away those first motives to follow after it, so frequently proposed in scripture. The hope of future reward, and fear of punishment, the hope of heaven, and the fear of hell, &c. " page 11th.

I thought, that one who carries perfection to such an exalted pitch as dear Mr. *Wesley* does, would know, that a true lover of the Lord Jesus Christ would strive to be holy for the sake of being holy, and work for Christ out of love and gratitude, without any regard to the rewards of heaven, or fear of hell. You remember, dear Sir, what *Scougal* says, "Love's a more powerful motive that does them move." But passing by this, and granting that rewards and punishments (as they certainly are) may be motives from which a Christian may be honestly stirred up to act for God, how does the doctrine of election destroy these motives? Do not the elect know that the more good works they do, the greater will be their reward? And is not that encouragement enough to set them upon, and cause them to persevere in working for Jesus Christ? And how does the doctrine of election destroy holiness? Whoever preached any other election, than what the Apostle preached, when he said, "Chosen through sanctification of the Spirit?" Nay,

is not holiness made a mark of our election by all that preach it? And how then can the doctrine of election destroy holiness?

The instance which you bring to illustrate your assertion, indeed, dear Sir, is quite impertinent. For you say, "If a sick man knows, that he must unavoidably die or unavoidably recover, though he knows not which, it is not reasonable for take any physic at all," page 11. Dear Sir, what absurd reasoning is here? Was you ever sick in your life? if so, did not the bare probability or possibility of your recovering, though you knew it was unalterably fixed, that you must live or die, encourage you to take physic? For how did you know, but that very physic might be the means God intended to recover you by? Just thus it is as to the doctrine of election. I know that it is unalterably fixed, may one say, that I must be damned or saved; but since I know not which, for a certainty, why should I not strive, though at present in a state of nature, since I know not but this striving may be the means God has intended to bless, in order to bring me into a state of grace? Dear Sir, consider these things. Make an impartial application, and then judge what little reason you had to conclude the 10th paragraph, page 12, in these words: "So directly does this doctrine tend to shut the very gate of holiness in general, to hinder unholy men from ever approaching thereto, or striving to enter in thereat."

"As directly," say you paragraph 11, "does the doctrine tend to destroy several particular branches of holiness, such as meekness, love, &c." I shall say little, dear Sir, in answer to this paragraph. Dear Mr. *Wesley* perhaps has been disputing with some warm narrow spirited men that held election, and then infers, that their warmth and narrowness of spirit, was owing to their principles? But does not dear Mr. *Wesley* know many dear children of God, who are predestinarians, and yet are meek, lowly, pitiful, courteous, tender-

hearted, kind, of a catholic spirit, and hope to see the most vile and profligate of men converted? And why? because they know God saved themselves by an act of his electing love, and they know not but he may have elected those who now seem to be the most abandoned. But, dear Sir, we must not judge of the truth of principles in general, nor of this of election in particular, entirely from the practice of some that profess to hold them. If so, I am sure much might be said against your own. For I appeal to your own heart, whether or not you have not felt in yourself, or observed in others, a narrow-spiritedness, and some disunion of soul respecting those that hold particular redemption. If so, then according to your own rule, *universal redemption is wrong*, because it destroys several branches of holiness, such as meekness, love, &c. But not to insist upon this, I beg you would observe, that your inference is entirely set aside by the force of the Apostle's argument, and the language which he expresly uses, *Colossians* iii. 12, 13. "Put on, therefore, (as the elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Here we see that the Apostle exhorts them to put on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, &c. upon this consideration, namely, because they were elect of God. And all who have experimentally felt this doctrine in their hearts, feel that these graces are the genuine effects of their being elected of God.

But, perhaps dear Mr. *Wesley* may be mistaken in this point, and call that passion, which is only zeal for God's truths. You know, dear Sir, the Apostle exhorts us to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and therefore you must not condemn all that appear zealous for the doctrine

of election, as narrow-spirited, or persecutors, because they think it their duty to oppose you. I am sure, I love you in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and think I could lay down my life for your sake; but yet, dear Sir, I cannot help strenuously opposing your errors upon this important subject, because I think you warmly, though not designedly, oppose the truth, as it is in Jesus. May the Lord remove the scales of prejudice from off the eyes of your mind, and give you a zeal according to true Christian knowledge!

Thirdly, says your sermon, page 13, paragraph 12, “This doctrine tends to destroy the comforts of religion, the happiness of Christianity, &c.”

But how does Mr. *Wesley* know this, who never believed election? I believe they who have experienced it, will agree with our 17th article, “That the godly consideration of predestination, and election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing their minds to high and heavenly things, as well because it does greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation, to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God, &c.” This plainly shews, that our godly reformers did not think election destroyed holiness, or the comforts of religion. As for my own part, this doctrine is my daily support: I should utterly sink under a dread of my impending trials, was I not firmly persuaded that God has chosen me in Christ from before the foundation of the world, and that now being effectually called, he will suffer none to pluck me out of his almighty hand.

You proceed thus: “This is evident as to all those who believe themselves to be reprobate, or only suspect or fear it; all the great and precious promises are lost to them; they afford them no ray of comfort.”

In answer to this, let me observe, that none living, especially none who are desirous of salvation, can know that they are not of the number of God's elect. None, but the unconverted, can have any just reason, so much as to fear it. And would dear Mr. *Wesley* give comfort, or dare you apply the precious promises of the gospel, being children's bread, to men in a natural state, while they continue so? God forbid! What if the doctrine of election and reprobation does put some upon doubting? So does that of regeneration. But, is not this doubting, a good means to put them upon searching and striving; and that striving, a good means to make their calling and their election sure. This is one reason among many others, why I admire the doctrine of election, and am convinced that it should have a place in gospel ministrations, and should be insisted on with faithfulness and care. It has a natural tendency to rouze the soul out of its carnal security. And therefore many carnal men cry out against it. Whereas universal redemption is a notion sadly adapted to keep the soul in its lethargic sleepy condition, and therefore so many natural men admire and applaud it.

Your 13th, 14th, and 15th paragraphs come next to be considered. "The witness of the Spirit, (you say, paragraph 14, page 14.) experience shews to be much obstructed by this doctrine." But, dear Sir, whose experience? Not your own; for in your Journal, from your embarking for *Georgia*, to your return to *London*, page the last, you seem to acknowledge that you have it not, and therefore you are no competent judge in this matter. You must mean then the experience of others. For you say in the same paragraph, "Even in those who have tasted of that good gift, who yet have soon lost it again, (I suppose you mean lost the sense of it again) and fallen back into doubts and fears and darkness, even horrible darkness that might be felt, &c." Now, as to the darkness of desertion, was not this the case of Jesus

Christ himself, after he had received an unmeasurable unction of the Holy Ghost? Was not his soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, in the garden? And was he not surrounded with an horrible darkness, even a darkness that might be felt, when on the cross he cried out, “My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?” And that all his followers are liable to the same, is it not evident from scripture? For, says the Apostle, “He was tempted in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be able to succour those that are tempted.” And is not their liableness thereunto, consistent with that conformity to him in suffering, which his members are to bear? Why then should persons falling into darkness, after they have received the witness of the Spirit, be any argument against the doctrine of election? “Yes, you say, many, very many of those that hold it not, in all parts of the earth, have enjoyed the uninterrupted witness of the Spirit, the continual light of God’s countenance, from the moment wherein they first believed, for many months or years to this very day.” But how does dear Mr. *Wesley* know this? Has he consulted the experience of many, very many in all parts of the earth? Or could he be sure of what he hath advanced without sufficient grounds, would it follow, that their being kept in this light, is owing to their not believing the doctrine of election? No, this, according to the sentiments of our church, “greatly confirms and establishes a true Christian’s faith of eternal salvation through Christ,” and is an anchor of hope, both sure and stedfast, when he walks in darkness and sees no light; as certainly he may, even after he hath received the witness of the Spirit, whatever you or others may unadvisedly assert to the contrary. Then, to have respect to God’s everlasting covenant, and to throw himself upon the free distinguishing love of that God, who changeth not, will make him lift up the hands that hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees. But, without

the belief of the doctrine of election, and the immutability of the free love of God, I cannot see how it is possible that any should have a comfortable assurance of eternal salvation. What could it signify to a man, whose conscience is thoroughly awakened, and who is warned in good earnest to seek deliverance from the wrath to come, though he should be assured that all his past sins are forgiven, and that he is now a child of God; if notwithstanding this, he may hereafter become a child of the devil, and be cast into hell at last? Could such an assurance yield any solid lasting comfort to a person convinced of the corruption and treachery of his own heart, and of the malice, subtilty, and power of Satan? No! that which alone deserves the name of a full assurance of faith, is such an assurance, as emboldens the believer, under the sense of his interest in distinguishing love, to give the challenge to all his adversaries, whether men or devils, and that with regard to all their future, as well as present attempts to destroy; saying with the Apostle, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies; who is he that condemns me? It is Christ that died: yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for me. Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? shall tribulation or distress, or persecution or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword! Nay, in all these things I am more than conqueror, through him that loved me. For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor heighth nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus my Lord."

This, dear Sir, is the triumphant language of every soul that has attained a full assurance of faith. And this assurance can only arise from a belief of God's electing everlasting love. That many have an assurance they are in

Christ to-day, but take no thought for, or are not assured they shall be in him to-morrow, nay to all eternity, is rather their imperfection and unhappiness, than their privilege. I pray God to bring all such to a sense of his eternal love, that they may no longer build upon their own faithfulness, but on the unchangeableness of that God, whose gifts and callings are without repentance. For those whom God has once justified, he also will glorify. I observed before, dear Sir, it is not always a safe rule to judge of the truth of principles from people's practice. And therefore, supposing that all who hold universal redemption in your way of explaining it, after they received faith, enjoyed the continual uninterrupted sight of God's countenance, it does not follow, that this is a fruit of their principle: for that I am sure has a natural tendency to keep the soul in darkness for ever; because the creature thereby is taught, that his being kept in a state of salvation, is owing to his own free will. And what a sandy foundation is that for a poor creature to build his hopes of perseverance upon? Every relapse into sin, every surprize by temptation, must throw him "into doubts and fears, into horrible darkness, even darkness that may be felt." Hence it is, that the letters which have been lately sent me by those who hold universal redemption, are dead and lifeless, dry and inconsistent, in comparison of those I receive from persons on the contrary side. Those who settle in the universal scheme, though they might begin in the Spirit, (whatever they may say to the contrary) are ending in the flesh, and building up a righteousness founded on their own free will: whilst the others triumph in hopes of the glory of God, and build upon God's never-failing promise, and unchangeable love, even when his sensible presence is withdrawn from them. But I would not judge of the truth of election, by the experience of any particular persons: if I did (O bear with me in this foolishness of boasting) I think I myself might

glory in election. For these five or six years I have received the witness of God's Spirit; since that, blessed be God, I have not doubted a quarter of an hour of a saving interest in Jesus Christ: but with grief and humble shame I do acknowledge, I have fallen into sin often since that. Though I do not, dare not allow of any one transgression, yet hitherto I have not been (nor do I expect that while I am in this present world I ever shall be) able to live one day perfectly free from all deficits and sin. And since the scriptures declare, "That there is not a just man upon earth," no, not among those of the highest attainments in grace, "that doeth good and sinneth not;" we are sure that this will be the case of all the children of God. The universal experience and acknowledgment of this among the godly in every age, is abundantly sufficient to confute the error of those who hold in an absolute sense, *that after a man is born again he cannot commit sin*; especially, since the Holy Ghost condemns the persons who say they have no sin, as deceiving themselves, as being destitute of the truth, and making God a liar, *1 John* i. 8, 10. I have been also in heaviness through manifold temptations, and expect to be often so before I die. Thus were the Apostles and primitive Christians themselves. Thus was *Luther*, that man of God, who, as far as I can find, did not peremptorily, at least, hold election; and the great *John Arndt* was in the utmost perplexity but a quarter of an hour before he died, and yet he was no predestinarian. And if I must speak freely, I believe your fighting so strenuously against the doctrine of election, and pleading so vehemently for a sinless perfection, are among the reasons or culpable causes, why you are kept out of the liberties of the gospel, and from that full assurance of faith which they enjoy, who have experimentally tasted, and daily feed upon God's electing, everlasting love.

But perhaps you may say, that *Luther* and *Arndt* were no Christians, at least very weak ones. I know you think meanly of *Abraham*, though he was eminently called the friend of God; and, I believe, also of *David*, the man after God's own heart. No wonder, therefore, that in a letter you sent me not long since, you should tell me, "that no baptist or presbyterian writer whom you have read, knew any thing of the liberties of Christ." What! neither *Bunyan*, *Henry*, *Flavel*, *Halyburton*, nor any of the *New-England* and *Scots* divines. See, dear Sir, what narrow spiritedness and want of charity arise from your principles, and then do not cry out against election any more on account of its being "destructive of meekness and love."

Fourthly, I shall now proceed to another head. Says the dear Mr. *Wesley*, page 15, paragraph 16, "How uncomfortable a thought is this, that thousands and millions of men, without any preceding offence or fault of theirs, were unchangeably doomed to everlasting burnings?"

But who ever asserted, that thousands and millions of men, without any preceding offence or fault of theirs, were unchangeably doomed to everlasting burnings? Do not they who believe God's dooming men to everlasting burnings, also believe, that God looked upon them as men fallen in *Adam*? And that the decree which ordained the punishment, first regarded the crime by which it was deserved? How then are they doomed without any preceding fault? Surely Mr. *Wesley* will own God's justice, in imputing *Adam*'s sin to his posterity; and also, that after *Adam* fell, and his posterity in him, God might justly have passed them ALL by, without sending his own Son to be a saviour for any one. Unless you heartily agree to both these points, you do not believe original sin aright. If you do own them, then you must acknowledge the doctrine of election and reprobation to be highly just and reasonable. For if God might justly impute *Adam*'s sin to all, and

afterwards have passed by all, then he might justly pass by SOME. Turn on the right hand, or on the left, you are reduced to an inextricable dilemma. And, if you would be consistent, you must either give up the doctrine of the imputation of *Adam*'s sin, or receive the amiable doctrine of election, with a holy and righteous reprobation as its consequent. For whether you can believe it or no, the word of God abides faithful. "The election has obtained it, and the rest were blinded."

Your 17th paragraph, page 16, I pass over. What has been said on paragraph the 9th and 10th, with a little alteration will answer it. I shall only say, it is the doctrine of election that mostly presses me to abound in good works. I am made willing to suffer all things for the elect's sake. This makes me to preach with comfort, because I know salvation does not depend on man's free will, but the Lord makes willing in the day of his power, and can make use of me to bring some of his elect home, when and where he pleases. But,

Fifthly, You say, paragraph 18, page 17, "This doctrine has a direct manifest tendency to overthrow the whole Christian religion. For, say you, supposing that eternal unchangeable decree, one part of mankind must be saved, though the Christian revelation were not in being."

But, dear Sir, how does that follow? Since it is only by the Christian revelation that we are acquainted with God's design of saving his church by the death of his Son. Yea, it is settled in the everlasting covenant, that this salvation shall be applied to the elect through the knowledge and faith of him. As the prophet says, *Isaiah* liii. 11. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." How then has the doctrine of election a direct tendency to overthrow the whole Christian revelation? Who ever thought, that God's declaration to *Noah*, that seed-time and harvest should

never cease, could afford an argument for the neglect of plowing or sowing? Or that the unchangeable purpose of God, that harvest should not fail, rendered the heat of the sun, or the influence of the heavenly bodies unnecessary to produce it? No more does God's absolute purpose of saving his chosen, preclude the necessity of the gospel revelation, or the use of any of the means through which he has determined the decree shall take effect. Nor will the right understanding, or the reverent belief of God's decree, ever allow or suffer a Christian in any case to separate the means from the end, or the end from the means. And since we are taught by the revelation itself, that this was intended and given by God as a means of bringing home his elect, we therefore receive it with joy, prize it highly, use it in faith, and endeavour to spread it through all the world, in the full assurance, that wherever God sends it, sooner or later, it shall be savingly useful to all the elect within its call. How then, in holding this doctrine, do we join with modern unbelievers, in making the Christian revelation unnecessary? No, dear Sir, you mistake. Infidels of all kinds are on your side of the question. Deists, Arians, Socinians, arraign God's sovereignty, and stand up for universal redemption. I pray God, that dear Mr. *Wesley*'s sermon, as it has grieved the hearts of many of God's children, may not also strengthen the hands of many of his most avowed enemies! Here I could almost lie down and weep. "O tell it not in *Gath*! Publish it not in the streets of *Ascalon*, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised rejoice, lest the sons of unbelief should triumph!"

Further, you say, page 18, paragraph 19, "This doctrine makes revelation contradict itself." For instance, say you, "The assertors of this doctrine interpret that text of scripture, *Jacob* have I loved, but *Esau* have I hated, as implying that God, in a literal sense, hated *Esau* and all the reprobates from

eternity!" And, when considered as fallen in *Adam*, were they not objects of his hatred? And might not God, of his own good pleasure, love or shew mercy to *Jacob* and the elect, and yet at the same time do the reprobate no wrong? But you say, "God is love." And cannot God be love, unless he shews the same mercy to all?

Again, says dear Mr. *Wesley*, "They infer from that text, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, that God is mercy only to some men, viz. the elect; and that he has mercy for those only, flatly contrary to which is the whole tenor of the scripture, as is that express declaration in particular, The Lord is loving to every man, and his mercy is over all his works." And so it is, but not his saving mercy. God is loving to every man: he sends his rain upon the evil and upon the good. But you say, "God is no respecter of persons." No! For every one, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, that believeth on Jesus, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him: "But he that believeth not shall be damned." For God is no respecter of persons, upon the account of any outward condition or circumstance in life whatever; nor does the doctrine of election in the least suppose him to be so. But as the sovereign Lord of all, who is debtor to none, he has a right to do what he will with his own, and to dispense his favours to what objects he sees fit, merely at his pleasure. And his supreme right herein, is clearly and strongly asserted in those passages of scripture, where he says, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and have compassion on whom I will have compassion," *Romans* ix. 15. *Exodus* xxxiii. 19.

Further, in page 19, you represent us as inferring from the text, "The children not being yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand: not of works, but of him that calleth. It was said unto her (unto *Rebecca*), The elder shall serve

the younger; that our predestination to life no ways depends on the fore-knowledge of God." But who infers this, dear Sir? For if fore-knowledge signifies approbation, as it does in several parts of scripture, then we confess that predestination and election do depend on God's fore-knowledge. But if by God's fore-knowledge, you understand God's fore-seeing some good works done by his creatures as the foundation or reason of chusing them, and therefore electing them, then we say, that in this sense, predestination does not any way depend on God's fore-knowledge. But I referred you, at the beginning of this letter, to Dr. *Edwards*'s *Veritas Redux*, which I recommended to you also in a late letter, with *Elisha Cole* on *God's Sovereignty*. Be pleased to read these, and also the excellent sermons of Mr. *Cooper*, of *Boston* in *New-England*, which I also sent you, and I doubt not but you will see all your objections answered. Though I would observe, that after all our reading on both sides the question, we shall never in this life be able to search out God's decrees to perfection. No, we must humbly adore what we cannot comprehend, and with the great Apostle at the end of our enquiries cry out, "O the depth, &c." or with our Lord, when he was admiring God's sovereignty, "Even so Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

However, it may not be amiss to take notice, that if those texts, "God willeth that none should perish," "I have no pleasure in him that dieth," and such like, be taken in their strictest sense, then no one will be damned.

But here's the distinction. God taketh no pleasure in the death of sinners, so as to delight simply in their death; but he delights to magnify his justice, by inflicting the punishment which their iniquities have deserved. As a righteous judge who takes no pleasure in condemning a criminal, may yet

justly command him to be executed, that law and justice may be satisfied, even though it be in his power to procure him a reprieve.

I would hint farther, that you unjustly charge the doctrine of reprobation with blasphemy, whereas the doctrine of universal redemption, as you set it forth, is really the highest reproach upon the dignity of the Son of God, and the merit of his blood. Consider whether it be not rather blasphemy to say as you do, page 20, "Christ not only died for those that are saved, but also for those that perish." The text you have misapplied to gloss over this, see explained by *Ridgely*, *Edwards*, *Henry*; and I purposely omit answering your texts myself, that you may be brought to read such treatises, which, under God, would shew you your error. You cannot make good the assertion, "That Christ died for them that perish," without holding (as *Peter Boehler*, one of the *Moravian* brethren, in order to make out universal redemption, lately frankly confessed in a letter) "That all the damned souls would hereafter be brought out of hell." I cannot think Mr. *Wesley* is thus minded. And yet without this can be proved, universal redemption, taken in a literal sense, falls entirely to the ground. For how can all be universally redeemed, if all are not finally saved?

Dear Sir, for Jesus Christ's sake, consider how you dishonour God by denying election. You plainly make salvation depend not on God's *free-grace*, but on man's *free-will*; and if thus, it is more than probable, Jesus Christ would not have had the satisfaction of seeing the fruit of his death in the eternal salvation of one soul. Our preaching would then be vain, and all invitations for people to believe in him, would also be in vain.

But, blessed be God, our Lord knew for whom he died. There was an eternal compact between the Father and the Son. A certain number was then given him, as the purchase and reward of his obedience and death. For these

he prayed, *John* xvii. and not for the world. For these, and these only, he is now interceding, and with their salvation he will be fully satisfied.

I purposely omit making any further particular remarks on the several last pages of your sermon. Indeed had not your name, dear Sir, been prefixed to the sermon, I could not have been so uncharitable as to think you were the author of such sophistry. You beg the question, in saying, "That God has declared, (notwithstanding you own, I suppose, some will be damned) that he will save all," *i. e.* every individual person. You take it for granted (for solid proof you have none) that God is unjust, if he passes by any, and then you exclaim against the horrible decree: and yet, as I before hinted, in holding the doctrine of original sin, you profess to believe that he might justly have passed by all.

Dear, dear Sir, O be not offended! For Christ's sake be not rash! Give yourself to reading. Study the covenant of grace. Down with your carnal reasoning. Be a little child; and then, instead of pawning your salvation, as you have done in a late hymn book, if the doctrine of *universal redemption* be not true; instead of talking of *sinless perfection*, as you have done in the preface to that hymn book, and making man's salvation to depend on his own *free-will*, as you have in this sermon; you will compose an hymn in praise of sovereign distinguishing love. You will caution believers against striving to work a perfection out of their own hearts, and print another sermon the reverse of this, and entitle it free-grace *indeed*. Free, because not free to all; but free, because God may withhold or give it to whom and when he pleases.

Till you do this, I must doubt whether or not you know yourself. In the mean while, I cannot but blame you for censuring the clergy of our church for not keeping to their articles, when you yourself by your principles,

positively deny the 9th, 10th, and 17th. Dear Sir, these things ought not so to be. God knows my heart, as I told you before, so I declare again, nothing but a single regard to the honour of Christ has forced this letter from me. I love and honour you for his sake; and when I come to judgment, will thank you before men and angels, for what you have, under God, done for my soul.

There, I am persuaded, I shall see dear Mr. *Wesley* convinced of election and everlasting love. And it often fills me with pleasure, to think how I shall behold you casting your crown down at the feet of the Lamb, and as it were filled with a holy blushing for opposing the divine sovereignty in the manner you have done.

But I hope the Lord will shew you this before you go hence. O how do I long for that day! If the Lord should be pleased to make use of this letter for that purpose, it would abundantly rejoice the heart of, dear and honoured Sir,

Your affectionate, though unworthy brother and servant in Christ,

George Whitefield.

A VINDICATION AND CONFIRMATION OF THE REMARKABLE WORK OF GOD IN NEW-ENGLAND.

BEING SOME REMARKS ON A LATE PAMPHLET, ENTITLED, "*THE STATE OF RELIGION IN NEW-ENGLAND, SINCE THE REVEREND MR. GEORGE WHITEFIELD'S ARRIVAL THERE.*"

In a Letter to a Minister of the Church of Scotland.

A VINDICATION, &c.

Cambuslang, August 31, 1742.

Reverend and dear Sir,

I HAVE read the pamphlet entitled, "*The State of Religion in New-England*, since the Reverend Mr. *George Whitefield*'s arrival there, in a letter from a gentleman in *New-England* to his friend in *Glasgow*." I think the contents no way answer the title page. It rather ought to be intitled, *The State of Religion falsely stated*. For I am persuaded, some things are therein asserted, without sufficient evidence to prove them, and many more things falsely represented, and set in a wrong light: the design of the pamphlet itself is base and wicked. It is intended, if possible, to eclipse the late great and glorious work, begun and carried on for some time in *New-England*; to

invalidate the testimonies that have been given of it, and thereby of consequence to bring a reproach upon, and to hinder the spreading of a like glorious work, which God of his infinite mercy has for some time been carrying on in this land. Give me leave to send you a few observations upon this *anonymous* pamphlet. I call it *anonymous*, because the publisher has not thought proper to put down the name of the writer of the first letter Mr. *A. M.* at length, which I think he was bound in duty to do. The publisher indeed, in the advertisement prefixed to the letter, tells us, "The reader may depend upon it, that the following letter is genuine, from a gentleman who hath always had a good character for sound understanding, integrity, sobriety of manners, piety; and, notwithstanding his engagements in secular affairs, has never been an unconcerned spectator of any thing that might affect the state of religion." But I must beg the publisher's pardon, if I tell him, that I am one of those readers who cannot depend upon all this, merely upon his desiring me to do so. For really there is one thing in the letter which makes me shrewdly suspect that the letter itself is not genuine, at least that there has been some additions made to it since it came to *Scotland*. For the supposed writer of this letter, page 15, says, "In the preface to the sermon published by Mr. *Edwards* of *Northampton*, which I see is reprinted among you." Now how this gentleman could see at *Boston, May 24*, that Mr. *Edwards*'s sermon was reprinted in *Scotland*, which was not done till the *June* following, I know not. If it be said, that by the words *among you* he means in *Britain*, I see that the printed advertisement in the *London Weekly History*, of the publication of Mr. *Edwards*'s sermon in *England*, is dated *May 1*, and says, "This day is published." I myself was one that was chiefly concerned in publishing of it. I sent the first copy to *Scotland*, and to my certain knowledge it was never published in *Britain* till

May 1. Is it probable that people at *Boston* should know of this *May 24*? What a character this gentleman has always had for "sound understanding, integrity, sobriety of manners and piety," I will not take upon me to determine, nor does the publisher give us opportunity to know what character the gentleman really has had, since he does not publish his name: but however that be, I fear he has forfeited his good character "for sound understanding, integrity and piety," by writing this letter. And though he may not be altogether an "unconcerned spectator of any thing that might affect religion," yet I fear he has been so taken up with "his engagements in secular affairs," that he hath not given himself sufficient time to enquire into matters of fact, but has heard with others ears, and seen with others eyes, and has not himself attended as he ought, to the one thing needful.

He says in the beginning of his letter, page the 3d, "I am sorry you have had such accounts of persons, and things, transmitted you from this country, as you mention in your letter; they are far from being true, and must come from men of narrow minds, and great bigotry, or from such as basely affect popularity, or from well-meaning weak Christians, of little knowledge of human nature, or the history of mankind." What accounts this gentleman refers to I know not. If he means the accounts in the *Weekly History*, as I suppose he does; I think this gentleman is sadly mistaken. Most of the accounts were transmitted by the honourable Mr. *Williard*, secretary of the province. The Rev. Dr. *Colman*, the Rev. Mr. *Cooper*, the Rev. Mr. *Prince*: persons I am intimately acquainted with, and who are by no means "Men of narrow minds, great bigotry, or little knowledge of human nature, or the history of mankind: but have deservedly had a good character for sound understanding, integrity, sobriety of manners and piety:" Some of these were honoured several years ago with degrees, by the university of

Glasgow, upon recommendation from the Honourable society at *Edinburgh* for Propagating Christian Knowledge; of which society several of the most intelligent gentlemen in the nation are members: such honours were done to Messrs. *Colman*, *Prince*, and *Cooper*.

Now whether *they*, or this *anonymous writer*, are to be most credited, I leave any reasonable man to judge. Indeed he boldly asserts, "That these accounts are not true:" but what proofs does he bring of the falsity of them? None at all. Let us but know who this writer is, I am persuaded my honoured friends at *Boston*, will soon bring him to the test of these assertions.

He goes on thus "Indeed some persons of very good sense were once inclined to think God was doing wonders in this place." (*Boston*) And I am persuaded these very same persons have not altered their opinion yet, but actually believe that God has done wonders; if turning people from darkness to light, and making them new creatures, is doing wonders.

"But that was a time when a superstitious panic ran very high, and bore down every body that was not well fixed and established; either by a natural steadiness of temper, or by strong reasoning and reflections. But as soon as the passions of the people subsided, and men could coolly and calmly consider, almost every one of but tolerable sense and understanding in religious matters, in great measure changed their opinions of the spirit that prevailed here, and had been raised by *Whitefield* and *Tennent*."

What had been raised by Mr. *Whitefield* and *Tennent*? God forbid! that either Mr. *Tennent* or I should ascribe any of that work to ourselves. No, it was raised by the Holy Spirit of God. It was no *superstitious panic*, but a plentiful effusion of the Holy Ghost. It's true, it did run high; glory be to God for it! and did bear down every body, except those who would not

submit to the Redeemer's scepter, through self-righteousness and unbelief; which I am afraid this writer terms, natural steadiness of temper, strong reasoning and reflection. Nor is it true that "Almost every one of but tolerable understanding in religious matters, in a great measure have changed their opinions of the spirit that prevailed at that time." No, dear Sir, they yet believe it to be a glorious work of God, as is evident from the late writings of some of these eminent ministers in *New-England*, just mentioned.

What the writer says of me in the following paragraph, page 4th, is not worthy notice. He is welcome to make as free with my character as he pleases, and I freely forgive him. However I thank him for doing me the justice to say, "That I collected money *for the Orphan-house* in *Georgia*." It was not then *for myself*; nor does he charge me with embezzelling the 5 or 600 *l.* He could not do this *justly*, because before the writing of this letter, an account came to *Boston* how I had expended it. And as for being "A bold and importunate beggar," I acknowledge I learned that from the wise Man, who tells me, "Whatever thou findest in thy hand to do, do it with all thy might;" and from the apostle *Paul*, who in the second epistle to the *Corinthians*, chapter viii. 9. shews himself to be the most bold, insinuating and importunate beggar for pious uses, that I ever yet met with.

I think I am much obliged to the writer, for what he says concerning me in this respect. But I wish he had not made so free with the character of my honoured friends. He cries out against slander in others, and at the same time, through the whole letter, he is guilty of the most palpable slander himself. He is pretty favourable to the Rev. Mr. *Webb*, and the Rev. Mr. *Cooper* of *Boston*. He only calls them, page the 7th, "Two great admirers of *Whitefield* and *Tennent*, flaming zealots for certain *favourite opinions* and

tenets." And so indeed they are, blessed champions, I know them well, for certain favourite opinions, and tenets of the church of *Scotland*; such as original sin, the imputed righteousness of Christ, election, and other glorious gospel truths. But as for Mr. *Tennent*, he seems quite angry with him.

Never was a man more wrongfully represented. This letter-writer says, "He has often heard, that Mr. *Tennent* had always been remarkable in the *Jerseys*, for his uncharitable and divisive courses." But does the hearing of this, prove the truth of it. I have the happiness of being personally and very intimately acquainted with Mr. *Tennent*. I scarce know a man of a more catholic spirit. "He is a man of no learning." His writings prove the contrary. His antagonists abroad dare not say they have found him so. "His great business in his sermons is either to puzzle, or to fright the hearers, but especially the last, which he did by roaring out, and bellowing hell and damnation, devils, and all the dreadful words he could think of." Indeed, to the honour of the grace of God be it spoken, he is a son of thunder, especially in his application, and when he is preaching the law; at such times, under him, people cannot easily sleep: but withal, he is a workman that needs not be ashamed, and is taught of God rightly to divide the word of truth. As for puzzling his hearers, I fear that Mr. *A. M.* thinks he did so, because he generally insists much on the *new birth*, *imputed righteousness*, *divine faith*, and the other peculiar doctrines of the gospel. These things are all foolishness to the natural man, and puzzled *Nicodemus* himself, when discoursed with by our blessed Lord, *John* iii. 9. "*Nicodemus* answered and said unto him, how can these things be?" Again, "ministers in general, he calls carnal, unconverted, blind-leaders of the blind, rational, moral, dry, husky preachers, that were leading the people to hell." I suppose Mr.

Tennent said, “That carnal blind preachers who preach morality without due regard to gospel grace and motives; who do not preach justification by faith, and regeneration, they who do not preach Christ as all in all, were blind-leaders of the blind, and were leading the people to hell.” But it is absurd to suppose he thought that all ministers in general were such. I know a great body of ministers, of whom he thinks most highly. But, “He exhorted people to leave them, and to go about exhorting one another, and telling their experiences.” This I cannot believe is truly represented; for I have now a letter by me published by Mr. *Tennent*, against persons going about in the character of exhorters; but if they only exhorted Christians not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, to provoke one another to love, and good works, and to tell one another what God had done for their souls, he did no more than what every gospel minister should do. He says, “He was followed by all sorts of people.” This I think was a proof that he was of a catholic spirit, and not of a divisive uncharitable temper. “As much as *Whitefield* was.” And I pray God he may be followed a thousand times more. “And by many preferred to him.” Very justly. “He was most censorious and uncharitable; every one that was not exactly of his mind he damn’d without mercy.” This is calumny indeed. I know many ministers who do not think as Mr. *Tennent* does in all respects; whom he notwithstanding highly values. But I suppose the writer was angry with him, because he pronounced all in a state of condemnation that were not born again, and that did not believe in, and lay hold on the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. His master authorizes him to pronounce such a sentence, “He that believeth not shall be damn’d.”

Again, “His sermons were sometimes as confused and senseless as you can imagine.” It is well they were not always so. “He seemed to have a

particular quarrel with reason, learning and morality; for he seldom finished a sermon without saying something against them." Never I believe, but when these things are magnified to the prejudice of divine revelation, illumination, or of Christ's imputed righteousness: for Mr. *Tennent* is a solid, learned, rational, and not only a moral, but true holy man. The Rev. Doctor *Colman*, in a letter to me published in the first weekly paper printed at *Glasgow*, writes thus of him: "We received him just as we did you, as an angel of Christ. He was abundant and fervent in labours, and God has been pleased to own his labours with abundant success." The honourable and truly pious Secretary *Williard*, writes thus: "There has been so evidently the finger of God in directing you into this province, and after your departure, the Rev. Mr. *Tennent*, through your earnest and importunate request to him, and in the wonderful success that has attended both his and your ministry, as also the labours of our own ministers for some months past; that many who like not the work, are sadly put to it, to keep their eyes shut against the evidences thereof."

The Rev. Mr. *Cooper*, in a letter printed in the *Weekly History*, No. 2d, (which the printer has mistaken for *Colman*,) calls him, "Dear Mr. *Tennent*. He came," says he, "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel indeed. He was with us several months. Many thousands were awakened, and I believe many truly converted. There is quite another face of religion in this town, as well as in many places in the country. Many ministers as well as people are greatly quickened. Blessed be God, who put it into your heart to move him to come, and inclined his heart to come, and help us." I could bring a cloud of witnesses to testify the falseness of the character given to Mr. *Gilbert Tennent* by this letter-writer. The account which he gives of himself to me in a letter published in the *Weekly History*, No. __ is admirably sweet: his

book, intitled, *The Presumptuous Sinner detected*, and his many printed sermons, and his preface to his deceased brother's treatise upon the *New Birth*, which is now in the country (and which I would recommend) shew him to be a man of great learning, solidity, and piety. And I am not without some distant hopes, that the people of *Scotland* will have an opportunity of hearing him ere long, and then they may judge for themselves.

After such a false and scandalous character given of that great man of God Mr. *Gilbert Tennent*, I think I may justly suspect the truth of all that this writer says in the subsequent part of the letter. From such a letter-writer as this, what truth can we expect?

The writer himself gives me leave to speak in this manner. For he seems to make the validity of what follows, to depend on the character he gave of me and Mr. *Tennent*, page the 6th, "From such men as these (*Whitefield* and *Tennent*) and such doctrines and ways of preaching as theirs, what fruit can you expect"? Now all he says about me is, "That I collected in *New-England* 5 or 600*l.* sterling for the Orphan-house in *Georgia*: that I was a bold and importunate beggar," &c. This could have no influence upon the people's minds, to raise a bad spirit among the people. And as for the character he gives of Mr. *Tennent*, I have proved it to be absolutely false: consequently, whatever he builds upon the foundation of Mr. *Tennent*'s bad character, amounts to nothing at all, since he has not proved the character given of him to be true.

But suppose Mr. *Tennent* was the man he is represented to be, does it therefore follow that all the great and glorious work carried on in *New-England*, by other ministers, and in other places where Mr. *Tennent* and I never were, is *enthusiasm* and *delusion*? By no means; and yet this is the whole drift of the pamphlet.

Surely the writer knows not what spirit he is of. In the 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10th pages, he represents things in a most ridiculous dress, and takes upon him to condemn all the converts, to a man, (though he could not possibly be acquainted with the hundredth part of them,) as "Self-conceited, superstitious, enthusiastic, censorious, slanderous." At the same time he seems to ridicule the concern which the people were under when they were brought to cry out, "What shall we do to be saved." He laughs at them for asking one another "How do you feel? have you seen Christ?" He boldly asserts, that "the boasted converts, not one in a hundred excepted, make religion consist, in the feeling of inward impulses, impressions, and in an inexplicable faith, joys, extasies, hearing of sermons, and such like." In short, he by this and the whole drift of his letter, seems to me to be far from deserving the character given of him, in the advertisement affixed to the title-page of the pamphlet.

Page the 11th, he falls foul of Mr. *Moorhead*, and speaks almost as freely of him as of Mr. *Tennent*. I cannot say I was very intimate with Mr. *Moorhead* when at *Boston*: but the letters that have lately come from him, and from others concerning him, bespeak him to be a man of a good spirit, and one whom God has blessed with abundant success. And I have great reason to believe that he is a man not over credulous: because I have heard from his friends here, that he did not overmuch favour the work of God that was at *Northampton* in *New-England* some years ago, and therefore probably, would not readily favour the late work in *Boston* and other parts, had he not sufficient evidence that it was a work of God.

Page 14th, The letter writer takes upon him to assert, "That a pamphlet published in *Scotland*, intitled, *Christ riding in the Chariot of Salvation*, is stuffed with abominable lies." As a proof of it, he urges, "That the students

in *Boston*, got nothing by *Whitefield* and *Tennent* but *enthusiasm*, pride, a contempt of their betters, &c." What they got by me I know not; but I have great reason to believe they got something that was good, under God, by Mr. *Tennent*; for Dr. *Colman*, in a letter to me, which was printed in the *Glasgow Weekly History*, No. 1, writes, "At *Cambridge* the college is entirely changed; the students are full of God, will I hope come out blessings in their generation, and I trust are so now to each other. Many of them are now, we think, truly born again, and several of them happy instruments of conversion to their fellows. The voice of prayer and praise fills their chambers; and sincerity, fervency, and joy, with seriousness of heart, sit visibly on their faces. I was told yesterday that not seven of a hundred remain unaffected. I know how the good tidings of this will affect and please you. God give you like joy every where in the fruit of your labours."

And the honourable Secretary *Williard* about the same time writes to me thus: "But that which forebodes a more lasting advantage, is the new face of things at the college, where the impressions of religion have been, and still are very general, and many in a judgment of charity brought home to Christ; and divers gentlemen's sons, that were sent there only for a more polite education, are now so full of zeal for the cause of Christ, and of love to souls, as to devote themselves entirely to the studies of divinity."

In the same page he would fain tax Mr. *Gilbert Tennent* with a lie; for it was he wrote the account in the *Weekly History*, No. 1. Says he, "It is said, when Mr. *Gilbert Tennent* preached at *Marblehead* and *Charles-Town*, his voice had like to have been drowned with their outcries." But he mistakes, it is not said so: for I have searched narrowly into the pamphlet and weekly history, and find no mention of an outcry, but only a great shock given at

Marblehead. It was at *Portsmouth*. Mr. *Gilbert Tennent* writing to his brother says, "That there were at *Portsmouth* and *Charles-Town*, in time of sermon, such outcries that his voice had like to have been drowned." I think Mr. *Tennent* is the best judge of what he heard with his own ears. Mr. *A. M.*'s living near *Charles-Town*, and having never heard a word of this from the minister with whom he frequently conversed, is no proof it was not so. It might have been so, and yet not come into the minister's mind to tell Mr. *A. M.* of it.

In the same page, he finds fault with the accounts given of some young children "who talked of the things of God as if they were people of 70 or 80 years. Alas! how easily are mankind deceived! How fond are they to impose on themselves and others! Some of these I have conversed with:" but did he converse with all, or with these mentioned in the pamphlet? If not, how can he urge this as another lie in the pamphlet? I take Mr. *Abercromby*, who sent the account of the children, and who is a preacher of good character, to be a better judge of the matter than Mr. *A. M.* But this *anonymous* letter-writer, seems resolved to condemn every thing in the gross. Indeed he speaks favourably of the church of *England*. "I must do justice, says he, to the church of *England*," page 16. "There are three congregations of that way in *Boston*: they all live in love and peace; their ministers speak against enthusiasm and bigotry every day; not above three or four at most, of some thousands that are of the episcopal persuasion, are taken with this new-light (as they call it); they all, says he, stand fast to the church, and their numbers increase very fast."

One would imagine, by this, Mr. *A. M.* is a church of *England* man, and it should seem a bigoted one too: and then no wonder he speaks against the new-light. Their ministers I believe do preach against what I fear he terms

enthusiasm, “The powerful feeling operations of the Holy Ghost.” But I cannot think they preach so much against bigotry. For in a conference I held with all three of those ministers in *Boston*, the head of them, to prove that we ought all to be of the church of *England*, brought this text, “That they may be all one, even as thou O father and I are one.” They assert *baptismal regeneration*, deny perseverance, and free justification by faith without works, and seem to think of Mr. *Gilbert Tennent* just as this letter-writer does. No wonder then he is so friendly to them.

But why should I say more? it would be endless, as well as take up too much of my precious time to be more particular in my observations upon Mr. *A. M.*’s letter. There are some matters of fact mentioned in it, such as “a blind lad’s preaching in *Connecticut*, page 12. Mr. *D*——’s manner of preaching in a hot day, page 13,” and some other things, which I cannot take upon me to make replies to, and which, if true, will by no means prove the late work of God in *New-England* to be only enthusiasm and delusion. Ere long I hope to see *Boston*. Then I will endeavour to send an impartial account. Indeed Mr. *A. M.* page 17. seems not to care for my return to *Boston*. But I hope to have a prosperous journey to them in some months, by the will of God, and see how they do.

In the mean while, give me leave to observe, that the publishers of this pamphlet (for I believe there are more than one concerned in it) have almost saved me the trouble, and have taken an effectual way to confute themselves. For they have annexed to this letter, an “Appendix, containing proofs for the facts in the foregoing letter, extracted from sermons preached by some of the most eminent ministers in *New-England*, lately printed at *Boston*.” But these extracts by no means contain proofs of all the facts recorded in the foregoing letter, consequently all the facts in the letter which

are not proved by these extracts, we have reason to doubt of. I have not an opportunity of getting all the sermons of the reverend ministers mentioned in the title page: but it grieved me, when I saw extracts taken out of their writings to prove, that the work lately begun and carried on in *New-England* was enthusiasm and delusion. This was the chief reason of my writing you this letter; it will grieve them to hear that their writings have been used to so bad a purpose. The compilers of the pamphlet have dealt with *their sermons*, as the devil dealt with the scripture, when he tempted our Lord in the wilderness; I mean, marred and wholly misapplied them. The publishers stile them, at the head of the appendix, some of the most eminent ministers in *New-England*; and depend much upon their authority, to prove the facts of Mr. *A. M.*'s letter. And I desire no other authority than these very eminent ministers sermons, out of which the extracts are taken, to prove that the work lately begun and carried on in *New-England* is not enthusiasm and delusion, but a great and marvellous work of the Spirit of God.

The compilers, indeed, in order to make the world believe they had been impartial, have published a sentence or two, wherein Dr. *Colman* has written favourably of the Orphan-house in *Georgia*, and says, "the order of it is admirable, &c." but this is only a disguise. For they have been far from acting fair in this respect. The Doctor complains in the P. S. of that letter, page 44. that "some of my friends have made too free with my letters in printing only part of them, and mixing them with parts of others without distinction." I think it is my duty to take all the blame from off my friends, upon myself, as to printing only parts of his letters; for I was the only person concerned; but as for mixing them with others, without distinction, I know nothing of it. The letters were sent to me from the Doctor. I thought it would be improper to publish any other parts of the Doctor's letters than

what respected the success of the glorious gospel, and that I thought he would gladly have published: but if the Doctor found fault with my friends; I am sure he justly may blame these compilers who have published only part of this letter of his. One would have thought they should have taken a caution from this very P. S. But they were afraid, as it would seem, of the contents of it; for a friend who has seen and read the whole letter, sends me the following extract out of it. “I hope we are retrenching our superfluity and luxury; our young people have thrown by much of their finery and gaiety, and seem to have eye and heart on things spiritual and heavenly; and if God build them up into families, with their present prudent pious dispositions, it promises greatly for the next generation, that glory will dwell in our land, and his work appear to children’s children.” And in that very part of it they have printed, the Doctor says enough to overthrow the whole design of the pamphlet, page 42. “All this notwithstanding, there has been a great and glorious work of God going on among us, from the day of Mr. *Whitefield*’s visit to us.” I have a sermon of the Doctor’s now before me, intitled, “*The word of God magnified by him*,” preached *April 22, 1742*, “wherein his testimony is humbly given for the great and wondrous work of God’s grace manifest in many parts of the land.” The last paragraph of that sermon begins thus, “I close with giving glory to God, for the great and good work of his grace which he hath so visibly begun, spread, and is carrying on in every part almost of our provinces.” This very sermon I believe has been in the hands of the compilers of this pamphlet. How then could they be so bare-faced, and so injurious, to the good man’s character, as to print any part of his letter, to subserve so base a design? I believe they will not have the Doctor’s thanks for this.

The like treatment they have given the Rev. Mr. *Turell*, another of the eminent ministers, from whom they have taken extracts to prove the facts of Mr. *A. M.*'s letter. I am persuaded Mr. *Turell* will be much concerned to find any part of his sermon thus misused; and how the compilers of this pamphlet could dare to make this use of his writing, I cannot imagine; for, in the very first page of the preface to that very sermon, out of which they have taken their extracts, he speaks of himself "as one of the friends and zealous promoters of the good work:" nay he begins his preface with these words, "the occasion of my publishing this brief direction to my people, is partly to vindicate my character, which has been injured by a report spread, that of a zealous promoter of the glorious work of God's grace and Spirit appearing, I am become an opposer:" which shews, that Mr. *Turell* would not care to be represented as an opposer of that work, and consequently would not chuse, that his writings should be produced to prove the principal facts in this letter of *A. M.*'s, who would represent the whole as enthusiasm and delusion.

What opinion Mr. *Turell* had of persons of this gentleman's spirit, is evident from the fourth page of the same preface, which the compilers of the pamphlet could not but see. His words are these, "As for the profane triumphs of the opposers, (of such I mean) who attribute the whole of this glorious scene to the devil, or wild enthusiasm, a heated imagination, &c. I detest their opinion, though I am far from judging their state. I am confident that of the many that I have discoursed with under the common impressions (two or three excepted) they have been all wrought upon in a way agreeable to the gospel: and just as I should have desired some years ago. And I must testify, to the glory of God, and his sovereign rich grace, that I do behold the distinguishing marks of God's spirit on many. My brethren, let us pray

for the preservation, revival, progress, and universal spread thereof." In page 14. of his directions, he says, "I charitably believe, some scores in this place have been seriously wrought upon; and the far greater part of them have declared, God has made me the happy instrument of their awakening." And, page 18, says he, "the names of *Whitefield* and *Tennent* (though liable to err) I have once and again mentioned to you with honour; they have been raised by God to do abundance of good." How does this agree with the account Mr. *A. M.* gives of the spirit raised by us, and with that scandalous character he gives of Mr. *Tennent* in particular; and when these quotations are parts also of one of the treatises, out of which one of the extracts mentioned in the appendix is taken, and are written by one of those eminent ministers whose writings are referred to, to prove the principal facts recorded in Mr. *A. M.*'s letter.

But what surprises me most of all is, that they should extract any thing from Mr. *Parsons* to prove Mr. *A. M.*'s matters of fact. Indeed, in the passage cited from him, page 41 of the pamphlet, to use the words in the *Glasgow Weekly History*, No. 35. I see only a warning against rashly concluding persons to be in a converted state; because, some who have been thus well judged of do afterwards fall away into errors, or appear to be deluded, or turn out impostors; and the warning enforced by an instance, and indeed but by one instance, of a person who was a visionary. Mr. *Parsons*'s caution to others against concluding too rashly that people are converted, is a presumption, that he is cautious in that matter himself; yet in this very sermon of Mr. *Parsons*'s, out of which the extracts mentioned in the appendix are taken, he says, page 44, "I hope not less than an hundred and fifty souls are converted in about nine months past:" though his parish is small, consisting only of 120 families. I could heartily wish that the

whole sermon was printed; it is directly levelled in many parts of it against persons of Mr. *A. M.*'s spirit and sentiments, and is intended as a needful caution for those lately converted, to avoid extremes, and take care to walk consistently. He has all along been a great promoter of this work: in a letter dated *December 16, 1741*, to Dr. *Colman*, and which is printed in the *Weekly History*, he mentions a most wonderful effusion of the Holy Ghost in his congregation. In that letter he makes an honourable mention of Mr. *Tennent*: "I have reason, says he, to bless the Lord that he sent him for our help; and indeed by an enquiry since, I find his labours were blessed to give a more general shock than appeared at the very time."

The other eminent ministers sermons I have not yet met with: but I have great reason to believe they have been treated in the same manner: the time would fail me, dear Sir, to send you all the vouchers that might be produced for the glorious work in *New-England*. Messrs. *Webb*, *Cooper* and *Prince*, in a preface to a sermon by Mr. *M'Gregor*, a presbyterian minister, and which I hope also will be reprinted, speak nobly of it. Mr. *Edwards*'s sermon I think is most admirable, and answers all the objections that Mr. *A. M.* or others can make against it. In short, if any work had all marks of a divine signature, this undoubtedly has.

When I consider how Mr. *A. M.* so quarrels with it, and endeavours to represent it in so ridiculous a light, I cannot but wish he may consider *Romans* viii. 7. *1 Corinthians* ii. 14. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; and the natural man discerneth not the things of the spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned." The sum of the matter seems to be this; there has been a great and marvellous work in *New-England*: but, as it should seem, by the imprudences of some, and the overboiling zeal of others, some irregularities have been committed in several places, which

Mr. *Tennent* himself, in a letter to Mr. *Parsons*, printed in the *Boston Gazette*, has borne his testimony against, as strongly as any of these eminent ministers. This, dear Sir, is nothing but what is common. It was so in *Old-England* some few years ago. Many young persons there, ran out before they were called: others were guilty of great imprudences. I checked them in the strictest manner myself, and found as they grew acquainted with the Lord Jesus, and their own hearts, the intemperance of their zeal abated; and they became truly humble walkers with God. After a gathering, there will always be a sifting time: and the church is generally shaken before it is settled. But must the whole work of God be condemned as enthusiasm and delusion because of some disorder? No, I wish with all my soul, that those who extracted from Mr. *Parsons*, had observed what he says, page 41, and 42. “It is very much to be feared,” says he, (speaking to persons who cried down the whole work of God because of the imprudences and miscarriages of a few) “that you are strangers to the sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost, when you can so easily pass over the table of the rich dainties which God spreads for his own children, which while they feast upon, their souls are drawn out in rivers of pleasure and love; and like the crow, light upon, and greedily pick up, every bit of filthy carrion you can meet with.”

Dear Sir, as I allow you to publish my letter; out of compassion to the compilers and publishers of the pamphlet, I cannot but express my concern, that they may seriously consider, whether this mentioned by Mr. *Parsons* be not directly their case. And that they may take heed lest the God of this world may have blinded their eyes: since they had this and the other sermons before them, they must sin against light and knowledge in publishing such a tract. And therefore, to use the words of Mr. *Parsons* in his sermon, page 42. “It is not possible that you should be innocent, but on

the contrary plunge yourselves under amazing guilt, by such a dreadful conduct. Whilst you stand amazed at the rings of the wheels, as things too high and dreadful for you; whilst you know not what to make of the effusions of the Holy Spirit, but are blundering at every thing amiss; when God is working a work of his astonishing grace before your eyes which you will not believe; beware lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets, 'Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish!' Dear immortal souls, I beseech and persuade you, by the mercies of God and the astonishing love of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you would not sacrifice the operations of the blessed Spirit to your own prejudice, by means of our imperfections: I beseech and charge you by the coming of the great Jehovah in the word of his grace, that you do not despise his glorious name, and the riches of his mercy, now offered to you. I charge and admonish you by the dignity and worth of your immortal souls; by the powerful impressions of an approaching change; by the certain tremendous appearing of the Great Judge; by the inexpressible agonies of hell, and inconceivable joys of an everlasting heaven, that you do no longer reject, nor once more cavil against the glorious interest and kingdom of the blessed Jesus triumphing at this day, and inviting the miserable slaves of the devil, to become the happy subjects of it. I warn and charge you before the great God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the holy Angels, upon your peril, that you take diligent heed to these things. And if you reject to hear, if you dare reject, or boldly despise the admonition, remember you are answerable at the great tribunal, and must expect a most fearful share of torments among the damned world, for such unspeakable guilt."

Thus speaks this great and good man: my heart warmed, dear Sir, whilst I was reading his discourse; it is close, succinct and powerful: how could the

publishers, after reading such a dreadful warning, print any thing out of his sermon, to prove the work in *New-England*, to be enthusiasm? I would heartily join with him and the other ministers in *New-England*, was I there, in bearing a faithful testimony against any thing that I might judge to be inconsistent with the precious rules of the holy scriptures. At the same time I pray, that even the ministers themselves may act with the same caution they recommend to their people, and then I doubt not but we shall see a happy end put to what may now be irregular or disorderly. The dear Redeemer has assured us, "that the gates of hell shall never prevail against his church." He will cause that all things shall work together for her good. The wrath of man shall turn to his praise, and the remainder of it shall he restrain; he will bring order out of confusion, and the church shall be more than conqueror through his love. I will therefore conclude this long letter, with the words of the psalmist in the second psalm,

Why rage the heathen? and vain things,
Why do the people mind?
2. Kings of the earth do set themselves,
And Princes are combin'd
To plot against the Lord, and his
Anointed, saying thus,
3. Let us asunder break their bands,
And cast their cords from us.
4. He that in heaven sits, shall laugh:
The Lord shall scorn them all.
5. Then shall he speak to them in wrath,
In rage he vex them shall.
6. Yet notwithstanding I have him

To be my King appointed,

And over Sion, my holy hill,

I have him King anointed.

Upon this assurance, I rest in peace, and am, reverend and dear Sir, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus,

Your affectionate and obliged friend, brother and servant,

G. W.

By way of P. S. to this letter, give me leave to send you a copy of the preface to Mr. *M'Gregor*'s sermon, to which I have referred in my letter, and which is signed by three eminent ministers of *Boston*. Dated, *Boston*, *January 12, 1742*. This will give you a clear insight into what body of doctrines is professed and taught by the promoters of this work: how far they are from bigotry, and also may explain how the remaining violent opposers of those doctrines came to be so much exasperated.

The Preface to Mr. M'Gregor's Sermon.

AS all the protestant churches in *Europe*, both *Episcopalian* and *Presbyterian*, happily agreed at the time of the Reformation in the scripture doctrines of grace, as appears by the published harmony of their confessions; in particular, the church of *Scotland* in 1560, the church of *England* in 1562-3, and the church of *Ireland* in 1616; so it must be owned that the Presbyterians have generally persevered in a steady adherence to the original doctrines of the Reformation, to the present day.

And as the Assembly's shorter catechism has been all along agreeable to the known principles of the *New-England* churches, and has been generally received and taught in them, as a system of Christian doctrine agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, wherein they happily unite; it is a great pleasure to us, that our Presbyterian brethren who come from *Ireland* are generally with us

in these important points, as also in the particular doctrines of experimental piety arising from them, and the wondrous work of God agreeable to them, at this day making its triumphant progress through the land; all now happily combining to illustrate and confirm each other in so glaring and strong a manner as is irresistible to serious and unprejudiced beholders; and has already forced many men of clear minds, strong powers, considerable knowledge, and firmly riveted in Arminian and Socinian tenets, to give them all up at once, and yield to the adorable sovereignty and irresistibility of the Divine Spirit in his saving operations on the souls of men.

For to see on the one hand, such men as these, some of them of licentious lives, long inured in a course of vices, and of high spirits, coming to the preaching of the word, some only out of curiosity, others with a strong antipathy and meer design to get matter of cavilling and banter; all at once, in opposition to their inward enmity, resolutions and resistances, to fall under an unexpected and hated power; to have all the strength of their resolution and resistance taken away; to have such an inward view of the horrid wickedness not only of their lives, but also of their hearts, with their exceeding great and immediate danger of eternal misery, as has amazed their souls and thrown them into distress unutterable, yea forced them to cry out in the assemblies with the greatest agonies: and then in two or three days, and sometimes sooner, to have such unexpected and raised views of the infinite grace and love of God in Christ, as have enabled them to believe in him, lifted them at once out of their distresses, filled their hearts with admiration, and joy unspeakable, and full of glory, breaking forth in their shining countenance and transporting voices to the surprise of those about them: and to see them kindling up at once, into a flame of love and praise to God, an utter detestation of their former courses and vicious habits, yea by

such a detestation the very power of those habits at once receive a mortal wound: in short, to see their high spirits on a sudden humbled, their hard hearts made tender, their aversion from the Holy God now turned into a powerful and prevailing bent to contemplate upon him as revealed in Christ, to labour to be like him in holiness, to please and honour him by an universal and glad conformity to his will and nature, and promote his holy kingdom in all about them; loving them, forgiving them, asking forgiveness of them, abounding in acts of justice and charity, in a meek and condescending carriage towards the meanest, and aspiring after higher sanctity.

And to see other gentlemen of the like knowledge, parts and principles, and of sober, just and religious lives, as far as their meer reason with outward revelation are able to carry them, and prepossessed against this work as imagined enthusiasm, yet at once surprizingly to find themselves intirely destitute of that inward sanctity, and supreme love to God, and holiness, which the gospel teaches as absolutely needful to see the kingdom of grace and glory; to find themselves no more than conceited Pharisees, who had been working out a righteousness of their own for justification; and to have a clear discovery of their inward enmity to Christ, and the nature and way of redemption by him, with the native vileness of their hearts and lives, they had never seen before: in short, to find themselves yet unrenewed in the spirit of their minds, and under the heavy wrath and curse of God; to open into the clear discovery of their past delusions; to find the hardness of their hearts, the blindness of their minds, and their utter impotence to convert themselves, or believe in Christ; to lose all their former confidence, give up their beloved schemes, see themselves undone and helpless, and sink into a great distress: and then condemning

themselves as guilty wretches, humbly lying at the foot of absolute and sovereign Grace, and looking up to Christ the only Mediator to reconcile them to the glorious God, to justify them wholly by his own most perfect righteousness, and to enlighten, quicken, sanctify, dwell in, and govern them by his Almighty Spirit; and there to wait till they find a new and mighty life and power come into their souls, enabling them to embrace, trust in, and love this divine Redeemer, rejoice with satisfaction in him, and perform every kind of duty both to God and man with pleasure, and with quite another frame and spirit than before.

Such great and sudden turns as these, are as evident demonstration as we can possibly conceive of the truth of the inspired scriptures, and in particular of those scripture doctrines, of the sovereign and victorious grace of Christ, received and taught among us: we see with our eye, that when he rideth forth on the word of truth, conquering and to conquer, his right-hand teaches terrible things. He makes his arrows so sharp and piercing in the hearts of his stoutest enemies, as oblige them to fall down under him; and when the day of his power comes on any people, he makes the most obstinate to be most gladly willing and obedient to him. And these *principles of grace*, and these *works of* God, do most invincibly confirm each other.

And though it must be owned with sorrow, that some few who see these wondrous works continue unconvinced, yet this is no more strange than that some of the most learned and religious men, as were the Scribes and Pharisees, who saw the wondrous works of Christ on earth, yet continued unconvinced that they were the works of God, yea pursued him with unrelenting enmity and violence. However, it is a reviving consolation to us, that as this work surprizingly goes on from town to town, it goes on

more and more to silence the most fierce opposers: though mighty oppositions rise at first, it bears them down before it, and our more mighty Saviour seems resolved to go on still from conquering to conquer.

In vain do its remaining enemies attempt to brand it with the name enthusiasm. For this is like the gentile *Romans* branding the *Jewish* religion with the hated name of superstition; and if this work is truly enthusiasm, then we have been wholly mistaken in the meaning of the word: and what they call enthusiasm, is a glorious and blessed work of God, most powerfully and suddenly changing the very hearts and lives of men; making them in a great degree like to Christ in love, and righteousness, and holiness, and meekness, and humility; filling their hearts with holy joy, and their mouths with praises.

But we must remit the remaining opposers to the law and testimony of God himself in the inspired oracles; as doth our reverend and dear brother the author of the following valuable sermon. And we are glad on this occasion to join our testimony with him, both to the same doctrines of grace, and to the wondrous work of God agreeable to them; as also to declare our great satisfaction to see him and others of our said presbyterian brethren concurring with us in them; with our apprehension that our uniting in these important points, is such a powerful band of union in Christian love and fellowship, as should overcome the remains of every kind of prejudice that may yet subsist among our people: and our earnest wishes, that with a tender and meek forbearance of each other in different sentiments about church order and government, we may all unite in maintaining and promoting these more excellent and momentous points of grace, and vital piety.

Thomas Prince,

John Webb,
William Cooper.
Boston, January 12, 1742.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE OCCASION, PROCESS, AND ISSUE, OF A LATE TRIAL AT THE ASSIZE HELD AT GLOUCESTER, MARCH 3, 1743 BETWEEN SOME OF THE PEOPLE CALLED METHODISTS, PLAINTIFFS, AND CERTAIN PERSONS OF THE TOWN OF MINCHIN-HAMPTON, IN THE SAID COUNTY, DEFENDANTS. IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

And when the town-clerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter. Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet

blasphemers of your goddess. Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies; let them implead one another. But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly. For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

Acts xix. 35-40.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT, &c.

London, March 12, 1744.

My dear friend,

ON *Thursday* evening I came hither from the *Gloucester* assizes, where I have been engaged in a trial between some of those who are called Methodists, and some violent rioters. Perhaps this news may a little startle you, and put you upon enquiry (as it hath done some others) "How we came to go to law with our adversaries, when it is our avowed principle to suffer patiently for the truth's sake?" I will tell you, my dear friend: though perhaps there is nothing in the world more abused than the law, and there are very few that go to law out of a proper principle; yet we hold, that there is a proper use of it, and the law is good, when used lawfully. Whether or know we have used it lawfully in the present case, I shall leave my friend to judge, after I have told him the motives that induced us to engage in it.——The Methodists, you know, are every where accounted enthusiasts, in the worst sense of the word; but though they are accounted such, yet they would not be enthusiasts in reality. Now we look upon it to be one species of enthusiasm, to expect to attain an end, without making use of proper means. We also think, that believers should be very careful not to be fond of suffering persecution, when they may avoid it, by making application to the

higher powers. We are likewise of opinion, that good Christians will be good subjects, and consequently it is their duty, as much as in them lies, to put a stop to every thing, in a rightful way, that may prove destructive to the king or the government under which they live. Christian ministers, in particular, we think, ought to consider the weakness of people's grace, and, in pity to precious souls, do what they can to remove every thing out of the way, that may discourage or prevent poor people's hearing the everlasting gospel. These considerations, my dear friend, for some time past, have led me to examine whether the *Methodists* in general (and I myself in particular) have acted the part of good subjects, and judicious Christian ministers, in so long neglecting to make an application to the superior courts, and putting in execution the wholesome laws of the land, in order to prevent those many dreadful outrages which have been committed against us. I need not descend to particulars. Our *Weekly History* is full of them; and before that came out, several of our brethren, both in *England* and *Wales*, have received much damage from time to time, and been frequently in great hazard of their lives. *Wiltshire* has been very remarkable for mobbing and abusing the Methodists; and, for about ten months last past, it has also prevailed very much in *Gloucestershire*, especially at *Hampton*, where our friend Mr. *Adams* has a dwelling-house, and has been much blessed to many people. This displeased the grand enemy of souls, who stirred up many of the baser sort, privately encouraged by some of a higher rank, to come from time to time, in great numbers, with a low-bell and horn, to beset the house, and beat and abuse the people. About the beginning of *July* last, their opposition seemed to rise to the highest. For several days they assembled in great bodies, broke the windows, and mobbed the people to such a degree, that many expected to be murdered,

and hid themselves in holes and corners, to avoid the rage of their adversaries. Once, when I was there, they continued from four in the afternoon till midnight, rioting, giving loud huzzas, casting dirt upon the hearers, and making proclamations, “That no Anabaptists, Presbyterians, &c. should preach there, upon pain of being first put into a skin-pit, and afterwards into a brook.” At another time they pulled one or two women down the stairs by the hair of their heads. And on the 10th of *July* they came, to the number of near a hundred, in their usual way, with a low-bell and horn, about five in the afternoon, forced into Mr. *Adams*’s house, and demanded him down the stairs whereon he was preaching, took him out of his house, and threw him into a skin-pit full of noisome things and stagnated water. One of our friends, named *Williams*, asking them, “If they were not ashamed to serve an innocent man so?” they put him into the same pit twice, and afterwards beat him, and dragged him along the kennel. Mr. *Adams* quietly returned home, and betook himself to prayer, and exhorted the people to rejoice in suffering for the sake of the gospel. In about half an hour, they came to the house again, dragged him down the stairs, and led him away a mile and a half to a place called *Bourn-brook*, and then threw him in. A stander-by, fearing he might be drowned, jumped in and pulled him out; whereupon another of the rioters immediately pushed him into the pool a second time, and cut his leg against a stone, so that he went lame for near a fortnight. Both the constable and justices were applied to, but refused to act; and seemed rather to countenance the mobbing, hoping thereby *Methodism* (as they called it) would be put a stop to, at least at *Hampton*. For a season they gained their end. There was no preaching for some time, the people fearing to assemble on account of the violence of the mob. Upon my return to town, I advised with my friends what to do. We knew we

wanted to exercise no revenge against the rioters, and yet we thought it wrong that the gospel should be stopped by such persons, when the government under which we lived countenanced no such thing; and also, that it was absurd to thank God for wholesome laws, if they were not to be made use of. We knew very well, that an Apostle had told us, that magistrates were ordained for the punishment of evil doers; and that they bear not the sword in vain. We were also fearful, that if any of our brethren should be murdered by future riotings (as in all probability they might), we should be accessary to their death, if we neglected to tie up the rioters hands, which was all we desired to do. Besides, we could not look upon this as allowed persecution, since it was not countenanced by the laws of the land, and we might have redress from these rioters and inferior magistrates, by appealing to *Cæsar*, whose real friends and loyal subjects we judged ourselves not to be, if we suffered his laws to be publicly trampled under foot by such notorious rioting; and which, though begun against the Methodists, might terminate in open rebellion against King *George*. For these and such like reasons, we thought it our duty to move for an information in the *King's-Bench* against five of the ring-leaders, and fixed upon the riot which they made on *Sunday, July 10*, when they put Mr. *Adams* and *Williams* into the skin-pit and brook. But before this was done, I wrote a letter to one whom they called Captain, desiring him to inform his associates, "That if they would acknowledge their fault, pay for curing a boy's arm, which was broken the night I was there, and mend the windows of Mr. *Adams*'s house, we would readily pass all by; but if they persisted in their resolutions to riot, we thought it our duty to prevent their doing, and others receiving, further damage, by moving for an information against them in the *King's-Bench*." I also sent a copy of this letter to a minister of

the town, and to a justice of the peace, with a letter to each from myself: but all in vain. The rioters sent me a most insolent answer, wrote me word, "They were in high spirits, and were resolved there should be no more preaching in *Hampton*." Finding them *irreclaimable*, we moved the next term for a rule of court in the *King's-Bench* to lodge an information against five of the ring-leaders, for the outrage committed, violence offered, and damage done to Mr. *Adams* and *Williams*, on *Sunday, July 10*. The rioters were apprized of it, appeared by their council, and prayed the rule might be enlarged till the next term. It was granted. In the mean while they continued mobbing, broke into Mr. *Adams*'s house one *Saturday* night at eleven o'clock, when there was no preaching, made those that were in bed get up, and searched the oven, cellar, and every corner of the house, to see whether they could find any Methodists. Some time after, they threw another young man into a mud-pit three times successively, and abused the people in a dreadful manner. The next term came on. We proved our accusations by twenty-six affidavits; and the defendants making no reply, the rule was made absolute, and an information filed against them. To this they pleaded NOT GUILTY; and, according to the method in the crown-office, the cause was referred to the assize held at *Gloucester*, *March* 3d.——Thither I went, and on *Tuesday* morning last the trial came on. It was given out by some, "That the Methodists were to lose the cause, whether right or wrong." And I believe the Defendants depended much on a supposition, that the gentlemen and jury would be prejudiced against us. We were easy, knowing that our Saviour had the hearts of all in his hands. Being aware of the great consequences of gaining or losing this trial, both in respect to us and the nation, we kept a day of fasting and prayer through all the societies both in *England* and *Wales*. Our *Scotch* friends also joined with us; and chearfully

committed our cause into his hands by whom kings reign and princes decree justice. We had about thirty witnesses to prove the riot and facts laid down in the information. Our council opened the cause (as I heard, being not present when the trial begun) with much solidity and sound reasoning: they shewed, “That rioters were not to be reformers; and that his Majesty had no where put the reins of government into the hands of mobbers, or made them judge or jury.” One of them in particular, with great gravity reminded the gentlemen on the jury of the advice of *Gamaliel*, a doctor of the law, recorded *Acts* v. 38, 39. “Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this council, or this work, be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.” Our witnesses were then called. I came into court when the second witness was examining. Mr. *Adams* and four more (three of which were not called Methodists) so clearly proved both the riot and the facts laid to the charge of the Defendants, that the Judge was of opinion there needed no other evidence. The council for the Defendants then rose, and exerted a good deal of oratory, and I think said all that could well be said, to make the best of a bad matter. One urged, “That we were enthusiasts, and our principles and practices had such a tendency to infect and hurt the people, that it was right, in his opinion, for any private person to stand up and put a stop to us; and whoever did so, was a friend to his country.” He strove to influence the jury, by telling them, “That if a verdict was given against the Defendants, it would cost them two hundred pounds: that the Defendants rioting was not premeditated; but, that coming to hear Mr. *Adams*, and being offended at his doctrine, a sudden quarrel arose, and thereby the unhappy men were led into the present fray, which he could have wished had not happened; but however it did not amount to a riot, but

only an *assault*." Their other council then informed the jury, "That they would undertake to prove that the Methodists began the tumult first." He was pleased also to mention me by name, and acquainted the court, "That Mr. *Whitefield* had been travelling from common to common, making the people cry, and then picking their pockets, under pretence of collecting money for the colony of *Georgia*; and knowing that *Gloucestershire* was a populous country, he at last came there. That he had now several curates, of which Mr. *Adams* was one, who in his preaching had found fault with the proceedings of the clergy, and said if the people went to hear them, they would be damned. He added, that there had lately been such mobbing in *Staffordshire*, that a regiment of soldiers was sent down to suppress them; insinuating that the Methodists were the authors. That we had now another cause of a like nature depending in *Wiltshire*; and that we were not of that mild pacific spirit, as we would pretend to be."——This, and much more to the same purpose, though foreign to the matter in hand, pleased many of the auditors, who expressed their satisfaction in hearing the Methodists in general, and me in particular, thus lashed, by frequent laughing. The eyes of all were upon me. Our Saviour kept me quite easy. I thought of that verse of *Horace*,

——Hic murus aheneus esto,
Nil conscire sibi, nullâ pallescere culpâ.

Tertullus's accusing *Paul* came also to my mind, and I looked upon myself as highly honoured in having such things spoken against me falsely for Christ's great name's sake. To prove what the Defendants council had insinuated, they called up a young man, who was brother to one of the Defendants, and one of the mob. He swore point blank, "That Mr. *Adams* said, if people went to church, they would be damned; and if they would

come to him, he would carry them to Jesus Christ. He swore also, that the pool in which Mr. *Adams* was thrown, was no deeper than half way up his legs. He said first, that there were about ten of them that came to the house of Mr. *Adams*; and then he swore that there were about threescore. He said, there was a low-bell, and that one of the Defendants did ask Mr. *Adams* to come down off the stairs, but that none of them went up to him; upon which Mr. *Adams* willingly obeyed, went with them briskly along the street, and, as he would have represented it, put himself into the skin-pit and pool, and so came out again." He said also some other things; but through his whole evidence appeared so flagrantly false, that one of the counsellors said, "It was enough to make his hair stand an end." The Judge himself wished, "He had had so much religion as to fear an oath." So he went down in disgrace. Their second evidence was an aged woman, mother to one of the defendants. She swore, "That her son did go up the stairs to Mr. *Adams*, and that Mr. *Adams* tore her son's coat, and would have broken his neck down stairs." But she talked so fast, and her evidence was so palpably false, that she was sent away in as much disgrace as the other. Their third and last evidence was father to one who was in the mob, though not one of the defendants. The chief he had to say was, "That when Mr. *Adams* was coming from the pool, one met him, and said, "Brother, how do you do?" Upon which he answered, "That he had received no damage, but had been in the pool, and came out again." So that all their evidences, however contrary one to another, yet corroborated ours, and proved the riot out of their own mouths. The book was then given to a justice of the peace, who had formerly taken up Mr. *Cennick*, for preaching near *Stroud*, and had lately given many signal proofs that he was no friend to the Methodists. But he intending to speak only about their characters, and the council and Judge

looking upon that as quite impertinent to the matter in hand, he was not admitted as an evidence.——Upon this, his Lordship, with great candour and impartiality, summed up the evidence, and told the jury, "That he thought they should bring all the Defendants in *guilty*; for our evidences had sufficiently proved the whole of the information, and also that the riot was premeditated." He said, "That, in his opinion, the chief of the Defendants evidence was incredible; and that, supposing the Methodists were heterodox, (as perhaps they might be) it belonged to the ecclesiastical government to call them to an account; that they were subjects, and rioters were not to be their reformers."——He also reminded them of the dreadful ill consequences of rioting at any time, much more at such a critical time as this; that rioting was the fore-runner of, and might end in, rebellion; that it was felony, without benefit of clergy, to pull down a meeting-house; and, for all as he knew, it was high-treason to pull down even a bawdy-house. That this information came from the *King's-Bench*; that his Majesty's justices there thought they had sufficient reason to grant it; that the matters contained in it had been evidently proved before them, and consequently they should bring all the Defendants in guilty."

Upon this the jury were desired to consider of their verdict. There seemed to be some little demur amongst them. His Lordship perceiving it, informed them, "They had nothing to do with the damages, (that was to be referred to the *King's-Bench*) they were only to consider whether the Defendants were guilty or not." Whereupon, in a few minutes, they gave a verdict for the prosecutors, and brought in all the Defendants, "guilty of the whole information lodged against them." I then retired to my lodgings, kneeled down, and gave thanks, with some friends, to our all-conquering *Emmanuel*. Afterwards I went to the inn, prayed, and returned thanks with

the witnesses, exhorted them to behave with meekness and humility to their adversaries, and after they had taken proper refreshment sent them home rejoicing. In the evening I preached on those words of the Psalmist, “By this I know, that thou favourest me, since thou hast not suffered mine enemy to triumph over me.” God was pleased to enlarge my heart much. I was very happy with my friends afterwards, and the next morning set out for *London*, where we have had a blessed thanksgiving season, and from whence I take the first opportunity of sending you as many particulars of the occasion, progress, and issue of our trial, as I can well recollect. What report his Lordship will be pleased to make of the case, and how the Defendants will be dealt with, cannot be known till next term; when I know I shall apprize you of it, as also of our behaviour towards them.——In the mean while let me entreat you to give thanks to the blessed Jesus in our behalf, and to pray that his word may have free course, may run and be glorified, and a stop be put to all such rebellious proceedings. I remain, Sir,

Your very affectionate friend, and humble servant,

George Whitefield.

⁂ For more particulars of this affair, see Volume II. Letters 526, 527, 529, 545, 549, and 550.

A LETTER TO THE REV. THOMAS CHURCH, M.A. VICAR OF BATTERSEA, AND PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S; IN ANSWER TO HIS SERIOUS AND EXPOSTULATORY LETTER TO THE REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD, ON OCCASION OF HIS LATE LETTER TO THE BISHOP OF LONDON, AND OTHER BISHOPS.

A LETTER, &c.

London, May 22, 1744.

Reverend Sir,

I HAVE read your expostulatory letter, and thank you for prefixing your name. Had the author of the observations been so ingenuous, he would have saved you and me some trouble; but as he hath not, and the pamphlet was published in such a way, I cannot think myself justly chargeable with ill-

manners or censoriousness, for treating him and their Lordships concerned, in the manner I have done. Our Saviour dealt always very plainly with the rulers of the *Jewish Church*; and when one was offended, and said, "Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also," he was so far from recanting, that he said, "And woe unto you also ye lawyers." In the same spirit, the proto-martyr *Stephen* addressed himself to the *Jewish Sanhedrim*, and said unto them, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in hearts and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye." And however shocking, Rev. Sir, it may appear to you, (page 43d of your letter) for us to urge our Lord's example and his blessed apostles, yet I think it quite consistent for a minister, who has received an apostolical commission at his ordination, "Receive thou the Holy Ghost now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands, &c." to make use of the example of our Lord and his apostles, in vindication of his conduct; because Christ left us an example, that we might follow his steps; and we are called to be followers of the apostles, as they were of Jesus Christ. I know not how to give flattering titles, and therefore must stand to it, that they are false witnesses, however dignified or distinguished, and lay to my charge a thing that I know not, who tax me with being an *open defier of government*, for preaching in the fields. Neither do I think I have wronged the author of the observations at all, by insinuating, "That the design and scope of this pamphlet was to represent the proceedings of the Methodists as dangerous to the church and state, in order to procure an act of parliament against them, or oblige them to secure themselves by turning dissenters." That this was his drift, (at least that he intended to move the government against the Methodists in general, and me in particular) I think appears quite plain from a little two-penny paper lately published, (I suppose by the same

anonymous author) wherein he declares, “That though Mr. *Whitefield* has pleaded in behalf of the Methodists, that they are an harmless and loyal people, yet 1st. He cannot possibly be supposed to know all the persons, or even one tenth part of those present at his meetings of 30, 50, or 80000.—2d. When he appoints or holds a meeting, all people are at liberty to come, and to carry on such purposes as they think proper.—3d. Such a free and safe resort for great multitudes to one place, subject to no controul or examination, is doubtless a great opportunity put into the hands of seditious persons to raise disturbances.” He adds, “How consistently with the act of toleration, or with what safety to the public, these field-preachings may be continued, let the world judge.” If this be not intended to move the government against me, surely there was never a motion made against any man living; but with what little shew of true reasoning I need not mention. Let the world judge.

Here lies the point, Rev. Sir: the generality of the clergy are offended in their hearts, that his majesty is so mild towards his harmless and loyal people the Methodists. They have denied the Methodist preachers the use of their churches, and think, if field-preaching was put a stop to, Methodism, as they term it, would be less extensive. But were they to gain their point, and the preachers to be bound, yet perhaps after all they would find themselves mistaken, for the word of God would not be bound. And I remember a saying of the then Lord Chancellor to that holy martyr *Bradford*, “Thou hast done more hurt (as he called it) by thy letters and exhortations since thou hast been in prison, than thou ever didst before.” However this be, field-preaching is at present the clergy’s eye-sore. Hence they raise a clamour that it is unlawful. We deny it. We say the act of toleration urged against us is nothing to the purpose, for we are true

members of the established church; and that if we were not (*quod magno mercenter Atridæ*) yet the trial of *Mede* and *Pen* is an adjudged case. But still, if you or any other person please to move for an information against me, for preaching in a field, or a street, though I purpose to go abroad shortly, yet I shall think it my duty to stay some time, to make a legal defence. But if not, henceforward whatever questions may be put to me in print, about the lawfulness of field-preaching, they will lie unanswered.

Not that I think it is barely field-preaching that gives the generality of the clergy such offence. No, it is the doctrine that I preach there, that is the grand cause of their contending with me. You are pleased, Rev. Sir, to say (Page 39th) "That I have revived the old *Calvinistical disputes* concerning predestination, &c." (I suppose you mean justification by faith alone, the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, man's utter inability to turn to God, or to do good works, &c.) "Which you say had happily slept for so many years." But if this be my shame, I glory in it. For what is this but reviving the essential articles of the *Church of England*, which undoubtedly are Calvinistical, and which, by your own confession, have happily slept for so many years? This is too true. But however you may count this a happiness, yet in my opinion it is one of the greatest judgments that has befallen our nation. And if it had not been for the remnant of free-grace, dissenting ministers, (stiled by the author of the observations, dissenting teachers) and the little flock of the Methodist preachers, that the Lord Jesus has raised up and preserved amongst us, many of the essential doctrines of the articles of the Church of *England* might have, as you term it, happily slept many years more.

These, Rev. Sir, are the real sentiments of my heart. I think they are founded on truth and soberness. And if so, blame me not, as you do (page

21st) for comparing the Church of *England*, as it now subsists, to a *leaky ship*. For is it not too evident that she is not only leaky, but really *sinking*, when several of the Right Reverend the Bishops, and a prebendary of *St. Paul's*, can openly plead for works being a condition of our justification in the sight of God? This was the particular charge my Lord of *London* gave his clergy in his last pastoral letter, "So to explain the doctrine of justification by faith alone, as not to exclude good works from being a condition of our justification." Was the great apostle of the Gentiles now living, what anathema's would he pronounce against such *Judaizing* doctrine? Was *Luther* on earth, how would he thunder against such a charge? For he calls justification by faith alone, *articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ*. This is the great fundamental point in which we differ from the church of *Rome*. This is the grand point of contention between the generality of the established clergy, and the Methodist preachers: we plead for free justification in the sight of God, by faith alone, in the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, without any regard to works past, present, or to come. You (*Bellarmine* like) are for making your works, conditions (page 17th); "And joining your honest, though imperfect endeavours to serve and please your Maker, with a hearty trust and confidence in his everlasting mercies," (page 42.) You say, (page 58th) we are very far from building wholly on our morality;" we say, our morality is not to be built on at all, but that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." This, you think, is one of my errors. But if it be an error, it is a scriptural error; and so plainly taught in the eleventh article of our church, that he that runs may read: and however you may blame me for insinuating, "That some of the clergy may adhere to his majesty only for his preferments, and consequently not appear altogether so hearty in a time of

danger;" yet I cannot think it an instance of hard-judging at all. For if persons can deliberately subscribe to the doctrines of justification by faith alone, and other articles that are purely *Calvinistical*, yet so explain them away as plainly to prove they scarce believe a word of them, I should not wonder if they turned *Jacobites*, or went over to the pretender, whenever they saw it suited their worldly interest so to do.

That I am not alone in my opinion, give me leave, Rev. Sir, to transcribe a passage I lately met with in the latter end of a book, entitled, *The Honeycomb of Free Justification*, written by one Mr. *Eaton*, A.M. of *Trinity College* in *Cambridge*, printed at *London* in the year 1642.

"Free justification was first enjoined to be diligently taught, for the reformation of the church, by King *Henry* VIII. but was by King *Edward* VI. and Queen *Elizabeth*, principally established by parliament, and singled out from all the rest of the established articles of religion; and reduced into sermons and homilies to be (after the people's sight of their lost estate, and woeful misery by sin) *principally taught*, and chiefly known and understood of all the subjects and commons of the land, for these four causes.

1st. "Because it is the only immediate cause and means of our peace with God. For being justified by faith we have peace with God, *Romans* v. 1. and our assurance of free salvation by Jesus Christ, and is therefore called the justification of life, *Romans* v. 18. 'For whom God justifieth, them he also glorifieth,' *Romans* viii. 30.

2d. "Because it is the ordinance of God (quite contrary to the judgment of popish carnal reason) that powerfully causeth people to leave their sins, and live a true sanctified and godly life. *Titus* ii. 11 to 15. *Romans* 5th and 6th chapter.

3d. “Because it is the chief cause and means to discover and suppress the *Romish* antichrist, popery, &c. and all other superstitions, sects, errors and schisms out of the land; and to establish unity, peace and concord in matters of religion, and of assurance of free salvation, and makes every man to keep in a lawful vocation, and to do it profitably in love. *Galatians* v. 13.

4th. “To direct ministers ὀρθοποδεῖν to go with a right foot to the truth of the gospel, *Galatians* ii. 14. in sound preaching, and pure declaring of the word of God, by true faith of free justification, because (saith the established doctrine of our church) sincere preachers ever were, and ever shall be but a few; and their preaching of God’s word most sincere in the beginning, by process of time waxeth less and less pure, and after is corrupt, and last of all quite laid down, and left off; because free justification is a doctrine hardly learned in a church, and soon lost again, *Galatians* i. 6. and yet is the true strength, happiness and safety of the whole land, *Isaiah* lxii. 1–6.”

Hereupon, the 5th part of the sermon against disobedience and rebellion, established by Queen *Elizabeth*, teacheth the commons, that such bishops or ecclesiastical persons, as by pride and ambitious rule, do by terms of error, schism, or heresy, hinder this *main light of God’s word* from the people, are the *chiefest traytors* in the land: and the 6th and last part largely teacheth, that such subjects and commons to whom through ignorance of God’s word, this light of righteousness, and this sun of understanding doth not shine, although they may brag, as did sometimes the *Jewish* clergy and people, that they cannot lack knowledge, yet are such by their blind dead faith, traytors to God, traytors to their king, traytors to their own souls and bodies, and traytors to the whole land and country.”

Thus writes that good man Mr. *Eaton*. I leave you, Rev. Sir, to make what use of it you please. You see we have human as well as divine authority on our side. And yet we are looked upon as erroneous, and are accordingly denied the churches: and what for? even for preaching up the doctrine of justification by faith alone; for which the glorious martyrs of the Church of *England* burnt in *Smithfield*. If this be not like *Nero*'s setting *Rome* on fire, and then charging it upon the Christians, I know not what is.

This is really, Rev. Sir, the truth of the case. However, we are willing to frequent the church, and receive the holy sacrament, if the clergy please to give us leave. This I think we may do, without being guilty of the inconsistency you charge us with (page 29th), because in the 26th article of our church we are taught, "Although in the visible church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometime the evil have chief authority in the ministration of the word and sacraments: yet, forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his commission and authority, we may use their ministry, both in hearing the word of God, and in receiving of the sacraments: neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such, as by faith, and rightly do receive the sacraments ministered unto them, which be effectual, because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men." This I think a sufficient vindication, for the methodists keeping in the church. But if some cannot go thus far, nor bear to hear the doctrine of justification by faith alone continually preached against, the preachers must thank themselves if any entirely desert the church, and run to meeting-houses or elsewhere, to get food for their souls. For I am persuaded, if the doctrine of justification by faith alone be banished from our pulpits, people may attend to their lives

end, and yet never have the whole counsel of God (as you think they may, page 50.) declared unto them.

I could enlarge upon this point, and also answer the charge of enthusiasm which you bring against me in several parts of your letter. But I willingly omit it, because I shall have occasion to write more explicitly on these points in my second answer to the *Observations*: I have some reasons for deferring it at present. But I assure you, Rev. Sir, you must not expect me to treat that anonymous author with less justice than in my last. For however worthy perhaps he may be in your sight, I think I shall prove him to be no better than an unskilful slandering sophister; and if a clergyman, an unorthodox blind guide.

As for the irregularities I have been guilty of, in curtailing the liturgy, or not using the common-prayer in the fields, &c. I think it needless to make any apology, till I am called thereto in a judicial way by my ecclesiastical superiors. They have laws and courts. In and by those, ecclesiastics are to be judged; and I am ready to make a proper defence, as I mentioned in my answer to the first part of the observations, whenever it shall be required at my hands. Only I would beg leave to observe, that by calling extempore prayer, *extempore effusions*, you cast a slur upon the whole body of dissenters, and on many of the reformed churches abroad. And as the free grace dissenters have helped to keep up the *Calvinistical* disputes, which you say have happily slept in the established church for so many years; was it not for his Majesty's great kindness, and the lenity of his government, they would meet with no better treatment than the poor Methodists do now.

Indeed you say (page 41st) "We do not oppose or deny the true scripture doctrine concerning these points, (viz. Free justification, the new birth, and the in-dwelling of the spirit) but only your account and explication of

them." Give me leave therefore, Rev. Sir, if you are pleased to favour me with another letter, to let me know how you explain these important points, or what you can find inconsistent with scripture, or the articles of the church of *England*, in those discourses which I have published, and in which I have endeavoured to treat on these points in an explicit manner.

I would observe to you, that I wish every non-resident minister in *England*, could give as good an account of their non-residence, as I can of my absence from *Savannah*. To satisfy you, Rev. Sir, I will acquaint you with the whole. When I first went abroad, I was appointed to be minister of *Frederica*. But upon my arrival in *Georgia*, finding there was no minister at *Savannah*, and no place of worship at *Frederica*, by the advice of magistrates and people, I continued at *Savannah*, teaching publicly, and from house to house, and catechising the children day by day, during the whole time of my first continuance in *Georgia*; except about a fortnight in which I went to *Frederica* to visit the people, and to see about building a church, for which I had given fifty pounds out of some money I had collected, and of which I have given a public account. About four months after, I came over to *England* to receive priest's orders, and collect money for building an Orphan-house. At the request of many, the honourable trustees presented me to the living of *Savannah*. I accepted it, but refused the stipend of fifty pounds per annum, which they generously offered me. Neither did I put them to any expence during my stay in *England*, where I thought it my duty to abide, till I had collected a sufficient sum wherewith I might begin the Orphan-house, though I should have left *England* sooner, had I not been prevented by the embargo. However, I was more easy because the honourable trustees, I knew had sent over another minister, who arrived soon after I left the colony. Upon my second arrival at *Georgia*,

finding the care of the Orphan-house, and the care of the parish, too great a task for me, I immediately wrote over to the honourable trustees to provide another minister. In the mean while, as most of my parishioners were in debt, or ready to leave the colony for want of being employed, and as I believed, that erecting an Orphan-house would be the best thing I could do for them and their posterity, I thought it my duty, from time to time, to answer the invitations that were sent me to preach Christ Jesus in several parts of *America*, and to make more collections towards carrying on the Orphan-house. The Lord stirred up many to be ready to distribute and willing to communicate on this occasion. I always came home furnished with provisions and money, most of which was expended among the people, and by this means the northern part of the colony almost entirely subsisted for a considerable time. This was asserted, not very long ago, before the house of commons. And now, Sir, judge you whether my non-residence, was any thing like the non-residents of most of the *English* clergy. When I was absent from my parishioners, I was not loitering or living at ease, but preaching and begging for them and theirs: and when I returned, it was not to fleece my flock, and then go and spend it upon my lusts, or lay it up for a fortune for myself and relations. No: freely as I had received, freely I gave: and "therefore when the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." I am become a fool in glorying. But you have compelled me. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knoweth that I lie not. I fought not theirs, but them. And however you may judge me, (page 20th) as though I chose this itinerant way of preaching for the sake of *Profit*; yet I assure you

the last day will prove that you and all like-minded are quite mistaken. I choose a voluntary poverty. The love of God and the good of souls is my only aim. The manner of my call to my present way of acting, if the Lord gives me freedom, shall be the subject of a future tract. I send you this short letter, to convince you that I am really willing to give an answer of the hope that is in me, with meekness and fear. I shall only add, if you do not like the example of *Gallio* (page 27th) I would humbly recommend to you the advice of *Gamaliel*. “Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this council, or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.” I am, Rev. Sir,

Your affectionate brother and servant,

George Whitefield.

AN ANSWER TO THE FIRST PART OF AN ANONYMOUS PAMPHLET, ENTITLED, "OBSERVATIONS UPON THE CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR OF A CERTAIN SECT USUALLY DISTINGUISHED BY THE NAME OF METHODISTS."

IN A LETTER TO THE RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOP OF LONDON, AND THE OTHER RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOPS CONCERNED IN THE PUBLICATION THEREOF.

False Witnesses did rise up: they laid to my Charge Things that I knew not,

Psalms xxxv. 11.

A LETTER TO THE RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOP OF LONDON, &C.

London, March 1744.

My Lords,

THE Apostle *Peter* exhorts us, "to be ready to give an answer to every one that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and

fear." And if this is to be our conduct towards every one, much more are we bound to behave thus to those who are overseers of the church of God, and consequently are invested with an authority to require an answer at our hands.

A desire of complying with this apostolical injunction, induced me, my Lords, about five weeks ago, to publish an Advertisement [1], wherein I desired an open publication of several anonymous papers, entitled, *Observations upon the conduct and behaviour of a certain sect, usually distinguished by the name of Methodists*. Papers, which, upon enquiry, I found had been printed some considerable time, had been read in the societies of *London* and *Westminster*, and handed about in a private manner to particular friends, with strict orders to part with them to no one. What could be the meaning of such a procedure, I know not. But this I know, however such a clandestine way of acting, may savour of the wisdom of the serpent, it does not bespeak that harmlessness of the dove, which our Saviour in an especial manner recommends to his ministers.

Whereas some anonymous papers against the people called *Methodists* in general, and myself and friends in particular, have been for some weeks printed in a large edition, and handed about and read in the religious societies of the cities of *London* and *Westminster*, and given into the hands of many private persons, with strict injunctions to lend them to no one, nor let them go out of their hands to any; and whereas, after having accidentally had the hasty perusal of them, I find many queries of great importance concerning me, and my conduct, contained therein; and as it appears that one paper has little or no connexion with another, and a copy, when applied for, was refused me, and I know not how soon I may embark for *Georgia*; I am therefore obliged hereby to desire a speedy open publication of the

aforesaid papers, in order that a candid, impartial answer may be made thereto by me,

George Whitefield.

London, January 26, 1744.

Who the real author of these papers may be, I am not yet able for a certainty to find out. But I had reason to believe, that my Lord of *London* was concerned in composing or revising them. That I might not be mistaken, after the publication of the advertisement, I wrote his Lordship a letter [2], wherein I desired to know, whether his Lordship was the author of this paper or not, and also desired a copy. His Lordship was pleased to send word by my friend, who carried the letter, that "I should hear from him." Hitherto his Lordship has not favoured me with an answer. Only some time ago, one Mr. *Owen*, a printer, in *Amen-Corner, Pater-noster Row*, who is printer to my Lord of *London*, left a letter [3] for me, wherein he informed me, that he had orders from Several of the Bishops to print the *Observations on the conduct and behaviour of the Methodists* (with some few Additions) for their use; and when the impression was finished, I should have a copy. Why my Lord of *London*, or the several other Bishops concerned, should conceal their names, or why a copy should be denied me, so long after the papers had been printed, I leave the world to judge. I cannot think such a way of proceeding can gain your Lordships any credit from the public, or any thanks from the other Bishops who have not interested themselves in this affair, and who, I believe, are more NOBLE, than to countenance the publication of any such performance.

My Lord,

London, February 1, 1744.

Simplicity becomes the followers of *Jesus Christ*, and therefore I think it my duty to trouble your Lordship with these few lines. I suppose your Lordship has seen the advertisement published by me, about four days ago, concerning some anonymous papers, which have been handed about in the societies for some considerable time. As I think it my duty to answer them, I should be glad to be informed whether the report be true, that your Lordship composed them, that I may the better know to whom I may direct my answer. A sight also of one of the copies, if in your Lordship's keeping, would much oblige, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged, dutiful son and servant,

George Whitefield.

P. S. The bearer will bring your Lordship's answer; or if your Lordship please to favour me with a line, be pleased to direct for me, to be left with Mr. *J. Syms*, &c.

Sir,

February 3. 1744.

My name is *Owen*. I am a printer in *Amen-Corner*; and I waited upon you to let you know, that I have had orders from several of the Bishops, to print for their use, such numbers of the *Observations upon the conduct and behaviour of the Methodists*, (with some few additions) as they have respectively bespoken. And I will not fail to wait upon you with one copy, as soon as the impression is finished. I am, Sir,

Your most obedient, &c.

It is a weighty thing with me, my Lords, to have insinuations made, or queries put to me, in respect to my practice and doctrine, in such a public manner, by persons that are placed at the head of the church. It is true, your Lordships have not put queries to me in your own names; but as the author

has concealed his, and these papers are printed by your Lordships orders, you have thereby adopted them for your own; consequently, I am put under a necessity of directing this letter as I have done. And I can assure your Lordships, that with great deference to the dignity of your office, after earnest prayer, with I trust some degree of humility, and unfeigned simplicity of heart, I now sit down to perform my promise, to give a candid and impartial answer to the fore-mentioned papers, which were sent me last week, (collected into a pamphlet) by Mr. *Owen*; and I suppose, by your Lordships order.

I never yet was, and hope never shall be so far left to lean to my own understanding, as to fancy myself infallible. Young as I am, I know too much of the devices of Satan, and of the desperate wickedness and deceitfulness of my own heart; not to be sensible, that I am a man of like passions with others, and consequently may have sometimes mistaken nature for grace, imagination for revelation, and the fire of my own temper, for the pure and sacred flame of holy zeal, which cometh from God's altar. —If therefore, upon perusing the pamphlet, I find that I have been blameable in any respect (as in all probability I may) I will not only confess it, but return hearty thanks both to the compiler and your Lordships, though unknown.

Indeed, it is but of little consequence to the merits of the cause to know who the author is. Only thus much may be said, your Lordships yourselves being judges, it is not quite fair to give stabs in the dark; and it is some satisfaction to the person attacked, to know who and what his antagonists are, that he may know the better how to deal with them. But since that cannot be granted, it may be more to the purpose, to consider the matters

contained in the pamphlet, and to answer for myself, so far as I am concerned.

It is entitled, *Observations upon the conduct and behavior* (*i. e.* upon the conduct and conduct) *of a certain sect, usually distinguished by the name of Methodists*. I think the title ought rather to run thus,—*Misrepresentations of the conduct and PRINCIPLES, of many orthodox, well-meaning ministers, and members of the church of England, and loyal subjects to his Majesty King George, falsely termed a Sect, and usually distinguished, OUT OF CONTEMPT, by the name of Methodists*. This title, my Lords, would just answer the contents. For the *principles* as well as *conduct* of the Methodists are struck at, and greatly misrepresented in this pamphlet. And the Methodists are no *sect*, no separatists from the established church, neither do they call people from her communion. Besides, the author ought to have added, *A new edition, with several alterations, additions and corrections*; for otherwise the world is made to believe, that this is the self-same composition which was handed about some months ago, and of which I had a hasty reading. Whereas there are several things omitted, some things added, and divers alterations made in this new edition; so that the title-page is not only injudicious, but false and scandalous.

And if the *title-page* is so bad, I fear the *design and scope* of the pamphlet itself is much worse. For is it not to represent the proceedings of the Methodists as dangerous to the church and state, in order to procure an act of parliament against them, or oblige them to secure themselves by turning dissenters?

But is not such a motion, at such a season as this, both uncharitable and unseasonable? Is not the administration engaged enough already in other affairs, without troubling themselves with the Methodists? Or who would

now advise them to bring farther guilt upon the nation, by persecuting some of the present government's most hearty friends? I say, my Lords, the present government's most hearty friends. For though the Methodists (as the world calls them) disagree in some particulars, yet I dare venture to affirm, that to a man they all agree in this, to love and honour the king. For my own part, I profess myself a zealous friend to his present Majesty King *George*, and the present administration. Wherever I go, I think it my duty to pray for, and to preach up obedience to him, and all that are set in authority under him, in the most explicit manner. And I believe, should it ever come to the trial, the poor despised Methodists, who love his Majesty out of *principle*, would cleave close to him in the most imminent danger, when others that adhere to him, only for *preferments*, perhaps might not appear altogether so hearty. My Lords, I have now been a preacher above seven years, and for these six years past, have been called to act in a very public way. Your Lordships must have heard of the very great numbers that have attended me: sometimes several of the nobility, and now and then, even some of the clergy have been present. Did they ever hear me speak a disloyal word? Are there not thousands can testify, how fervently and frequently I pray for his Majesty King *George*, his royal offspring, and the present government? Yes, my Lords, they can. And I trust, through the divine assistance, I should be enabled to do so, though surrounded with popish enemies, and in danger of dying for it as soon as my prayer was ended. This, my Lords, as far as I am acquainted with them, is the present temper of my friends, as well as myself. And may I not then appeal to your Lordships, whether it be not the interest of the administration to encourage such persons, or at least to let them alone? *Gallio*, on a like occasion, thought it his wisdom to act thus. "For when the *Jews* made insurrection with one accord against *Paul*, and

brought him to the judgment-seat, saying, this fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law; he said unto the *Jews*, if it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye *Jews*, reason would that I should bear with you. But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it, for I will be no judge of such matters." Nay, he was so far from approving of their motion, that he drove them from the judgment-seat.

My Lords, I know of no law of the state that we have broken, and therefore we have not incurred the displeasure of the civil power. If your Lordships apprehend that we are liable to ecclesiastical censures, we are ready to make a proper defence whenever called to it by our ecclesiastical superiors. As for myself, your Lordships very well know that I am a Batchelor of Arts, have taken the oaths, subscribed to the articles, and have been twice regularly ordained. In this character I have acted both at home and abroad, and know of no law of our government which prohibits my preaching in any field, barn, street, or out-house whatsoever.

It is true, one or two of my friends, who preach as I do, were bred dissenters, and had been licensed, and preached in licensed places before my acquaintance with them; and one or two of the houses where the Methodists meet, have, without my knowledge, been licensed since; and therefore the author of the pamphlet is quite mistaken in his *first paragraph* (as well as the title page and design of his pamphlet) wherein he declares, that "it does not appear that any of the preachers among the Methodists have qualified themselves and the places (it would have been better *English* if he had said, qualified themselves, and licensed the places) of their assembling, according to the act of toleration; which act warrants separate assemblies for the worship of God, that before were unlawful." I wish the author had taken a little more care to inform himself before he published the

pamphlet. He would not then have been guilty of so many egregious mistakes, or without cause have condemned the innocent, as he hath done. However, in the general, he is right,—for, as yet, we see no sufficient reason to leave the church of *England*, and turn dissenters; neither will we do it till we are thrust out. When a ship is leaky, prudent sailors, that value the cargo, will not leave it to sink, but rather continue in it so long as they can, to help pump out the water. I leave the author, my Lords, to make the application.

But whether the Methodists are church-men or dissenters, the acts of King *Charles* II. referred to, page 3. paragraph 1. and page 4, paragraph 2. make nothing against them, neither do they prove the Methodists to be violaters of the statute law, by their being *field-preachers*. And what the author so peremptorily affirms, page 4. paragraph 3. (and which, by the way, is one of the *few additions* made in this, which was not in the last edition) is directly false. For he says, that "it has not been known, that a Dissenting teacher of any denomination whatever, has thought himself warranted under the act of toleration, to preach in fields or streets." It may not, indeed, be known to the author; but I know, my Lords, two of the most eminent among the Dissenting ministers, who have thought themselves warranted, if not by the act of toleration, yet by the laws of the land, to preach out of doors; and accordingly, when the house would not contain the people, they have preached in a field or orchard, and near the common high-way. My Lords, I have been perusing all the acts of King *Charles* II. wherein the word *field* is mentioned, and find they are intended "to suppress *seditious conventicles*, for promoting further, and more proper, speedy remedies against the growing and dangerous practices of *seditious sectaries*, and other *disloyal persons*, who, under pretence of tender consciences, have, or may, at their

meetings *contrive insurrections* (as late experience hath shewn)". These, my Lords, are the preambles of the acts. These are the only field-meetings I can find that are prohibited. And how, my Lords, can such acts be applied to the Methodists? Does not such an application imply a charge against the Methodists, as though they were seditious sectaries, disloyal persons, who, under pretence of tender consciences, have, or may contrive insurrections? Has any late experience shewn this? No, my Lords, and I hope no future experience ever will. How then can your Lordships, with a safe conscience, encourage such a pamphlet, or bespeak any number of Mr. *Owen*, in order, as may be supposed, that they should be dispersed among your Lordships' clergy? Well might the author conceal his name. A more notorious libel has not been published. I am apt to believe, that Mr. *Owen* the printer is of my mind also; for he has taken care in the title-page, not to let the world know where, or by whom, this pamphlet was printed. It comes into public like a child dropt, that no body cares to own. And, indeed, who can be blamed for disowning such a libel? For how, my Lords, does it appear by these acts, what the author so confidently asserts, page 4, paragraph 2, "that this new sect of Methodists have broken through all these provisions and restraints, neither regarding the penalties of the laws, which stand in full force against them, nor embracing the protection which the act of toleration might give them, in case they complied with the conditions of it?" How can he immediately add, "and if this be not an open defiance to government, it is hard to say what is?" May I not more justly say, if this be not an open defamation, and open defiance of all rules of charity, it is hard to say what is? Might he not as well tax the Methodists with high treason? Father, forgive him! Lord Jesus, lay not this sin to his charge!

Though the reign, my Lords, of King *Charles* II. wherein the acts before referred to were made, was not the most mild and moderate in religious matters, yet your Lordships very well know the famous trial of *Mede* and *Penn*; and, after the jury had been confined a long time, they brought them in, *guilty only of speaking in* Gracechurch-street. And if *Quakers* met with so much lenity under the reign of King *Charles*, what liberty of preaching in fields, and elsewhere, may not the loyal ministers and members of the church of *England*, nay, protestant Dissenting teachers also, expect under the more gentle and moderate reign of his present Majesty King *George*, who, as I have been informed, has declared, "there shall be no persecution in his days." May the crown long flourish on his royal head, and a popish Pretender never be permitted to sit upon the *English* throne! To this, I believe, all the Methodists will heartily say, *Amen*, and *Amen*.

That the Methodists, in general, are members of the *Established Church*, the author of the pamphlet himself confesses. For, page 4, paragraph 4. after he has, without proof, charged them with making open inroads upon the national constitution; he adds, that "these teachers and their followers affect to be thought members of the national church." And his following words prove that they not only affect it, but are members of the Established Church in reality: for, says he, "and do accordingly join in communion with it." And it appears, paragraph 6. that some of the Methodists communicate every Lord's-day. What better proof can they give of their being members of the Church of *England*? It would be well if all her members gave a like proof. But then, says our author, page 4, paragraph 4, they do it in a manner that is "very irregular, and contrary to the directions laid down in the rubrick before the communion, which is established by the act of uniformity." (Here is another correction in this new edition.) In the copy

that I read, it was “contrary to the directions laid down in our great rule, the act of uniformity.” I am glad the author found out his mistake, in putting the act of uniformity, for the rubrick. I hope the next edition will come out more correct still. This rubrick, says he, directs as follows: page 4, paragraph 4: “So many as intend to be partakers of the holy communion, shall signify their names to the curate, at least, some time the day before.” And, for not doing this, the new sect of Methodists, paragraph 5. page 6. is charged not only with breaking through, but “notoriously despising these wholsome rules.” But how unjust is such a charge? When I read it, it put me in mind of what the poor persecuted officers of the children of *Israel* said to *Pharaoh*, *Exodus* v. 15, 16. “Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? There is no straw given unto thy servants. They say unto us, Make brick, and behold thy servants are beaten, but the fault is in thy own people.” For, my Lords, is it not the business of the *clergy* to see this rubrick put in execution? And is it not the duty of the *church-wardens*, according to the 28th canon, quoted by our author, page 5, paragraph 4, “to mark whether any strangers come often, and commonly from other parishes to their churches, and to shew the ministers of them.” But, my Lords, where is this rubrick or canon observed, or insisted on by the ministers or church-wardens through *England*, *Ireland*, *Wales*, or his Majesty’s town of *Berwick* upon *Tweed*, except now and then, when they entertain a grudge against some particular Methodists? These, my Lords, would rejoice to see, that ministers and church-wardens would do their duty in this particular. For many of them have been so offended by the clergy’s promiscuously and carelesly admitting *all sorts of people* to the communion, that if it had not been for me, they would have left the church only upon this account. We would therefore humbly recommend it to your Lordships, that you, and the

rest of the Right Reverend the Bishops, would insist upon curates and church-wardens putting this, and all other such wholesome laws and rubricks into execution. That which is holy would not then be given unto dogs, nor so many open and notorious evil-livers take the sacred symbols of our Lord's most blessed body and blood into their unhallowed hands and mouths. The Methodists wish your Lordships prosperity in this much wished-for, though long neglected part of reformation, in the name of the Lord.

At the same time, my Lords, I would not say any thing that might any way encourage disorders; neither would I persuade the Methodists to leave their own parish-churches when the sacrament is administered there. On the contrary, I would have them take the author's advice, page 6, paragraph 6, "If particular persons are disposed to receive weekly, when the sacrament is not administered at their own parish-church, to repair privately to the church nearest their own, where the sacrament is administered every Lord's-day, having first signified their names to the minister, as the rubrick directs." This, I believe, they will readily comply with. For I cannot think with this author (in the same paragraph), that the reason of their coming in such numbers is, that they may have the "vain pleasure of appearing together in a body, and as a distinct sect." We would rather, according to the rules of that charity which hopeth all things for the best, believe that they come together in such companies to animate and encourage one another. Dr. *Horneck*, I remember, in his account of the primitive Christians, remarks, that "where you saw one Christian, you might generally see more." And is it not delightful, my Lords, to behold a communion table crouded? Do not such as complain of it, discover something of the spirit of those *Pharisees*, who were angry when so many people brought their sick to be healed by

our Lord Jesus on the sabbath-day? For I cannot think, that the ministers complain of this, only on account of their being hereby "put under the difficulty (paragraph 5, page 6.) either of rejecting great numbers as unknown to them, or administering the sacrament to great numbers, of whom they have no knowledge," because it is too notorious that hundreds receive the blessed sacrament, both in *London* and other places, where there are no Methodists, whom the minister knows little or nothing at all about, and takes no pains to enquire after. O that the Author's mentioning this, may be a means of stirring up the clergy to approve themselves *good shepherds*, by seeking, as much as in them lies, to know the state of all that come to the holy communion! Glad am I, my Lords, to find that the author, in this edition, hath left out the complaint which was in the copy I first read, of such crowds coming to receive the sacrament, "because the ministers who are afternoon-lecturers, were thereby put under the hardship of not having time for necessary rest and refreshment, between morning and evening duties. For might not our Lord say unto them, "You slothful servants, cannot you labour for me one day in a week? Cannot you lose one meal to feed my lambs, without complaining of it as an hardship?" Surely none can make such a complaint, but such "whose god is their belly, whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things." But I need not mention this, because the Author himself seems ashamed of it.

And indeed this, as well as the other objections against the Methodists, are so trivial, and the acts referred to as discountenancing their field-preaching, so impertinent, that the Author, without the least degree of a prophetic spirit, might easily foresee, paragraph 8, page 8, "that this, and every other *such complaint* against the Methodists, would be censured not only by them, (but by every impartial person) as a discouragement to piety

and devotion, and particularly a religious observation of the Lord's-day." Nay, my Lords, he might have foreseen that it would be censured as a wicked, false, and ill-designing libel. For is it not wicked, to represent innocent and loyal persons as *open defiers of government*, page 4, paragraph 2, and making *open inroads upon the national constitution*, (paragraph 4.) without bringing any real proofs of either?

I am not, my Lords, of the Author's opinion, paragraph 8, page 8, "that this slander (of his being a libeller) is effectually confuted, by looking back to the state of the several religious societies in *London* and *Westminster* for many years past." This will only serve to increase every unprejudiced person's censure of this performance, and more effectually, without the least degree of slander, prove it a *notorious libel*. For wherein do the Methodist societies transgress the laws of church or state, any more than the societies in *London* and *Westminster*? "Do the particular members of each society (paragraph 8. page 8.) attend the public duties of the day, together with their neighbours, as the laws of church and state direct?" Do not the members of the Methodist societies the same? "Have the members of the religious societies in *London* and *Westminster* (as the Author mentions in the same paragraph) also (by private agreements among themselves) their evening meetings, to employ the remainder of the day in serious conversation, and in reading good books, &c." Have not the members of the Methodist societies liberty to enter into a like private agreement among themselves? "Have the members of the *London* societies behaved with modesty and decency, without any violation of public order and regularity?" So have ours, my Lords, as all must confess who have been present when our societies met.

And therefore, my Lords, if these *London* societies, as our Author says, paragraph 8, page 8. have received no discouragements, but, on the contrary, have been countenanced and encouraged by the bishops and clergy; why do not the Methodists meet with the same treatment? Are they not as loyal subjects? If the one *read a prayer*, may not the other *pray extempore*? Does any law of God or man forbid it? If the one meet in a *vestry*, or private house, may not the other meet in a *Foundery* or *Tabernacle*? Are not your Lordships, therefore, reduced to this dilemma, either to encourage both or neither? or at least give the world better reasons than the Author of this pamphlet has, why your Lordships should countenance and encourage the one, and so strenuously discountenance and discourage the other.

For my own part, my Lords, I know of no reason why they are discountenanced, except this, "The Methodist societies (as they are called) are more for the power of godliness than those other societies of *London* and *Westminster*." I assure your Lordships, I have not been altogether a stranger to these societies. I used to meet with some of them frequently, and have more than once preached their quarterly sermon at *Bow-church*. Some, who before had only the form of godliness, our Saviour was since pleased to call effectually by his grace. But when they began to talk feelingly and experimentally of the new-birth, free justification, and the indwelling of the Spirit of God in believers hearts, they were soon looked upon as righteous over-much, and accordingly were cast out by their self-righteous brethren. These were the late extravagances, my Lords, into which the Author (just at the conclusion of his first part) says, that some have been unhappily misled; and this, my Lords, was the first rise of the societies which the Methodists now frequent. O that he and all who oppose them, had been misled into the

like extravagances! I mean a real experience of the new-birth, and the righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed and applied to their souls by faith, through the operation of the eternal Spirit! For without this they cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. These things, my Lords, the first members of the religious societies in *London* and *Westminster* were no strangers to. Nay, their being misled into what the Author calls the Methodists late extravagancies, was the rise of their societies, as well as ours; and they met for the very same ends, and I believe in the very same spirit as the Methodists now do. For a proof of this, I would refer the Author to Dr. *Woodward*'s account of the rise and progress of the religious societies in the city of *London*, &c. My Lords, I have been reading over this second chapter, and in reading it, could scarce refrain weeping, when I considered how blind the author of this pamphlet must be, not to discern, that the first religious societies answered, as to their spirit, experience, and ends of meeting, to the Methodist societies, as face answers to face in the water. Let him not, therefore, mention the predecessors of the present *London* societies (the last words of the first part) as though that would strengthen his cause. Indeed, my Lords, it weakens it much. For, was it possible for these predecessors to rise from the dead, and examine our principles and practices, and those of the present religious societies of *London* and *Westminster*, I believe they would utterly disown them, and turn Methodists too.

And why, my Lords, should the Author be so averse to *field-preaching*? Has not our Saviour given a sanction to this way of preaching? Was not the best sermon that was ever preached, delivered on a mount? Did not our glorious *Emmanuel* (after he was thrust out of the synagogues) preach from a ship, in a wilderness, &c.? Did not the Apostles, after his ascension,

preach in *schools*, *public markets*, and such like places of resort and concourse? And can we copy after better examples? If it be said, "that the world was then heathen," I answer, and am persuaded your Lordships will agree with me in this, that there are thousands and ten thousands in his Majesty's dominions, as ignorant of true and undefiled religion, as ever the heathens were? And are not persons who dare venture out, and shew such poor souls the way to heaven, real friends both to church and state? And why then, my Lords, should the *civil power* be applied to in order to quell and suppress them? Or a pamphlet encouraged by several of the *Right Reverend the Bishops*, which is manifestly calculated for that purpose? I would humbly ask your Lordships, whether it would not be more becoming your Lordships characters, to put your clergy on preaching against revelling, cock-fighting, and such like, than to move the government against those, who out of love to God and precious souls, put their lives in their hand, and preach unto such revellers, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus? What if the Methodists, "by public advertisements do invite the rabble?" (as our Author is pleased to write, page 4, paragraph 2.) Is not the same done by other clergy, and even by your Lordships, when you preach charity sermons? But, my Lords, what does the Author mean by the *rabble*? I suppose, the common people. If so, these are they who always heard the blessed Jesus gladly. It was chiefly the poor, my Lords, the οχλος, the turba, the mob, the multitude, these people, who, the scribes and pharisees said, knew not the law, and were accursed; these were they that were evangelized, had the gospel preached unto them, and received the Spirit of God's dear Son. Not many mighty, not many noble are called, says the Apostle. *Indocti rapiunt cœlum, dum nos cum doctrina descendimus in Gehennam*, says one of the fathers. And therefore, my Lords, supposing we

do advertise the rabble, and none but such make up our auditories, (which is quite false) if this be the Methodists shame, they may glory in it. for these rabble, my Lords, have precious and immortal souls, for which the dear Redeemer shed his precious blood, as well as the great and rich. These, my Lords, are the publicans and harlots that enter into the kingdom of heaven, whilst self-righteous formal professors reject it. To shew such poor sinners the way to God, to preach to them the power of Christ's resurrection, and to pluck them as firebrands out of the burning, the Methodist preachers go out into the highways and hedges. If this is to be vile, by the help of my God, I shall be more vile; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and be made instrumental in turning any of this rabble to righteousness. And more especially do I think it my duty to invite, and preach to this rabble in all places, where providence shall send me, at this season; that I may warn them against the dreadful effects of popish principles, and exhort them to exert their utmost endeavours to keep out a popish Pretender from ever sitting upon the *English* throne. In acting thus, I humbly apprehend, I can do most service to the cause of the blessed Jesus, to his present Majesty King *George*, to my fellow-subjects, and the government under which I live. And however such kind of preachers may be every where spoken against now, yet I doubt not but at the great decisive day, they will be received with an *Euge bene*, and shine as stars in the firmament for ever and ever: whilst those, who have only "divined for hire, have fed themselves, and not the flock, and lorded it over God's heritage," perhaps, may pay dear for their preferment, and rise to everlasting contempt. Pardon me, my Lords, for expressing myself here with some degree of warmth. I must own it gives me concern, to see some of the clergy strain at a gnat and swallow a camel, and attempt to pull the mote out

of our eyes, before they have pulled the beam out of their own. Is it not ridiculous, my Lords, even in the eyes of worldly men, and does it not render the Author of this pamphlet, justly liable to contempt, to charge the Methodists with breaking canons and rubricks, which is really not their faults; when at the same time he knows, that the generality of the clergy so notoriously break both canons and rubricks, and that too in the most important articles, such as not CATECHISING, PLURALITIES, NON-RESIDENCE, &c. every day themselves? With what face can he do it? Is not this like *Nero*'s setting *Rome* on fire, and then charging it upon the Christians? May not "physician heal thyself," be immediately retorted on him?

But I have done. I would not bring a railing accusation against any. Neither would I, my Lords, when giving a reason of the hope that is in me, do it any other way than with meekness and fear. I would therefore now proceed to answer the other parts of the pamphlet; but I shall reserve that for another letter, which, God willing, shall be published in a short time. In the mean while, I humbly recommend this to the divine blessing, and to your Lordships considerations, and beg leave to subscribe myself, my Lords,

Your Lordships most obedient son and servant,

George Whitefield.

1. Whereas some anonymous papers against the people called Methodists in general, and myself and friends in particular, have been for some weeks printed in a large edition, and handed about and read in the religious societies of the cities of London and Westminster, and given into the hands of many private persons, with strict injunctions to lend them to no one, nor let them go out of their hands to any; and whereas, after having accidentally had the hasty perusal of them, I find many queries of great importance concerning me, and my conduct, contained therein; and as it appears that one paper has little or no connexion with another, and a copy, when applied for, was refused me, and I know not how soon I may embark for Georgia; I am therefore obliged hereby to desire a speedy open publication of the aforesaid papers, in order that a candid, impartial answer may be made thereto by me,

2. My Lord,

3. Sir,

AN ANSWER TO THE SECOND PART OF AN ANONYMOUS PAMPHLET, ENTITLED, "OBSERVATIONS UPON THE CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR OF A CERTAIN SECT, USUALLY DISTINGUISHED BY THE NAME OF METHODISTS:"

IN A SECOND LETTER TO THE RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOP OF LONDON, AND THE OTHER THE RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOPS CONCERNED IN THE PUBLICATION THEREOF.

My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record, that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Romans x. 1, 2, 3.

A SECOND LETTER TO THE RIGHT REV. THE BISHOP OF LONDON, &C.

On board the Wilmington, Captain Darling, bound from Plymouth to Piscataqua in New-England, August 25, 1744.

My Lords,

I TROUBLED your Lordships with a letter some time ago. I now proceed, according to my promise, to answer the remainder of the anonymous pamphlet entitled, *Observations upon the Conduct and Behaviour of a certain Sect usually distinguished by the Name of Methodists*. The author opens the second part with this preface: "Besides the many *Irregularities* which are justly charged upon these itinerant preachers as violations of the laws of church and state; it may be proper to enquire, whether the *doctrines* they teach, or those lengths they run, beyond what is practised among our religious societies, or in any other Christian church, be a service or disservice to religion? to which purpose, the following Queries are submitted to consideration." It is here taken for granted, that the Methodists (termed by our author, either out of contempt, or by way of periphrasis, *these itinerant preachers*) are justly charged with many *Irregularities*, which amount to violations of the laws of church and state. But how has the author proved, what he here takes for granted? I humbly apprehend not at all. For has it not appeared in my answer to the first part of his observations, that neither the act of toleration, nor that of *Charles* IId, any way affects the Methodists, as being loyal subjects to his majesty King *George*, and members of the Church of *England*? How then have they been justly charged with violations of the laws of the state? And has it not been equally made to appear, that the irregularity the author says the Methodists have been guilty of, in coming to other parish churches to receive the sacrament,

is owing to the negligence of your Lordship's clergy and church-wardens? How then have they been justly charged with violations of the laws of the church? But may we not suppose by his speaking so contemptuously of these itinerant preachers, that itinerant preaching itself, is one of the many irregularities and violations of the laws of the church at least, if not of the state, which according to this author are justly charged upon these itinerant preachers? His eighth query, page 11th (which for method sake I would here beg leave to make some remarks upon) bespeaks as much. For he herein submits it to the consideration of the public, "Whether, in a Christian nation, where the instruction and edification of the people is provided for, by placing ministers in *certain districts*, to whom the care of the souls within those districts is regularly committed; it can be for the service of religion, that itinerant preachers run up and down from place to place, and from county to county, drawing after them confused multitudes of people? an evil which our church has wisely provided against, says our author, in the ordination of a priest, by expresly limiting the exercise of powers conferred upon him, of preaching the word of God, and administring the holy sacraments, to *the congregation* where he shall be lawfully appointed thereunto." Here indeed is a heinous irregularity charged upon these itinerant preachers, even a violation of the commission given them when they were ordained priests; but with what justice, I would refer to your Lordships consideration. For if the commission given us, when ordained priests, absolutely prohibits us to preach any where but to the congregation where we shall be lawfully appointed thereunto, will it not prove too much? and has not the author, in endeavouring to reproach us, unwarily reproached your Lordships also? for are not your Lordships then equally irregular, equally violators of the laws of the church, whenever you preach (though it

be never so seldom) out of your Lordships respective diocesses? And does not this commission, thus strictly taken, absolutely forbid any presbyters whatsoever preaching any where besides in their own particular congregations? and if so, are not all ministers that exchange pulpits equally irregular, at least as really violators of their ordination commission, as these itinerant preachers?

Our author in the following paragraph under the forementioned query tells us, “That the bishops indeed and also our two universities have power to grant *licenses to preach*, of a larger extent, to such clergymen as they judge proper; who, in virtue thereof may, if they chuse, travel from place to place as itinerants. But then the church has provided in that case (*Can.* 50), that neither the minister, church-wardens, nor any other officers of the church shall suffer any man to preach within the churches and chapels, but such as by showing their licence to preach, shall appear unto them to be sufficiently authorized thereunto.” What these licences for itinerant preaching are to which the author here refers, is not certain. Does he not seem to mean the common licences which your Lordships give the clergy, when they take upon them holy orders? Are not these the licences which the church-wardens examine? And what is the end of these licences? Was it ever heard before that they were to qualify persons to be itinerant preachers? Is not the plain end of them, to satisfy the church-wardens that the persons who offer their service have had a regular ordination, and are sufficiently authorised to preach? And does not the author know that these licences now are little regarded? Do not our letters of orders answer the same end to all intents and purpose? Were they not judged sufficient at our first setting out into the ministry? And after all, what is it that the ministers and church-wardens can do to persons that have not these licences? Why they are not to suffer them

to preach *within* their churches and chapels? but have they any power, my Lords, to hinder them from preaching *without* their churches or chapels? No, blessed be God, their power is limited within: hitherto can they go, and no further. And therefore supposing these itinerant preachers, though they have no licenses, do not preach within any churches or chapels, unless with the ministers or church-wardens consent, how are they justly charged with violating a law of the church, though they should preach without doors to as great multitudes as shall be inclined to hear them?

He proceeds in the 3d paragraph under this 8th query to write thus: "The practice of licensing itinerant preachers was occasioned by the low talents of many incumbents in the more early days of the reformation, whose abilities carried them no farther than to the reading of homilies; a defect which has long been remedied by a liberal education of sufficient numbers of persons for the ministry, who regularly perform the office of preaching, as well as other duties, in the parishes committed to their care. And if the forementioned defect did still continue, as God be thanked it does not, it would be ill supplied by our modern itinerants, who make it their principal employ, wherever they go, to instil into the people a few favourite tenets of their own; and this, with such diligence and zeal as if the whole of Christianity depended upon them, and all efforts towards the true Christian life, without a belief of those tenets, were vain and ineffectual."

But, my Lords, what can this author mean by writing thus? for supposing the practice of itinerant preaching was primarily occasioned by the low talents of many incumbents in the more early days of the reformation, does it therefore follow, that there can be no other just cause assigned for itinerant preaching now? What if the generality of the present incumbents depart from the good old doctrines that were preached in the more early

days of the reformation, and notwithstanding their liberal education, make no other use of their learning but to explain away the articles and homilies, which they have subscribed in the grammatical and literal sense? Is it not necessary, in order to keep up the doctrines, and thereby the real dignity of the church, that either the clergy thus degenerated, should be obliged to read the homilies as formerly, and to preach consistently therewith; or that those who do hold the doctrines of the reformation, should go about from place to place, and from county to county, nay from pole to pole, if their sphere of action extended so far, to direct poor souls that are every-where ready to perish for lack of knowledge, into the right way which leadeth unto life? That this is the case between the established clergy and these itinerant preachers, will appear presently; and how then can this author charge them with making it their principal employ, wherever they go, to instil into the people a *few favourite tenets* of their own? Has the author followed them wherever they have preached, that he asserts this so confidently concerning them? Is it not to be wished that he had at least taken care to have been better informed? for then he would have saved himself from the guilt of a notorious slander. Is it not evident to all who hear them, that the favourite tenets which the itinerant preachers make it their principal employ to instil into people's minds wherever they go, are the *great doctrines of the reformation*, homilies and articles of the church? such as "Man's bringing into the world with him a corruption which renders him liable to God's wrath and eternal damnation: That the condition of man after the fall of *Adam*, is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God: That we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings: That they

are to be accursed, who presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature." These, my Lords, are some of the favourite tenets of these itinerant preachers. Their others are like unto them. Can these, my Lords, be properly called their own? Or ought it not to be the principal employ of every true minister, wherever he goes, to instil such tenets, and that too with the utmost diligence and zeal, into the people's minds? Does not a great part of Christianity depend on them? And are not all pretensions to a true Christian life, without a belief of these tenets, vain and ineffectual? May not these itinerant preachers therefore complain unto your Lordships of this anonymous author, as *Mephibosheth* complained to *David* of treacherous *Ziba*? Doubtless he hath slandered them. And wherefore does he speak so contemptuously of itinerant preachers? Is it not an amiable and honourable character? And may I not take the freedom of acquainting your Lordships, that if all the Right Reverend the Bishops did their duty, (especially my Lord of *London*, whose diocess is of such a vast extent) they would all of them long since have commenced itinerant preachers too?

But to return to an examination of the other part of the author's preface. After he has taken it for granted, that many irregularities are justly charged upon these itinerant preachers, as "Violations of the laws of church and state," he adds, "It may be proper to enquire, whether the doctrines they teach, and those lengths they run beyond what is practised among our religious societies, or in any other Christian church, be a service or disservice to religion." The religious societies or any other Christian church! What, does our author make the religious societies a church? This is going further than the Methodists, whom he is pleased to stile only a sect.

But if the religious societies, my Lords, be a church, may it not be proper to enquire how their doctrines or practices came to be set up as a rule and standard for others to go by, so that persons doing service or disservice to religion must be judged of according as they deviate from or adhere to the religious societies either in doctrine or practice? Or supposing the religious societies were to be a standard for others to go by, was it not incumbent on the author to give the public a short summary and account of their doctrines and practices? For otherwise how can the world possibly judge whether the Methodists do deviate from them; or if so, whether they do thereby service or disservice to religion? Indeed, this author has told us in his first part, how the religious societies behave on *Sundays*; but he has no where acquainted us with the principles they hold, or how they behave on other days. And till he does, I will venture to affirm, that unless these itinerants teach other doctrines than the present religious societies generally hold, and run greater lengths in Christianity than the generality of them, it is to be feared, now run, they will be in great danger of never arriving at "the mark for the prize of their high-calling in Christ Jesus their Lord."

I have been the more particular, my Lord, in the examination of the preface, because the author, by annexing these words, "to which purpose the following queries are submitted to consideration," seems to lay it down as the ground-work and foundation of all the subsequent queries. And if the foundation be so weak and sandy, how slight and superficial must be the superstructure?

I suppose your Lordships will readily grant, that it is the bounden duty of every regular and fair writer (especially when he is charging others with irregularities as violations of the laws of church and state) to take care that he does not violate the laws of Christian charity. Or if he puts queries to the

public concerning any persons, ought he not to take heed that those queries are founded upon truth, and that the charges therein exhibited are really matter of fact? But our author has notoriously neglected this fundamental rule, and thereby not only cast a lasting blot and odium upon his own character, if his name was known, but also hath done real hurt to the cause he would defend. The query already examined concerning *itinerant preaching*, wherein he has charged the Methodists with instilling into people a few favourite tenets of their own, sufficiently demonstrates this. But this is not all; several of the other queries now coming under consideration are by no means founded on truth, and contain charges against these itinerants, whereby they are as much wronged and unjustly vilified as ever *Stephen* was, when the *Jews* suborned men who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against *Moses* and against God, this holy place and the law."

To prove this, we need only examine the two queries which immediately follow the preface.

Query 1st. "Whether notions in religion may not be heightened to such extremes, as to lead some into a disregard of religion itself through despair of attaining such *exalted heights*? and whether others, who have imbibed those notions, may not be led by them into a disregard and disesteem of the common duties and offices of life, to such a degree at least as is inconsistent with that attention to them, and that diligence in them, which providence has made necessary to the well-being of private families and public societies, and which Christianity does not only require in all stations and in all conditions, but declares at the same time (*Colossians* iii. 22. *Ephesians* v. 6.) that the performance even of the lowest offices in life, as unto God

(whose providence has placed people in their several stations) is truly serving Christ, and will not fail of its reward in the next world."

Query 2. "Whether the enemy of mankind may not find his account in their carrying Christianity, which was designed for a rule to all stations and all conditions, to *such heights* as make it fairly practicable by a very few in comparison, or rather by none?"

His 5th and 6th queries, page the 10th, are like unto them. They run thus, "Whether those exalted strains in religion, and an imagination of being already in a *state of perfection*, are not apt to lead men to spiritual pride, and to a contempt of their fellow-christians; while they consider them as only going on in what they account the low and imperfect way," (*i. e.* as growing in grace and goodness only by degrees)? And again, "whether the same exalted strains and notions do not tend to weaken the natural and civil relations among men, by leading the inferiors, into whose heads those notions are infused, to a disesteem of their superiors; while they consider them as in a much *lower dispensation* than themselves; though those superiors are otherwise sober and good men, and regular attendants on the ordinances of religion?"

Here again it is supposed, that these itinerant preachers either imagine themselves to be in a state of perfection, or at least teach others to imagine that they are; and that the consequence of this is a weakning the natural and civil relations among men, by leading them to a disesteem of their fellow-christians, and superiors, who are supposed to be in a lower dispensation than themselves.

Heavy charges, my Lords, these are indeed! But what evidence does our author produce to prove them? Why really none at all. For here is no quotation at the bottom of either of these queries from any of their writings;

so that we cannot tell whether they are levelled against these itinerant preachers in general, or any one of them in particular. And therefore the Prebendary of *St. Paul*'s, who has been pleased to reply to my first letter, in vindication of this author, has done wrong in affirming, "That under each query there is some quotation either from my journals or other writings, whereon it is founded." But there is no such thing under these four, wherein such heavy charges are included. And therefore may I not argue, as the author does upon another occasion in his first part, page 8th, that 'till some proof does appear, the presumption must be that he has none?

In the mean while, I dare challenge this author, and the whole world, to produce any passage out of my writings, wherein I have taught any other Christianity, than what, through the aids of the Blessed Spirit, is practicable by all persons in all conditions; or that I ever preached otherwise than "That the performance even of the lowest offices of life as unto God, whose providence has placed people in their several stations, is truly a serving of Christ, and will not fail of its reward (though not of debt, yet of grace) in the next world." Neither did I ever imagine that I had attained, or was already perfect, or taught persons to imagine that they were so: no, I expect to carry a body of sin and death about with me as long as I live, and confess from my inmost soul, that I am the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints: I am so far from thinking that an imagination that we are already in a state of perfection, is only apt to lead men into spiritual pride, that I condemn it as the very quintessence and highest degree of it. And the more we are conformed to the divine image, the more exact I believe we shall be in keeping up our natural and civil relations among men, in giving all honour to whom honour is due, and in lowliness of mind esteeming each other better than ourselves. And if so, my Lords, may not the author, for

thus charging these itinerants in general without distinction, be justly stiled a *libeller*? And how will he undertake to prove, that any one of these itinerant preachers in particular, carries Christianity to any greater heighth than he himself does, query 13th, page 16, where in speaking of the Holy Spirit, he has these words, "Whose peculiar office it is, to season the heart with humility, and to root out of it the seeds (what is that but the very inbeing?) of pride and vain-glory."

Is he not very irregular in writing thus at random; nay, does he not hereby himself openly violate the laws both of church and state?

It is true, our author would appear an advocate for both; but does not his *third query*, page 9th, plainly prove him a real friend to neither; especially the latter? He there asks, "whether in particular, the carrying the doctrine of justification by faith alone to such a heighth, as not to allow, that a careful sincere observance of moral duties is so much as a condition of our acceptance with God, and of our being justified in his sight; whether this I say, does not naturally lead people to a disregard of those duties, and a low esteem of them; or rather to think them no part of the Christian religion?" It is plain from hence, that one of these extremes to which these itinerants exalt Christianity, and whereby it's queried, whether they do service or disservice to religion, "is their carrying the doctrine of justification by faith alone to such a height, as not to allow that a careful and sincere observance of moral duties is so much as a condition of our acceptance with God, and of our being justified in his sight." Our author it seems is for another way of salvation, *query 5th*, page 10th, *viz.*, "for men's gradually working out their own salvation, by their own honest endeavours, and through the ordinary assistances of God's grace; with a humble reliance upon the merits of Christ for the pardon of their sins and the acceptance of their sincere, though

imperfect services." This is our common divinity. This is what my Lord of *London* in his last pastoral letter against luke-warmness and enthusiasm, exhorted his clergy to preach. But how contrary is all this to the articles and homilies of our church? For what says the *11th article*? "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore that we are justified by faith only is a most wholsome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the homily of justification."

And if both the article and homily of the Church of *England* expresly declare, that we are justified before (or in the sight of) God, by faith, and faith only, how can "a careful and sincere observance of moral duties be a condition, my Lords, of our acceptance with God, and of our being justified in his sight?" And if the doctrine of being justified by faith only be a wholsome doctrine, and very full of comfort, how can this author in the latter part of this query now before us, enquire, "whether preaching this doctrine does not naturally lead people to a disregard of moral duties, and a low esteem of them; or rather to think them no part of the Christian religion?" Does he consider, that in writing thus, he directly symbolizes with the infidel, *Romans* vi. 1. who is introduced after the apostle had been insisting at large on this doctrine of justification by faith only, as speaking like our author, "Shall we sin then that grace may abound?" The apostle immediately rejects the motion with a *me genoito*; and so reply these itinerants, my Lords, "God forbid." For what says the *12th, article* of our Church? "Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a

lively faith, may be as evidently known, as a tree discerned by the fruit?" And do we then by preaching the doctrine of justification by faith only, naturally lead people to a disregard of moral duties and a low esteem of them, much less to think them no part of the Christian religion? Do we not rather establish them, by laying a foundation whereon true moral duties can only be built, so as to be acceptable in the sight of God? for what says our *13th article*? "Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, for as much as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the school authors say) deserve grace of congruity; yea rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin."

To this query our author annexes the following observation. "The words of the pious and judicious Mr. *Chillingworth* are very material to this purpose: For my part, says he, I do heartily wish that by public authority it were so ordered, that no man should ever preach or print this doctrine, that faith alone justifies, unless he joins this together with it, that universal obedience is necessary to salvation." What piety and judgment Mr. *Chillingworth* might be remarkable for, I know not; but if by "universal obedience being necessary to salvation," he means what our author does (or otherwise this quotation is nothing to the purpose) justification in the sight of God, then Mr. *Chillingworth*'s writing after this manner is a specimen neither of his piety or judgment; because the quite contrary doctrine is contained in our articles, and established by public authority. So that to wish for justification by faith alone to be put down by public authority, what is it in effect but to wish for the utter subversion of the grand doctrine of the reformation? Perhaps it may not be impertinent, or a vain repetition,

if I here beg leave to transcribe a passage (which I lately printed in my answer to the Prebendary of *St. Paul*'s) out of the *Honeycomb of Free Justification*, written by one Mr. *Eaton*, of *Trinity College* in *Cambridge*, printed at *London* in the year 1642. "Free justification was first enjoined to be diligently taught, for the reformation of the church, by King *Henry* VIII. but was by King *Edward* VI. and Queen *Elizabeth*, principally established by parliament, and singled out from all the rest of the established articles of religion; and reduced into sermons and homilies, to be (after the people's sight of their lost estate, and woeful misery by sin) *principally taught*, and chiefly known and understood of all the subjects and commons of the land, for these four causes.

1st. "Because it is the only immediate cause and means of our peace with God. For being justified by faith we have peace with God, *Romans* v. 1. and our assurance of free salvation by Jesus Christ, and is therefore called the justification of life, *Romans* v. 18. 'For whom God justifieth, them he also glorifieth,' *Romans* viii. 30.

3d. "Because it is the chiefest cause and means to discover and suppress the *Romish* antichrist, popery, &c. and all other superstitions, sects, errors and schisms out of the land; and to establish unity, peace and concord in matters of religion, and of assurance of free salvation, and makes every man to keep in a lawful vocation, and to do it profitably in love. *Galatians* v. 13.

4th. "To direct ministers, ὀρθοποδεῖν to go with a right foot to the truth of the gospel, *Galatians* ii. 14. in sound preaching, and pure declaring of the word of God, by a true faith of free justification, because (saith the established doctrine of our church) sincere preachers ever were, and ever shall be but a few; and their preaching of God's word, most sincere in the beginning, by process of time waxeth less and less pure, and after is

corrupt, and last of all quite laid down, and left off; because free justification is a doctrine hardly learned in a church, and soon lost again, *Galatians* i. 6. and yet is the true strength, happiness and safety of the whole land, *Isaiah* lxii. 1–6."

"Hereupon, the 5th part of the sermon against disobedience and rebellion, established by Queen *Elizabeth*, teacheth the commons, that such bishops or ecclesiastical persons, as by pride and ambitious rule, do by terms of error, schism, or heresy, hinder this *main light of God's word* from the people, are the *chiefest traytors* in the land: and the 6th and last part largely teacheth, that such subjects and commons to whom, through ignorance of God's word, this light of righteousness, and this sun of understanding doth not shine, although they may brag, as did sometimes the *Jewish* clergy and people, that they cannot lack knowledge, yet are such by their blind dead faith, traytors to God, traytors to their king, traytors to their own souls and bodies, and traytors to the whole land and country."

Thus far Mr. *Eaton*. And whether he or Mr. *Chillingworth* wrote with most piety and judgment on this head, I leave to the author's consideration. And at the same time appeal to your Lordships, whether the Methodists, by preaching up the doctrine of *justification by faith alone*, carry Christianity to an extreme? or, whether or not this author, by making moral duties a condition of our acceptance with God, and of our being justified in his sight, is not himself guilty of an irregularity which amounts to a violation of the laws both of church and state?

May not this also, my Lords, serve as an answer to our author's 10th *query*, page 12th. "Whether it be for the service of religion, to discourage people from reading Archbishop *Tillotson*'s Sermons and the *Whole Duty of Man*? to whom our Methodists might have added many more of our best

writers after the restoration. For, all these (together with explaining the whole work of our redemption by Christ) endeavoured to turn the minds of people to the practice of moral duties, and to cure them of that madness and enthusiasm into which they had been led by the Antinomian doctrines, and others of the like tendency, during the times of anarchy and confusion?" Undoubtedly; for are they not both wrong in their foundation? The latter indeed lays no foundation by justifying faith at all, and therefore may be more properly termed *Half the Duty of Man*; and the former, like our author, contrary to the laws of church and state, makes good works a *condition* of our acceptance with God, and of our being justified in his sight. And though I might have spared my *borrowed comparison* of putting the Archbishop on a level with *Mahomet*, (for which I ask the public pardon, though perhaps even this confession may be turned to my reproach) yet I can by no means agree with our author in this same *query, page 13th*, that either his Grace, or the author of the *Whole Duty of Man*, explained the whole work of our redemption by Christ. For how can that be possibly done, without explaining the doctrine of justification by faith alone? And therefore, whatever good the Archbishop, and many other of our best writers after the Restoration (as this author stiles them) might design by endeavouring "to turn the minds of people to the practice of moral duties, and to cure them of that madness and enthusiasm into which they had been led by the Antinomian doctrines, and others of the like tendency, during the times of anarchy and confusion," may I not appeal to your Lordships, whether that of the Poet be not too applicable to his Grace, to the Author of the *Whole Duty of Man*, and to writers of that stamp:

Incidit in syllam, qui vult vitare Charibdin?

For, is there no way, my Lords, of turning people's minds to the practice of moral duties, without turning their minds from the doctrine of justification by faith alone, without which, moral duties cannot be acceptable to God at all? What is this, my Lords, but, *Pharaoh* like, to command God's *Israel* to make brick without giving them straw? And supposing it be true, that the people before the restoration had been led into madness and enthusiasm, by Antinomian doctrines, was there no other way, my Lords, of curing them of this madness, but by preaching down the most fundamental article of the church of *England*, and so by preaching up the doctrine of justification in the sight of God, partly *by works*, and partly *by faith*, bring them half way to the church of *Rome*? Do not these itinerants, my Lords, by laying down faith as the foundation, and building the superstructure of universal obedience as the fruit of it thereon, keep a proper medium, and take the most effectual method of preserving people from Antinomianism on the one hand, or madness and enthusiasm, anarchy and confusion on the other? And is not this, my Lords, the constant tenor of their sermons? Do they not first labour to bring people to a real faith in Christ as the Lord their righteousness, and then exhort those that believe, to be careful to maintain and shew forth their faith, by a constant uniform performance of all manner of good works?

How disengenuous then is this Author's *9th query*, page 12. "Whether it does not savour of self-sufficiency and presumption, when a few young heads, without any colour of a divine commission, set up their own schemes, as the great standard of Christianity: and, how can it be reconciled to Christian humility, prudence, or charity, to indulge their own notions to such a degree, as to perplex, unhinge, terrify, and distract the minds of multitudes of people, who have lived from their infancy under a gospel

ministry, and in the regular exercise of a gospel worship; and all this, by persuading them, that they have never yet heard the true gospel, nor been instructed in the true way of salvation before: and that they neither are, nor can be true Christians, but by adhering to *their doctrines* and *discipline*, and embracing Christianity upon *their schemes*? All the while, for the sake of those schemes, and in pursuance of them, violating the wholesome rules, which the powers spiritual and temporal have wisely and piously established, for the preservation of peace and order in the church."

Here he charges these itinerants (though without proof, as he had done in the preceding one) with "*setting up their own schemes, as the great standard of Christianity*," and with telling people that "they neither are, nor can be true Christians, but by adhering to their doctrines and discipline, and embracing Christianity upon their schemes." Is not this calumny all over? For where has this author made it appear, that the Methodists preach contrary to the articles of the established church? Or how does he or can he prove, that they affirm, "People neither are, nor can be true Christians, without adhering to their discipline?" Where are any quotations to this purpose in his observations? Is not this, my Lords, all *gratis dictum*? And therefore, to use some of his own words, "Does it not savour of self-sufficiency and presumption, and can it be reconciled to Christian humility, prudence, or charity," to indulge his prejudice against any persons living to such a degree, as to lay things to their charge which they never thought of or said? For do not these itinerants freely converse with persons of all communions? Have I not in particular communicated with the church of *Scotland*, and preached among the churches in *New-England*? Do not the generality of the clergy cry out against me as a latitudinarian, and look upon me for so doing, as the bigotted *Jews* did on *Peter*, for going unto the

uncircumcised *Gentiles*; though I say as he did, “Can any man forbid me to converse with and communicate with those who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” Are not these notorious matters of fact? And how then can this author insinuate, that these itinerants tell people, that they neither are, nor can be Christians without adhering to their discipline?

But further, how scornfully does he speak of these itinerants? He stiles them *a few young heads*. And how unwarily has he thereby shewed his ignorance of the lively oracles of God? For has he never read what *David* saith, *Psalms* viii. 2. “Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and avenger?” Or that of the Apostle, *1 Corinthians* i. 27, 28. “But God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things that are not, to bring to nought things which are?” How presumptuously does he also tax these few young heads in this same query, with acting “*without any colour of a divine commission*?” For have not several of these young heads received a commission from your Lordships? And does not the success they have met with, as also their being strengthened to stem and surmount such a torrent of opposition, afford some colour at least, that they have acted by a divine commission indeed? For how could a few young heads, my Lords, or any men whatsoever, do such things, unless God was with them?

But our Author, it seems, looks upon what they call success, in a different light, and therefore, in this *9th Query*, further asks, “How it can be reconciled to Christian humility, prudence, or charity, to indulge their own notions to such a degree, as to perplex, unhinge, terrify, and distract the

minds of multitudes of people, who have lived from their infancy under a gospel ministry, and in the regular exercise of a gospel worship; and all this, by persuading them, that they have never yet heard the true gospel, nor been instructed in the true way of salvation before." To prove this particular part of the Query, he refers to passages which my Lord of *London* was pleased to extract out of my third Journal some years ago, such as, "I offered Jesus Christ freely to them;—I think *Wales* is excellently well prepared for the gospel of Christ;—Received news of the wonderful progress of the gospel in *Yorkshire*, under the ministry of my dear brother *Ingham*;—I was refreshed by a great packet of letters, giving me an account of the success of the gospel;—A most comfortable packet of letters, giving me an account of the success of the gospel." But how do all these passages, my Lords, put all together, afford the least shadow of a proof of what this Author here lays to these itinerants charge? Or how can offering Christ freely, and hearing and writing of the success of the gospel, be interpreted as perplexing, unhinging, terrifying, and distracting the minds of multitudes of people, &c.? Is not this, my Lords, like the other proofs he brings against these itinerants in some other respects? And may I not venture to affirm now, whatever I did some years ago, that if the Right Reverend the Bishops, and Reverend the Clergy, hold the same principles with this anonymous Author, then the generality of the poor people of *England*, however regular they may have been from their infancy in the exercise of a gospel worship, never yet lived under a gospel ministry, have never yet heard the true gospel, or been instructed in the true way of salvation. For how can that be, when the *fundamental doctrine* of the gospel, I mean justification by faith alone in the sight of God, must be necessarily every where preached down? Does not *Luther* call this, *Articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ*? And is there any

thing, my Lords, so very irreconcilable to Christian humility, prudence, or charity, for a few young heads, who do hold this doctrine, (seeing those who seem pillars, and are the *aged heads of the church*, are so much out of order) to venture out and preach this doctrine to as great multitudes of people as will give them the hearing? And supposing some of these multitudes should be unhinged, terrified, distracted, or disturbed a little, is it not better they should be thus unhinged from off their false foundation here, than by building upon their own works, and going about to establish a righteousness of their own, endanger their eternal salvation hereafter?

The distracting people's minds to such a degree as to occasion sudden roarings, agonies, screamings, tremblings, dropping-down, ravings, and such like, is by no means the great end proposed by these itinerants preaching, much less was it ever urged by them as an *essential mark* of the co-operation of the Spirit of God. And therefore, my Lords, is not our Author very unfair in stating his *4th Query*, page 10, as he has done: "Whether a due and regular attendance on the public offices of religion, paid by good men in a serious and composed way, does not better answer the true ends of devotion, and is not a better evidence of the co-operation of the Holy Spirit, than those sudden agonies, roarings and screamings, tremblings, droppings-down, ravings and madnesses, into which their hearers have been cast; according to the relations given of them in the Journals referred to?" Would not one imagine by this Query, that these itinerants laid down such things as screamings, tremblings, &c. as essential marks of the co-operations of the Holy Spirit? But can any such thing be proved? Are they not looked upon by these itinerants themselves, as extraordinary things, proceeding generally from soul-distress, and sometimes it may be from the agency of the evil spirit, who labours to drive

poor souls into despair? Does not this appear from the relation given of them in one of the Journals referred to? Are there not many relations of the co-operation of the Spirit in the same Journal, where no such bodily effects are so much as hinted at? And does not this give ground to suspect, that "the due and regular attendance on the public offices of religion, paid by (what our Author calls) good men, in a serious and composed way," is little better than a dead formal attendance on outward ordinances, which a man may continue in all his life-time, and be all the while far from the kingdom of God? Did ever any one before hear this urged as an evidence of the co-operation of the Spirit? Or would any one think, that the Author of the observations ever read the relations that are given of the conversion of several in the holy scriptures? For may we not suppose, my Lords, that many were cast into sudden agonies and screamings, *Acts* ii. 37. when "they were pricked to the heart, and said unto *Peter* and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" Or what would this Author think of the conversion of the Jailor, *Acts* x. 29, 30. "who *sprang in*, and came *trembling* and *fell down* before *Paul* and *Silas*; and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Or what would he think of *Paul*, who *trembling* and *astonished*, *Acts* ix. 6. said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and was afterwards, verse 9, "three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink?" Is it not to be feared, that if this Author had been seated upon the bench, and heard this Apostle give an account of his own conversion, he would have joined with *Festus* in crying out with a loud voice, "*Paul*, much learning hath made thee mad?" And are not all these things, and whatever else is recorded in the book of God, written for our learning? Is not God the same yesterday, to-day, for ever? And may he not now, as well as formerly, reveal his arm and display his power in bringing

sinners home to himself as *suddenly* and *instantaneously* as in the first planting of the gospel church?

But it seems, by *Query 7*, page 10, that our Author doubts whether there be any such thing as a *sudden* and *instantaneous change*. For he there enquires, “Whether a gradual improvement in grace and goodness, is not a better foundation of comfort, and of an assurance of a gospel new birth, than that which is founded on the doctrine of a sudden and instantaneous change; which, *if there be any such thing*, is not easily distinguished from fancy and imagination; the workings whereof we may well suppose to be more strong and powerful, while the person considers himself in the state of one who is admitted as a candidate for such a change, and is taught in due time to expect it?” Here it is to be observed, that after telling of a sudden and instantaneous change, he adds, “if there be any such thing.” What, my Lords, does this Author profess himself an advocate for the church of *England*, and yet say, “If there be any such thing as a sudden instantaneous change?” Does he not hereby lay an ax to the very root of the baptismal office? For if the child be actually regenerated by the Holy Ghost, when the minister sprinkles water upon him in the name of the blessed Trinity, does it not follow, that if any change at all be wrought in the child at that time, it must be sudden and instantaneous? And does he then say, “If there be any such thing?” And do your Lordships assent thereto? With what reason then are these itinerants upbraided for talking of a *sudden, instantaneous change*, upon which the very essence of baptismal regeneration, that Diana of the *present clergy*, entirely depends?

Besides, with what confidence or rules of fair reasoning can he here enquire, “Whether a *gradual improvement* in grace and goodness, is not a better foundation of comfort, and of an assurance of a gospel new-birth,

than that which is founded on the doctrine of a sudden and instantaneous change; which, if there be any such thing, is not easily distinguished from fancy and imagination; the working whereof we may well suppose to be more strong and powerful, while the person considers himself in the state of one who is admitted as a candidate for such a change, and is taught in due time to expect it?"

However unintelligible the latter part of this Query may be, does not the former part of it seem to imply, that these itinerants found the assurance of the gospel new-birth on this sudden and instantaneous change wrought on their hearers under their sermons, *exclusive* of a gradual improvement in grace and goodness afterwards! But is not this mere slander? For however they may humbly hope, that Sinners, when deeply impressed, may be suddenly and effectually wrought upon, yet how can it be proved that they reckon them real converts, till they see them bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, in doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with their God? Or if this was not the case, does not the author himself, if he holds baptismal regeneration, found his comfort on the doctrine of a sudden and instantaneous change? And do not the greatest part of the poor souls now in *England*, go on secure that they shall be eternally happy, and yet have no better foundation of comfort, and assurance of a gospel new-birth, than that which is founded on the doctrine of a sudden and instantaneous change wrought upon them in baptism?

Is not our Author, my Lords, also in this Query, guilty of another egregious mistake! For the *foundation of comfort* which these itinerants lay and depend on is, the compleat and *all-sufficient righteousness of Jesus*, and the new birth or change wrought in the heart, is by them looked upon *only as an evidence* that the persons thus changed, have indeed gotten a

foundation on this rock of ages, and consequently a sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life. And is not all this, my Lords, easily distinguished from fancy and imagination? And does not our Author lead people to a wrong foundation for comfort, by directing them to look for it from "a gradual improvement in grace and goodness?" For, what says the Apostle, *1 Corinthians* iii. 11. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus,"—"who (as he speaks in the first chapter of the same epistle, verse 30.) is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption?"

This foundation, as well as this sudden and instantaneous change, whether wrought in or after baptism, our Author, it is to be feared, is too great a stranger to: at least, he gives too great evidence, that he has made but little improvement in grace and goodness; for he asks in his *11th Query*, page 13, "Whether, the frame of human nature fairly considered, the Author of the *Whole Duty of Man*, did not do better service to religion, in laying down rules to keep recreations of all kinds within the bounds of innocence, than they who now censure him, and absolutely deny that recreations of any kind, considered as such, are or can be innocent?"

What rules the Author of the *Whole Duty of Man* may have laid down to keep recreations of all kinds within the bounds of innocence, it may be needless here to enquire. Is it not sufficient, my Lords, to mention, that the holy scriptures (wherein the whole duty of man, and that too in respect both to faith and practice, is fully and really taught) lay down one golden universal rule for recreations and every thing else, that "Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we must do all to the glory of God?" Whatever recreations people take to the glory of God, these itinerants, my Lords, think are quite allowable: but if they are made use of meerly for self-

pleasing, and not to God's glory, nor to fit us for his service, they do affirm, that all such recreations neither are nor can be innocent. And if the Author of the *Whole Duty of Man*, or any other Author whatsoever, hath set any other bounds, or fixed any other rule, however fairly he may have considered the frame of human nature, is it not evident, that he has not fairly considered the frame and nature of true Christianity? For does not that, my Lords, turn our whole lives into one continued sacrifice to God? And if we fairly consider the frame of human nature, how weak and frail it is, and how easily diverted from pursuing our one great end, are not those the greatest friends to religion, who caution people against leading themselves into temptations, or making use of any recreation that may put them out of a spiritual frame, and unfit them for the service of God? Is this going any further than the Apostle did, who so strictly cautions Christians "not to grieve the Spirit of God, whereby they are sealed to the day of redemption?"

Our Author, under this head, has referred to a passage out of one of my Journals, wherein I gave an account of my being in some polite company at *Maryland*, who were disposed to cards; and also a passage out of my letter from *New-Brunswick*, occasioned, if I mistake not, by meeting a man who thought it allowable to play at cards in the *Christmas* holidays, from the liberty given him by the Author of the *Whole Duty of Man*. And will our Author allow playing at cards to be a lawful recreation for a Christian? Is this one of the recreations of *all kinds* which may be kept within the bounds of innocence? Is it not a kind of casting lots? Has it not the appearance of evil? Will he not hear the church? And what says the 75th canon? "No ecclesiastical person shall at any time, other than for their honest necessities, resort to any taverns or alehouses, neither shall they board or

lodge in any such places. Furthermore, they shall not give themselves to any base or servile labour, or to drinking or riot, spending their time idly by day or by night, *playing at dice*, *cards*, or *tables*, or any other *unlawful game*: but at all times convenient, they shall hear or read somewhat of the holy scriptures, or shall occupy themselves with some other honest study or exercise, always doing the things which shall appertain to honesty, and endeavouring to profit the church of God, having always in mind that they ought to excel all others in purity of life, and should be examples to the people to live well and Christianly, under pain of ecclesiastical censures to be inflicted with severity, according to the qualities of their offences." An excellent canon this! And may I not argue from it thus? Either this canon is founded upon the word of God, or it is not: if it be not, why is it not abrogated? if it be, why is it not put in practice? Why do the clergy encourage frequenting of taverns, alehouses, and gaming by their own example? Are not such practices in this canon supposed to be quite contrary to the purity of life and excellency of example which may be justly required from them? And if such things are unseemly in a *clergyman*, are they not in a degree equally unseemly in *laymen*, whose privilege as well as duty it is, to be "holy in all manner of conversation and godliness," and who are universally commanded "to shine as lights in the world amidst a crooked and perverse generation?"

My Lords, might it not reasonably have been hoped, that your Lordships were too well acquainted with real and inward religion, to think that a soul born of God, and made partaker of a divine nature, can stoop so low, and act so unlike itself, as to seek for recreation in gaming? Does not the glorious and plenteous redemption, that great, inexpressibly great and present salvation, which the great High-priest and Apostle of our profession

has purchased for us by shedding his dear heart's blood, and whereby we are redeemed from this present evil world, set us above such trifling things as these, supposing they were not directly sinful? Are not Christians "kings and priests unto God?" And is it not as much beneath the dignity of their heaven-born spirits, to stoop to so low an amusement as gaming of any kind, as ever it was beneath the dignity of the *Roman Emperor* to spend his time in the amusement of catching flies? Does not our Author, therefore, my Lords, by writing thus, strike at the very vitals of religion, and prove too plainly that he is a stranger to the power of the dear Redeemer's resurrection? Need we, therefore, wonder at his *12th Query*, page 12, wherein he enquires, "Whether the strong expressions which are found in their printed Journals, of *extraordinary presences* of God, directing and assisting them in a more immediate manner, do not need some testimonies of a divine mission, to clear them from the charge of enthusiasm?" Under this query our Author has also mentioned several passages of my Journals, extracted by my Lord of *London*, in his *last pastoral letter* against lukewarmness and enthusiasm, and has also been at great pains to extract many more out of my four last Journals, which have been printed since, and which, according to our Author, are more full of enthusiasm, if possible, than the three first? But does not this Author forget, that I answered his Lordship's letter, and proved, that his Lordship was mistaken in his definition of enthusiasm; and that, according to his definition, I was no *enthusiast*? Did I not also prove, that the propositions on which his Lordship's quotations were founded were false? Has his Lordship, or any one for him, been pleased to make any reply to that answer? Not as I have heard of. And therefore, was it not incumbent upon this Author, my Lords, to have disproved or invalidated my answer to his Lordship's letter, before

he could honourably mention the passages referred to therein, to prove me an enthusiast? But passing by this, with the other many *irregularities* which are justly charged upon this *anonymous Author*, if he asks "whether the strong expressions which are found in *their* printed Journals (I suppose he would have said *his* printed Journals, for I find under this Query no Journals referred to but mine) of extraordinary presences of God directing and assisting them in a more immediate manner, do not need some testimonies of a divine mission, to clear them from the charge of enthusiasm?" I would ask this Author again, "What testimonies he would have?" Can he bring any proof against the matters of fact recorded in these Journals? Or will he venture to affirm, that I did not feel the divine presence in an extraordinary manner, that is, more at one time than another? Or that I have not been directed in a more immediate manner, at certain times, when waiting upon God? Were not such-like queries put by the heathens to the primitive Christians? And was not their answer, *Monstrare nequeo, sentio tantum*? I would further ask, what this Author means by a divine mission? Did not my Lord of *Gloucester* (for I must again repeat it) give me an apostolical one, when he said, "Receive thou the Holy Ghost by the imposition of our hands?" And can it be enthusiasm, or is there any thing extraordinary in saying, that I felt more of the influences of this Holy Ghost, and was assisted in a *more immediate manner* in my administrations at one time, than another? Or is it not more extraordinary (only indeed that it has been a good while too too common) that the Right Reverend the Bishops should take upon them to confer the Holy Ghost, and the Reverend the Clergy profess they are inwardly moved by it, and yet charge every expression they meet with, wherein his blessed influences are spoken of as felt and experienced, with being downright enthusiasm? But what shall we say?

“The natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit: they are foolishness unto him, neither can he understand them: because they are spiritually discerned.” What if some of the expressions, my Lords, in the Journals are strong? Does that prove them enthusiastical? Or what if feeling the presence of God, and being directed in a more immediate manner, be something extraordinary to our Author, does it therefore follow that it is so to others? Or is this Author like minded with the Right Reverend the Bishop and the Reverend the Clergy of the diocese of *Litchfield* and *Coventry*, who reckon the indwelling, and inward witnessing of, as also praying and preaching by the Spirit, among the *karismata*, the miraculous gifts conferred on the primitive church, and which have long since ceased? If so, no wonder that the expressions referred to are strong and extraordinary to him. But, my Lords, may I not beg leave to tell this Author, that these itinerant preachers have not so learnt Christ? No, they believe that Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever: and that he is faithful, who hath said to his Apostles, and in them to all succeeding truly Christian ministers, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.” Consequently they believe the Comforter will abide with them for ever, witnessing with their spirits that they are children of God; leading them by a diligent search of the holy scriptures into all truth; guiding them together with the word, the voice of friends and Providence, in all circumstances by his counsel; giving them utterance when called to speak to the people from God, and helping their infirmities, and assisting them in prayer when called to speak to God for the people. Inwardly moved by this Spirit, and not by any hopes of human grandeur or preferment, these itinerants, my Lords, first took on them the administration of the church; and his blessed influences they have from time to time happily experienced, as thousands whose eyes have been

opened to discern spiritual things, can testify. And being without cause denied the use of their brethrens pulpits, and having obtained help from God, they continue to this day, witnessing both to small and great the grand doctrines of the Reformation, *justification by faith alone* in the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, and the necessity of the *indwelling of the Spirit* in order to be made meet to be partakers of the heavenly inheritance, among all them that are sanctified. In doing thus they know of no "wholesome rules, wisely and piously established by the powers spiritual and temporal," *Query 9th*, page 12. which they have violated: or should they be commanded by the whole bench of Bishops to speak no more of this doctrine,—they have an answer ready, "We cannot but speak the things that we know." We take this to be an ungodly admonition; and therefore, "whether it be right in the sight of God, to obey man rather than God, judge ye." And though for so doing, they should be mobbed, as they frequently have been, and though God be not the author of confusion or tumult, as our Author would have it, page 12, yet they know of one who was mobbed himself upon a like account, and commanded *Timothy* to approve himself a minister of God *in tumults*. Being sensible of the indolence and unorthodoxy of the generality of the clergy, they think they are sufficiently warranted by the example of the Prophets of the Old, and of Jesus Christ and his Apostles in the New-Testament, (whatsoever our Author may say, *Query 8th* page 11.) to bear a faithful testimony against them. And being called by the Providence of God abroad, after their unworthy labours had been blessed at home, they have judged it meet, right, and their bounden duty, from time to time, to publish accounts of what God had done for their own and other people's souls: which, though despised by some, and esteemed enthusiastical by others, have been owned to the instruction and

edification of thousands. But whether this may be properly called “open and public boasting, unbecoming the modesty and self-denial of a minister of the gospel, especially one who would be thought to carry on his ministry under the immediate guidance of the blessed Spirit,” (as our Author intimates in his last *Query* of this 2d Part); or whether they were written with a single eye to the Redeemer’s glory, they are willing to leave to the determination of that God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hid. I could here enlarge; but having detained your Lordships too long already, I am,

Your Lordships most obedient son and servant,

George Whitefield.

SOME REMARKS UPON A LATE CHARGE AGAINST ENTHUSIASM,

Delivered by,

The Right Reverend Father in God, Richard, Lord Bishop of *Litchfield* and *Coventry*, to the Reverend the Clergy in the several parts of the Diocess of *Litchfield* and *Coventry*, in a *Triennial Visitation* of the same in 1741; and published at their request in the present Year 1744.

IN A LETTER TO THE REV. THE CLERGY OF THAT DIOCESS.

Matthew xi. 25, 26. *At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

TO THE REVEREND THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESS OF LITCHFIELD AND COVENTRY.

On Board the *Wilmington*, Captain *Darling*, *September 20, 1744*.

Reverend Brethren,

AS you profess to know the scriptures, I need not inform you, that the character of *young Elihu* shines in the 32d chapter of the book of *Job* with a

superior lustre, above that of his other three friends who came to converse with him. The humility and modesty wherewith he first addresses himself to them is peculiarly amiable. “I am young, says he, and ye are very old, wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you my opinion. I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.” But knowing by experience, that “great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment, he said, Hearken unto me, and I also will shew my opinion.” And that they might not censure him for rashness in speaking, he assures them, verses 11, and 12. that he had well weighed the matter before he broke silence. “Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst you searched out what to say. Yea, I attended unto you; and behold there was none of you that convinced *Job*, or that answered his words.” And that they might not be offended at his plain speaking, or expect that he would be over-awed from delivering his soul, by their superiority in age, learning, or circumstances of life, in the two last verses of the chapter, he boldly, but honestly tells them what they were to expect from him. “Let me not, I pray you, accept any man’s person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man, for I know not to give flattering titles: In so doing my Maker would soon take me away.” And it is very remarkable, that though we are told this young man’s wrath was kindled against *Job* and his three friends, verses 2 and 3. and though (as it appears from the ensuing chapters) he spoke very close and cutting things, yet at the end of the book, we find no blame laid on him by the great heart-searching God; whereas the other three are severely reproved, and commanded to apply to *Job* for the benefit of his prayers.

Animated by, and willing to copy after so bright an example, I now sit down to write you this letter; in which I would beg leave to make some

remarks on your Right Reverend Diocesan's late *charge against enthusiasm*. Had I continued in my native country, I should have taken the freedom to have written to his Lordship himself; but as I heard that he was very aged, and probably before this could reach *England*, might be called to give up his account to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, I thought it most advisable to direct this letter to you, at whose request, as appears by the title-page, this charge was printed.

It is not my design to enter upon a critical examination of every paragraph. I would observe in general, that his Lordship's main design, from the beginning to the end of it, is, to prove "that the indwelling and inward witnessing of the Spirit in believers hearts (if there were ever any such things at all) as also praying and preaching by the Spirit, are all the *extraordinary gifts* and operations of the Holy Ghost, belonging only to the apostolical and primitive times, and consequently all pretensions to such favours in these last days are vain and enthusiastical." In order to evince this, his Lordship selects several passages of holy writ, which, in his opinion, are misapplied by those whom his Lordship is pleased to stile *modern enthusiasts*, and undertakes to shew, page 11th, "that they are to be interpreted chiefly, if not only, of the state of the apostolical and primitive church, and that they very little, if at all, relate to the present state of Christians." Whether or not his Lordship hath succeeded in his undertaking, will best appear by a candid and impartial review thereof.

The first attempt of this nature which we meet with in his Lordship's charge, is page the 12th. His words are these: "That I may proceed in a regular manner, with regard to those passages of scripture that I shall select on this occasion, I chuse to begin with the original promise of the Spirit, as made by our Lord, a little before he left the world. It occurs in the 14th and

16th chapters of St. *John*'s gospel; in which he uses these words: 'When the Spirit of truth is come, (whom Christ had just before promised to send from the Father, chapter 14th, verse 16th) he will guide you into all truth, and he will shew you things to come.' And again, 'the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.' It is very clear (proceeds his Lordship) from the bare recital of these words, that as they were spoken to the apostles, so they peculiarly belong to the apostles themselves, or to the inspired persons in the primitive church."

But granting that these words do belong *peculiarly* to the apostles, does it therefore follow, that they do not at all belong to their successors, or in common to all believers upon whom the ends of the world are come? Were not the apostles then representatives of the whole church? And may not what was spoken to them, in a proper degree be said to be spoken to us and to our children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call? Does not his Lordship confess, page 13th, "that in one of these passages it is added, that the Father will give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever?" And does not his Lordship allow, page 14th, "that in the largest sense in which this may be understood, it is synonymous with Christ's promise to his disciples at his ascension, that he would be with them *always*, even to the end of the world;" that is, as himself explains it, "by the perpetual presence of the Holy Spirit, as the guardian of his church 'till the end of the world?" But how can Christ be with his church by the perpetual presence of his Spirit, or how can the Holy Spirit "be the guardian of his church 'till the end of the world," unless it is by opening and bringing all things to our remembrance, whatsoever Jesus hath said to us in his revealed will, guiding

us thereby into all truth, and teaching us all things necessary to eternal salvation?

This promise, it is true, as his Lordship observes, page the 15th, "was fulfilled in a most solemn manner by the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, and others with them, at the feast of Pentecost, that is recorded so particularly in the second chapter of the *Acts* of the Apostles." And it is as true, (as his Lordship intimates page 16th) "that St. *Peter* makes an application of the prophecy of *Joel*, to the miraculous effusion of the Spirit on that memorable occasion.

But does not his Lordship by intimating, that this promise of our Lord was wholly compleated on the day of Pentecost, prove too much? for does it not then follow, that no one after the day of Pentecost was to expect the Holy Ghost to bring all things to their remembrance, to teach them all things, and shew them things to come? How then could this promise be fulfilled in the apostle *Paul*, who was converted some time after? or how could this remain in the primitive church in the inspired persons, or abide with the church for ever to the end of the world? And supposing the apostle *Peter* does make an application of the prophecy of *Joel* to the miraculous effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, *Acts* the 2d, verses 16th, 17th, &c. does it therefore follow, that this promise of our Saviour extends no farther than that day? Does he any where intimate any such thing through his whole discourse? Or is it any new thing for prophecies to have several fulfilments? Is not that prophecy, "Out of *Egypt* have I called my son," which was originally spoken concerning God's *Israel*, applied by the evangelist *Matthew*, chapter 2d. verse 15th, to the Son of God himself? And therefore granting that this promise was in an extraordinary degree fulfilled in the day of Pentecost, how does it follow, that it is not now, and will be in an ordinary way,

fulfilling to the end of the world? And consequently, may not this promise of our Lord be pleaded by all his disciples, for the indwelling of his blessed Spirit, and his inward teaching, by the instrumentality of his revealed will, *now* as well as formerly (especially since his Lordship, page 15th, clears us from pretending to the operations of the miraculous kind) without being censured for so doing as *modern enthusiasts*.

But this inward teaching and indwelling of the Spirit, his Lordship will by no means allow even the primitive Christians to have had in common, and therefore, page 35th (which I come to next, for method's sake) he comments upon another remarkable scripture, that, in his Lordship's opinion, 'has been misapplied to later ages, and indeed to the present times, by several enthusiasts, but was really peculiar to the times of the apostles.' It occurs, says his Lordship, page *ibid.* in the first epistle of St. *John*, chapter ii. verse 20th, 27th. "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. But the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you: but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie; and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

This *unction* from the Holy One, and this *anointing*, his Lordship, in five or six pages, labours to prove was some extraordinary gift residing in some particular inspired persons, and not in the believers in general to whom the apostle wrote. But with what shadow of argument does his Lordship reason thus? For though it be certain (as his Lordship intimates page 37th) "that there were several such inspired teachers among the first Christians, who were endowed with various gifts of the Spirit, and among them with the gift of prayer, and preaching, and revelation of the true sense of the prophetical parts of the Old Testament;" yet how does it appear, that these inspired teachers are the particular persons referred to by the Apostle in this

passage? If that was the case, would not the epistle itself more properly have been directed to them, as having the oversight of the flock? Or is it not probable at least, that the Apostle would have had something to say to them, as well as to the "little children, young men, and fathers," verses 12th, 13th, to whom he writes so particularly? And is it not evident from the whole context, that this unction from the Holy One was not an extraordinary gift residing in any particular inspired person, but the indwelling of the Spirit, believers in general, whereby they had an experimental proof, that Jesus was indeed the Christ, and therefore needed not that any man should teach them, that is, further teach them, for the Apostle writes unto them as knowing persons, verse 12th, &c. Is not this interpretation quite consistent with the whole scope of the Apostle in this epistle, which was to comfort himself, and believers in general, now so many antichrists were abroad, that (since Jesus Christ had declared, *Matthew* xxiv. 24. that the elect could not be finally deceived) they having a proof of their election by receiving this unction from above, this indwelling of the Holy Ghost in their hearts, were now enabled, in a way far superior to, though not entirely exclusive of human teaching, to guard against the seducers of the day? And consequently, may not the indwelling of the Spirit be insisted upon now, as the privilege of all real Christians, without their being justly stiled for so doing, modern enthusiasts.

Again, is not his Lordship greatly mistaken in his explanation of the 16th verse of the 8th of *Romans*, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." "This passage, says his Lordship, page 18th, as it is connected with the preceding one, relates to the general adoption of Christians, or their becoming the sons of God, instead of the *Jews*, who were then rejected by God, and had lost that title. But what was

the ground of this preference that was given to Christians? It was plainly the gifts of the Spirit, which they had, and which the *Jews* had not. That Spirit then, which by its gifts enabled the Apostles and other Christians to work miracles of various kinds, was a demonstration, that God was in them of a truth, and that their religion was owned by him in opposition to that of the *Jews*, whom he had deserted in a judicial manner." The conclusion his Lordship draws from these premises, we have page the 20th. "That the fore-mentioned *testimony of the Spirit*, attended with the testimony of our own spirit, *i. e.* the consciousness of the sincerity and good lives of private Christians, was the public testimony of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit which God had conferred on the Apostles, and many of the first Christians; and which shewed that they and their brethren were the true church of God, and not the *Jews*. And this was a plain criterion in the first great controversy, namely, to which of those two churches men were obliged to adhere in communion. And consequently, this witness of the Spirit, which shews that we Christians are the sons of God, cannot possibly be applied to the mere private testimony of the Spirit given to our own consciences, to prove that we, or private Christians, are the sons of God and heirs of salvation, as is pretended by modern enthusiasts."

But does not his Lordship here argue from a mistaken supposition, that the Apostle, in the 8th of the *Romans*, is speaking of the miraculous power our Lord gave to his first Apostles to work miracles, in confirmation that their doctrine was of God? Is there any such thing so much as hinted at through the whole chapter? Is not the whole scope of it to shew the privileges of those, who "being justified by faith" alone, chapter 5th, "have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ?" Does not the Apostle therefore at the first verse say, "That there is no condemnation to them who

are in Christ Jesus?" Does he not say, verse the 9th, that "the Spirit of God dwelt in them?" Does not his Lordship allow, page 16, &c. That the Apostle in this and the preceding verses treats of that "*spiritual principle* in Christians which enables them to mortify the deeds of the body, and overcome carnal inclinations?" And what shadow of a reason can be given to prove that the same *spiritual principle* is not spoken of in verse 16th, as bearing witness with believer's spirits that they were the children of God? Is it not said, verse 15th, to be something that they had received? "But ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby ye cry Abba, Father." And is not the obvious sense of these verses put together plainly this, "That true believers, those who are Christians indeed, have the Spirit of God dwelling in them, verse 9th; are led by this Spirit, verse 14th; have gotten an inward witness from this same Spirit, that they are God's children, and therefore need not be brought into bondage, and fear, lest God would reject them, but may have free access, and with a full assurance of faith, and a holy child-like simplicity, draw near unto him, crying Abba, Father?"

His Lordship, to prove that this is not the sense of this passage, but that the testimony of the Spirit here spoken of, is a public gift of working miracles, refers, page 19th, to *Galatians* iii. 2. where the Apostle puts this question to them: "Received ye the Spirit, (*i. e.* according to his Lordship, the power of working miracles) by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" which (says his Lordship) the same Apostle presently after explains, when he says at verse 5th, "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" But is not here a plain antithesis between administring the Spirit and working miracles? Do they not evidently imply two distinct things? And can it be supposed, that the Spirit which the

Apostle asks, verse 2d, “Whether they had received by the works of the law, or the hearing of faith,” was a power to perform such miracles, at least that only? Would it not then follow, since he declares in the 8th of the *Romans*, “that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his,” that either all believers did receive his Spirit in his miraculous gifts, or that no one is a believer that has them not? And doth not the Apostle in this very epistle make it appear, that the Spirit here spoken of is not this miraculous outward testimony? For what says he, *Galatians* iv. 6. “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts (whereby it is plain the Spirit was received into the heart) crying, Abba, Father?” And does not this quite clear up that passage of *Romans*, chapter viii. verse 15. about the witnessing Spirit and the Spirit of adoption, *viz.* that believers (besides seeing the miracles which the Apostles wrought) had an *inward testimony* of the Holy Ghost, he making an inward application of the merits of Christ to their souls, and giving them an inward testimony that they were indeed the adopted sons of God, and therefore in a holy confidence they might cry, Abba, Father? Is there any thing forced in this interpretation? And consequently (notwithstanding what appears to the contrary from his Lordship’s explanation) may not persons assert, that there is such a thing as a witness or testimony of the Spirit given to our own consciences, to prove that private Christians are the Sons of God and heirs of salvation, without being censured for so doing as modern enthusiasts?

May I not likewise venture to affirm, that his Lordship is equally mistaken in his interpretation of the 26th and 27th verses of the same chapter, which runs thus: “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that

searcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God?"

The Spirit here spoken of, according to his Lordship, was the Spirit acting in the *inspired person*, who in the apostolical age, says his Lordship, page 24th, "had the gift of prayer, and interceded for the whole congregation; so that what is here said of the Spirit, is by an easy figure transferred to the spiritual or inspired person, who prayed in that capacity, for the whole Christian assembly. It is he that maketh intercession with God for private Christians, with vehement and inexpressible groanings or sighs." But however easy it may be to find out a figure to transfer what is here said of the Spirit, to the spiritual or inspired person, yet how will it be easy to find a figure to interpret this of the spiritual or inspired person at all? For has it not already been shewn, that this whole chapter is no where speaking of any such spiritual inspired person, but of the Spirit of God dwelling in all believers?

His Lordship goes on, page ibid. to comment upon the 27th verse: "And he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the spirit, (*i.e.* of the spiritual or inspired person) because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." That is, says his Lordship, "God knows the intentions of the spiritual person, and judges of the vehemence of his desires in prayer for the whole assembly, for whom he makes intercession, with regard to the immediate subject of affliction; literally indeed, *according to* God (*kata Theon*) or relatively to him, but by construction, conformably to the will of God; namely, that in a most fervent manner, the person that has the inspired gift of prayer, which he uses for the benefit of the whole assembly, he, I say, leaves it entirely to God, whether it be best that Christians should suffer afflictions for the gospel, or be delivered from

them. And such an intention of his prayer cannot but be highly acceptable to God, who searches his heart, and approves of such an act of profound resignation to his will."

Thus far his Lordship. But where is there through the whole chapter any mention made of an *assembly*, or of any *spiritual inspired person* praying in its behalf? Does it not require a very profound understanding to search it out? Is it not more agreeable to the whole scope of the apostle in this chapter, to believe, that this spirit here mentioned as helping infirmities, or distresses, and assisting in prayer, is the common privilege of all believers? Is he not said to make intercession for the saints in general? And does not his Lordship, page 22d, in effect own this? For what says his Lordship? "Now on this occasion, he, the apostle, adds another proof of the truth of Christianity, and that Christians are the adopted sons of God, and more especially with regard to their sufferings at that time, for the sake of their religion, says he, verse 26th. Likewise the Spirit also, (or rather *even, kai*) helpeth our infirmities (or our distresses, for the word *Astheneiais* signifies both.) And then he mentions in what instances he does so, viz. in prayers to God about bearing afflictions, or being delivered from them; and which of these two is most profitable for us, the Spirit knows better than we ourselves, and therefore instructs Christians how to pray with regard to their sufferings. We know not, says he, what we should pray for as we ought; that is, whether it be best for us to bear afflictions, or to be delivered from them according to our natural inclinations." And after writing thus, how inconsistent is it in his Lordship to say, that this is done by the Spirit acting in the inspired person only, who made intercession for the whole assembly? Is not the quite contrary, I could almost say, self-evident? And how then can those who, from this passage of the 8th of the *Romans*, humbly claim the

gift and grace of prayer now, as well as formerly, for so doing, be justly termed modern enthusiasts.

May we not further enquire, whether his Lordship's interpretation of the 4th and 5th verses of the 2d chapter of the first epistle to the *Corinthians* be sound and consistent? The words are these, page 27th. "And my speech and my preaching were not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God," As to the former part of these words, "My speech and my preaching were not with the enticing words of man's wisdom," his Lordship seems to agree with the interpretation put upon them by those whom he is pleased to term enthusiasts; but the latter, "The demonstration of the Spirit and of power," his Lordship, in pages 29th, 30th, 31st, and 32d, would fain shew, means no more, than that the Apostle proved Jesus to be the Messiah by proofs out of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and evinced the truth of Christianity by performing miracles.

And supposing this may be one sense of the words, yet if this be the sole meaning of the Apostle's expression, would it not have better become such a scholar as *Paul* was, to have said, "He came to them in the demonstration of the scriptures, rather than of the Spirit?" Can any parallel passage be produced, where the word *Spirit* is thus put for the scriptures? And therefore, by the demonstration of the Spirit, may we not understand, that the Spirit of God himself, whilst the Apostle was preaching, wrought a demonstrative conviction in the souls of his hearers, not only that what he spake was of God, but also that he was assisted in speaking by the Spirit of God? Does not this agree with what he says, 2d epistle *Corinthians* iii. 2, 3. "Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." And though it should be allowed that the word *Dunamis* (as his Lordship observes, page 30th) "in its ordinary sense in the New Testament, must signify the power exerted in miraculous operations:" yet how is it foreign to the Apostle's purpose to interpret it also of a divine power or energy, which ordinarily attended the word preached by him; I mean such a power as accompanied the word when the Lord opened the heart of *Lydia*, and when so many were pricked to the heart, and made to cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" Does not the word *Dunamis* seem to carry this sense with it, *2 Corinthians* iv. 7.? "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power (*Dunameos*) may be of God, and not of men." And is not *Apollos* said to be (*Dunatos engraphais*) mighty, or powerful, in the scriptures, though we do not hear that he performed any miracles at all? And though his Lordship is pleased to say, page ibid. "For by this power of God here spoken of, that it is a power to work miracles appears expresly," from the immediately following verse, in which is assigned the reason for using this method of proving Christianity to be true, "that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God:" yet will it not equally hold good, that their faith stood not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God? If by the power we understand a divine power attending the word preached in convincing the conscience, and changing the hearts of men, exclusive or besides a power of working miracles.

His Lordship in the same page proceeds thus. "By the *power of* God therefore must necessarily be understood the miraculous operations performed by Jesus Christ and his Apostles, as a divine testimony of their

authority." He goes on in the 7th, 10th, and following verses, to explain this "demonstration of the Spirit and of power;" and tells us, "That this wisdom of God is a mystery, or wisdom formerly hidden from the world, which was couched in the types and prophecies of the Messiah in the Old Testament, under the title of the *Law of Moses*, the *Psalms*, and all the prophets that were actually fulfilled in Jesus Christ. For, says he, 'the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. Now we have not received the spirit of the world, (viz. of oratory and philosophy) but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.' That is, that we might learn of the Spirit the true meaning of those writings which he dictated himself, and which none but the Spirit of God could know, since the gospel is the contrivance of God alone for man's salvation; and the benefits of it are freely and of his mere grace conferred upon us."

But in all these passages, where is there a shadow of a proof, that by the word *power*, the Apostle meant only that he worked miracles among them? Is there any such thing so much as hinted at in those verses? Or what greater reason is there to infer from hence, that the demonstration of the Spirit means no more than proving Christ to be the Messiah, from the books of the Old Testament?

His Lordship goes on, page 31st, to comment upon the 13th verse of the 1st *Corinthians* 2d. thus: "The apostle adds, 'Which things also we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, (*viz.* as before by oratory and philosophy) but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.' From which last passage it appears that the words which the Holy Ghost is said to teach, must be *prophetical revelations* made of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, which were clearly discovered to the Apostles, and explained by them to the world by the same Holy Spirit, that

perfectly knew those deep or mysterious things of God in the holy scriptures, which related to and were fulfilled in Jesus Christ; and whose expositions of his doctrine were authorized by the miracles they wrought in confirmation of it."

But supposing this be in part true, have not the words a further meaning? And by "Words which the Holy Ghost teacheth," may we not understand, words which the Holy Ghost did immediately put into this and other Apostles minds whilst they were preaching, speaking, or writing? Was there not such assistance promised to the Apostles? Did they not speak as the Spirit gave them utterance? And since Jesus Christ has promised in an especial manner to be with his ministers, even to the end of the world, may they not humbly claim the divine influence to assist them in a degree in preaching now, as well as formerly, by bringing to their remembrance the words and things he had taught them in the holy scriptures before, and so opening a door of utterance to them, without being, for so doing, justly stiled modern enthusiasts.

His Lordship, in order to give a sanction to these his several interpretations, quotes *Chrysostom*, *Origen*, and *Athanasius*: but does his Lordship deal candidly or simply in this matter? For though they may in some respects agree with his Lordship's literal interpretation, do they not give a spiritual one also? Does not his Lordship himself, page 42d, citing the authority of *Athanasius*, that great light of the Christian church, in effect confess this? Does he not say, that he interprets the *unction of the Holy One* not *merely* of divine grace? But does it therefore follow that he did not interpret it at all of divine grace? Nay, does it not follow, that he did interpret it of the divine grace of the Spirit of God dwelling in all believers, as well at least as of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit? Does not *Ignatius*,

one of the most early writers, stile himself *Theophoros*, and the people to whom he writes *Theophoroi*? And can it be supposed, that *Origen* in particular, (who his Lordship professes again and again, in his treatises against *Woolston*, to be such a spiritual interpreter of scripture,) has in these passages so tenaciously cleaved to the literal interpretation, as utterly to deny the indwelling and inward witness of the Spirit? Is not this entirely opposite to the whole tenor of his writings, as well as the writings of the most ancient fathers? And has not his Lordship, out of his great zeal against enthusiasm, by writing thus, unwarily run into an extreme? And as he justly charged the infamous *Woolston* with sticking too close to the spirit, and not minding the letter, has he not in this performance so closely adhered to the letter, and so sadly neglected the spirit, as almost totally (if his interpretations be true) to exclude the Holy Ghost in his operations, since the primitive times, out of the Christian world?

Is not this matter of fact? Are not these words of truth and soberness? Be not angry therefore, but bear with me a little, if like *Elihu*, "I speak that I may refresh myself. For behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles." Let his Lordship write what he pleases to the contrary, "there is a Spirit in man, and a holy Spirit in believers, and an ordinary inspiration of the Almighty, which now, as well as formerly, giveth them spiritual understanding." But supposing it was not so, and all his Lordship's glosses upon the forementioned passages, were as right as in my opinion they are wrong, could you, Reverend Brethren, (I appeal to your consciences) in your own hearts even wish that they were so? If you should answer, Yes, (as your requesting his Lordship to print this charge, gives me too great reason to think you would,) "Tell in it not in *Gath*, publish it not in the streets of *Ascalon*, lest the daughters of the *Philistines* rejoice, lest the

daughters of the uncircumcised triumph." For if this be the case, in what a poor benighted condition has the Lord Jesus left his church in these last days? And what avails it to have his doctrines and divine mission evinced formerly by gifts and miracles, if we are deprived of the inward teachings and indwelling of the Holy Spirit? It is true, his Lordship does talk here and there of the Blessed Spirit, and of his ordinary influences: but what are his ordinary operations, if he is neither to dwell in us, nor to give us an inward testimony in our hearts, that we are born of God? What signifies talking of his assistances, and at the same time declare, that they can neither be inwardly felt, or perceived, nor believers be *supernaturally* assured thereby of their salvation? Or if we are to expect no operations of the Spirit that are supernatural, as his Lordship again and again intimates, what are the natural operations that we are to look for? Or can there possibly be any operation of the Holy Spirit which is not supernatural? What can deists and the whole tribe of unbelievers wish for more than such doctrine? Does not his Lordship, by writing thus, greatly hurt the cause he would defend; and out of a zeal to prove Christianity no enthusiasm, unwittingly run into that fault which he would throw upon these against whom his charge is levelled, page 2d; I mean, "does he not act in concert with infidelity against our established religion, our great common salvation?" How must the church of *Rome* also glory in such a charge? Is it not after their own heart? Is not the denying the witness of the Spirit in believers hearts, one of the main *pillars of Popery*? Are not papists kept in slavery, and taught to trust to the absolution of their priest; because it was one of the determinations of the council of *Trent*, that none can here below attain from the Spirit a certainty of their being finally saved? His Lordship has done well in signalizing himself by writing against the papists and infidels. But what will it avail, or

how can his Lordship flatter himself that the efforts of the latter, page 2d, "*have been sufficiently opposed*:" since by writing against the *witness of the Spirit*, he so nearly symbolizes with the one, and by crying down all supernatural operations of the Holy Ghost, joins hands with the other? Besides, "If there are no proofs of the truth of our religion by the inward testimony of the Spirit, as his Lordship affirms, page 52d. or even by the infallible application of the several marks of truth in it by the Holy Spirit, to the minds of men, and his making so strong and violent an impression on them, as to form (*horresco referens*) a new unintelligible sort of divine faith, page 53." how shall we distinguish true and divine faith, from that which is false and barely historical? Are not the devils capable of such a faith? Nay, have they not as real faith as Christians themselves, if there be no other faith but what is wrought by external revelation and outward miracles? Do they not thus believe and tremble? And can it be supposed, that all the miracles that the Apostles wrought, and the glorious sermons that they were enabled to preach, were only to shew people what communion they were to be of? Is not this bringing the gospel down to a mere history, which one may read of the exploits of an *Alexander*; and making faith to be a bare assent of the understanding, which a person may have, and yet be no more benefited by the death of Christ, than *Simon Magus* was in believing that he was crucified?

But further; supposing his Lordship had shewn, that every one of those passages he has commented upon, had been misapplied by modern enthusiasts; yet are there not besides a great cloud of witnesses to be fetched from the lively oracles, to prove that the *indwelling*, and *inward witness* of the Spirit, are the privileges of all believers? Will you permit me to instance only in a few? What think you of that passage in *St. John*'s

gospel, chapter vii. 37, 38, 39. “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood up and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath spoken, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive?” How, I pray you, are we to understand that petition of our Lord for his disciples, just before his passion, in the same evangelist, chapter xvii. 20, 21. “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one:” And again, verses 22, 23. “That they all may be one, even as we are one, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one?” How would you explain that question of the Apostle’s to the *Corinthians*, (a church famous for its gifts above any church under heaven) “Know ye not that Christ is in you, unless you be reprobates?” How do you explain that assertion of the evangelist *John*, in his 1st epistle v. 10. “He that believeth hath the witness in himself?” Or that of the Apostle *Paul* to the *Ephesians*, chapter i. 13, 19. And again, chapter iv. 30? How do you interpret that passage, *2 Corinthians* xvi. 16? Or what say you to that exhortation of St. *Jude*, verse 20. “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God?” Can any of these passages, with any manner of consistency, be interpreted of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, or be confined to the primitive church? Do they not speak of an indwelling witnessing spirit, which all believers in all ages have a right to expect, till time shall be no more?

And now, my *Reverend Brethren*, if these things be so, may not that question be very justly put to you, which our Lord on a like occasion asked

Nicodemus, a ruler of the *Jews*: "Are ye masters of *Israel*? Are ye ministers of the Church of *England*, and know not these things?" What has his Lordship been doing so many years, in professing to confer the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands on so many ministers, saying unto them, "Receive the Holy Ghost by imposition of our hands," if there are none of those assistances from the Blessed Spirit to be expected now, which were conferred when our Saviour first spoke these words to his disciples? How can his Lordship in conscience make use of the ordination office? Or how could you, before many witnesses, publicly confess that you were inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you the administration of the church? when you openly deny him in his most powerful, and as to believers, in his common operations. Should you not tremble to think, how much this looks like belying the Holy Ghost, and acting the dreadful crime of *Ananias* and *Sapphira* over again, or lying not only unto man, but unto God? And why are you so zealous for the church, and continually crying out, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord," and yet trample her offices, collects and articles in effect under your feet? With what consistency can you use the baptismal office, and solemnly say unto God, "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit," and yet agree with his Lordship, page 61, in asserting, "to that federal rite of baptism is annexed the preventing or preparatory grace of God, as is likewise (on a due improvement) that of the assisting kind?" Is this all that is implied in the baptismal office? And is regeneration no more than this? What a miserable condition then are those in, who have only their baptismal regeneration to depend on? For who is there that has improved, nay who is there that has not sinned away this preparatory grace? Is not this directly contrary to the

whole baptismal office? And are not those to be reckoned friends to mankind, who bid them look for a better regeneration than this amounts to? Again, with what propriety can his Lordship, in the office of confirmation, pray unto God to give the persons to be confirmed "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and ghostly strength?" Or how can ministers in general, in the collect for *Whit-sunday*, say, "Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comforts?" Why are the passages, wherein these blessings are promised to the first Apostles, appointed to be read at this festival, if we are not in our degree to expect the same mercies? And if these things are not to be *inwardly felt*, and we are not to be supernaturally assured of our salvation, wherefore do you make use of those words in the visitation of the sick? "The Almighty Lord, who is a most strong tower to all them that put their trust in him, to whom all things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, do bow and obey, be now and evermore thy defence, and make thee *know* and *feel*, that there is none other name under heaven given to man, in whom and through whom thou mayest receive health and salvation, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:" Or with what propriety can you subscribe to the 17th article, wherein we are told, "That the godly consideration of predestination, and our election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as *feel in themselves* the working of the Spirit of Christ?" And if there be no such thing as inspiration at all, how can you, consistent with your principles, use the church collect before the communion office, and pray "Almighty God to cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the *inspiration* of his Holy Spirit?" Or how can you agree with the 13th article, which affirms, "That works done before the grace of Christ, and the *inspiration of the Spirit*, are not pleasant

to God?" Are not all these things against you? Do they not all concur to prove, that you are the betrayers of that church which you would pretend to defend? Alas, what strangers must you be to a life hid with Christ in God, and the blessed fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; when you know of no other first-fruits of the Spirit, than the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost conferred on some particular persons in the primitive church, which a man might have, so as to prophesy and cast out devils in the name of Christ, and yet be commanded to depart from him in the last day? How miserable must the congregations be, of which you are made overseers? And how little of the divine presence must you have felt in your administrations, that utterly deny the spirit of prayer, and the Spirit's helping you to preach with power, and consider them as things that have long since ceased? Is not this the reason why you preach as did the scribes, and not with any divine pathos and authority, and see so little good effect of your sermons? Have not your principles a direct tendency to lull poor souls asleep? For if they are not to look for the supernatural operations of the Spirit of God, or any inward feeling or perceptions of this Spirit, may not all that are baptized, and not notoriously wicked, flatter themselves that they are Christians indeed? But is not this the very quintessence of Pharisaism? Is not this the dark, benighted state the great Apostle of the *Gentiles* confesses he was in, before he was experimentally acquainted with Christ, or knew or felt the power of his resurrection? Is not this a prophesying falsely, to say unto people, "Peace, peace," when there is no true solid scriptural ground for peace? And are not you then properly the persons his Lordship speaks of, page 1st, as "betraying whole multitudes into an unreasonable presumption of their salvation?" For is it not the highest presumption, for any to hope to be

saved without the indwelling of the Spirit, since the Apostle declares, in the most awful manner, “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his?” Is it not high time for somebody to rouze the sleepy world out of this state, though it should cost them some melancholy thoughts? May they not justly despond and despair too of being saved in such a condition? For how can they possibly be good Christians, or indeed Christians at all, unless they some time or other feel the Spirit of God in their hearts? Or how can any justly be stiled enthusiastical pretenders to immediate inspiration and new revelation, page 3d, who only claim what is promised in the will of God already revealed, and exhort all to add diligence to make their calling and election sure? And why should that great man of God, Dr. *Owen*, be so particularly mentioned by his Lordship, page 15th? Has there a more solid critical learned divine appeared for many ages in the Christian world? Being dead, doth he not yet speak? Do not his works praise him? Or supposing he was an enthusiast, as his Lordship calls him, how can he be a modern one? Has he not been dead now above fifty years? And why is he mentioned with an &c.? Would his Lordship have us understand Dr. *Goodwin*, Mr. *Baxter*, and writers of the Puritan stamp? But in reproaching them, does not his Lordship equally brand Archbishop *Usher*, Bishop *Hall*, Bishop *Davenant*, Bishop *Hopkins*, and others, nay all the godly reformers and martyrs, and the compilers of our articles, homilies, and liturgy also? Were they not equally enthusiastical with those, which his Lordship in this charge would condemn; and may I not therefore say, if they were enthusiasts, would to God you were not only almost, but altogether such as they were? Has not his Lordship undesignedly put an honour upon the *Methodists*, by joining them in such company? Might not his Lordship easily foresee, that such a procedure as this, would rather increase than

diminish the progress of Methodism, which his Lordship seems to have unwittingly prophesied of three years ago, when this charge was first delivered? See margin of page 60. For what in an human way can have a more natural tendency to strengthen the Methodists hands, than their having a public occasion to shew, that they preach up the great doctrines of the reformation, and are thrust out of the synagogues for no other reason, than because they preach articles of faith, to which they have subscribed, as the expression is in the literal and grammatical sense?

O my reverend brethren, my heart is in pain for you: indeed I could weep over you. Surely you are not all of his Lordship's mind. And yet the *title-page* of this Charge seems at least to imply, that it was printed at the request of the generality of you. O be not angry if I entreat you, if there be any consolation in Christ, or fellowship of the Spirit, to think of these things, and lay them to heart. Remember, I beseech you, remember the good confession you made before many witnesses, when you professed that you were inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you the administration of the church. And consider with yourselves, what a horrid prevarication it must be in the sight of God and man, to subscribe to articles in the literal and grammatical sense, which you do not believe? Reflect on what is spoken by the Prophet, "They have run, and I have not sent them, therefore shall they not profit this people at all." Think what a dreadful thing it is to preach an unknown, an unfelt Christ; and how awful it will be to have the blood of thousands required at your hands at the great day? As you have received an apostolical commission, labour after an apostolical spirit. And do not set yourselves to oppose or run down his blessed operations in others, because you do not feel them in yourselves. Beware of thus doing despite to the Spirit of grace: and be not like the Pharisees, who

“neither entered into the kingdom of God themselves, and those that were entering in they hindered.” Seek you after a righteousness which exceeds theirs. Call to mind, I beseech you, that ye are the lights of the world. If therefore that light which is in you be darkness, how great must that darkness be? “Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.” God seems now about to rise to shake terribly the earth. We hear of wars and rumours of wars. O let your loins be girt, your lamps trimmed, and be ye like unto servants that are waiting for the bridegroom: that if he should come at the second or third watch, he may find you so doing. Smite not your fellow-servants; but rather take ye *Gamaliel*’s advice: “Refrain from these men, and let them alone. For if this counsel or work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found to fight against God.” The harvest is great, very great, and souls are every where perishing for lack of knowledge. Why should the labourers be so few? Think of that awful saying of the angel of the Lord, “Curse ye *Meroz*, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.” Shew that you love Christ above all things, by feeding his lambs and his sheep; by being instant in season and out of season. That so when the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls shall appear, you may give up your accounts with joy, and not with grief.

Suffer me also (as undoubtedly you requested his Lordship to publish this charge for their instruction) to give a word of exhortation to your *Parishioners*. You see, Sirs, that I have used great plainness of speech in my remarks upon this charge of your Right Reverend Diocesan. Do not without examination contradict and blaspheme, but be noble, as the *Bereans* were,

and “search the scriptures whether these things be so or not: to the law, and to the testimony.” Let that determine who are the seducers, who are the enthusiasts, and the enemies to the Church; those who preach up the doctrine of justification by faith alone in the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, and the indwelling and witnessing of the Spirit; or those who tell you, that they were the *miraculous gifts* of the Holy Ghost, and not to be expected in these last days. Say not within yourselves, “We have Jesus for our saviour, we have been born again in baptism, we are members of the Church of *England*, we do nobody any harm, we will do what we can, and Jesus Christ will do the rest;” but seek ye after a better righteousness than your own, even that “righteousness which is by faith;” and earnestly press after that indwelling of the Spirit, and that true inward holiness and purity of heart, without which no man living shall see the Lord. Get acquainted with the collects, homilies, articles and old writers of that Church whereof you profess yourselves members, and let not ignorance be the mother of your devotion. Remember that “God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” See that your zeal be according to knowledge: and count not those to be troublers of *Israel*, nor like the misguided *Jews*, irritated thereto by the high priests, raise mobs against them, as turners of the world upside down, who out of love to your souls, have put their lives in God’s hands, and shew unto you the true way of eternal salvation. Place not holiness in outward buildings, nor reject the gospel because preached to you in the fields, in the streets and lanes of the city. See, hear, and judge for yourselves, and beware lest that come upon you which is spoken by a Prophet: “Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish: for I work a work in your days, which a man shall not believe, though one declare it unto him.”

As for those among you, who in derision are termed *Methodists*, be you thankful to that God, who I trust has made you wise unto everlasting salvation, and given you not only to believe on the Lord Jesus, but also to suffer for his name. You have lately been enabled joyfully to bear the spoiling of your goods [1]. Think it not strange, if you should hereafter be called to resist unto blood. Fear not the faces of men, neither be afraid of their revilings. Having believed on the Lord Jesus, with your hearts, in spite of all opposition from men and devils, make confession of him with your mouths unto eternal salvation. Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and sealed by the blood of your martyrs: at the same time, "be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but the Lord Jesus hath chosen and redeemed you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Follow him therefore chearfully without the camp, bearing his reproach. The more you are afflicted, the more you shall multiply and grow. For verily no man hath lost houses or lands for Christ's sake, and the gospel, who shall not receive a hundred-fold in this life with persecution, and in the world to come life everlasting. Persecution is your privilege: it is a badge of your discipleship: it is every Christians lot in some degree or other. Only be ye careful to give no just offence, either to *Jew* or *Gentile*, or the church of God. And as you profess to have received the Holy Ghost in his sanctifying gifts and graces, and to have the Spirit of God dwelling in you, be ye studious to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit in your lives; that all who are acquainted with you may take knowledge that you have been with Jesus. Call no man master but Christ. Follow others only as they are followers of him. Be fond of no name but that of Christian. Beware of making parties, or calling down fire from

heaven to consume your adversaries. “Bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.” Labour to shine in common life, by a due conscientious discharge of all relative duties, and study to adorn the gospel of our Lord in all things. If you are good Christians, you will fear God, and for his sake honour the King. Be thankful for the many blessings you enjoy under the government of his present Majesty King *George*, and continue to pray to Him, by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice, to keep a *popish Pretender* from ever sitting on the *English* throne. Be cloathed with humility: and always count yourselves beginners in religion. Let it be your meat and drink to do and suffer the will of your Master, and forgetting the things which are behind, reach forward to the things which are before, and never cease striving, till you are filled with all the fulness of God. Determine to know nothing but Jesus, and him crucified. Remember his agony and bloody sweat, his shameful cross and passion. Chearfully pledge him in his bitter cup, and as he was, so be ye in this world. Think of his last and new commandment, and “love one another with a pure heart fervently;” looking and preparing for that blessed hour, when he shall come and call you to sit down with him at the marriage-feast in the realms of light and love, where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and where your weary souls shall be at rest.

Finally, I would drop a word to YOU, who have been lately called out into the highways and hedges, and have been honoured as instruments to compel many poor sinners to come in. Against you, my brethren, his Lordship’s charge seems to be particularly levelled. But I am persuaded you will be nothing terrified thereby, since you know, I believe, by happy experience, what it is to have the hidden mysteries of the kingdom of God opened to your souls, and to have the Comforter come and abide with you. You have

often felt his blessed influences, whilst you have been praying to that God whom you serve, dealing out the bread of life in his name to the people. Ye are highly favoured. Having believed, ye speak, and in your degree can say with our Saviour, “We speak the things that we know.” God, who hath commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shone into your hearts with the light of the glorious gospel. Put not therefore this light under a bushel, but preach the word; “Be ye instant in season and out of season; rebuke, reprove, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. Do the office of evangelists, and make full proof of your ministry.” And whilst others are calling for miracles from you, to prove that you are sealed and sent by the Spirit, do you labour after the conversion of precious souls as seals of your mission, who shall be your joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. Whilst others are approving themselves ministers of Christ, by *dignities* and great *preferments*, do you approve yourselves as the ministers of God in much *patience*, &c. See *2 Corinthians* vi. 4–8. Set the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, and the noble army of martyrs always before you. O think how abundant they were in labours, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft, and how they rejoiced when they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Jesus Christ’s sake. Above all, look ye unto Jesus the author and finisher of your faith; consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. Are you esteemed mad? So was he. Are you termed deceivers of the people? So was he. Are ye looked upon as actuated by an evil spirit? He was called *Beelzebub*, the very chief of the devils. Are ye thrust out of the synagogues? So was he. Do men hunt for your precious lives? So they did for his. The *Jews* sought often to kill him, but they could not, because his hour was not yet come: and so it shall be with you. You are

immortal till your work is done. The witnesses shall not be slain till their testimony is finished. Set your faces therefore as flints: let your brows be harder than adamant: fear not the faces of men, lest God confound you before them. Give not place to those who oppose the operations of the Spirit, no not for an hour. Go ye forth in the strength of the Lord, making mention of his righteousness, and his only. Remember that blessed promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Jesus is the same now as he was yesterday. And if you are really thrust out into the harvest by Jesus, he will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist. You see how dreadfully the scriptures are interpreted. Give yourselves therefore to reading. Search the scriptures. But above all things, pray that ye may be taught of God: without which, notwithstanding all critical and human learning, you will never be scribes well instructed to the kingdom of heaven. Continue to go out into the highways and hedges. Consider what multitudes there are around you every where, ready to perish for lack of knowledge. And though your enemies, for want of arguments, should so far prevail, as to bring you before governors for so doing, fear not, for it shall be given you, as well as unto the first preachers of the everlasting gospel, what ye shall speak. O men, greatly beloved, my heart is enlarged towards you. Give me leave to say unto you, as the angel did to *Daniel*, "Be strong," yea be strong: quit yourselves like men: put on the whole armour of God. And then, though you should be cast into a den of lions, that God whom you serve, is able, and will deliver you. Though afflicted, destitute, tormented here on earth, verily great shall be your reward in heaven.

And now, my *reverend brethren*, to whom this letter is particularly inscribed, what shall I say more? I commend it, and you, to the great God,

and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. I have written to you out of the fulness of my heart; and praying that God may give us a right judgment in all things, I beg leave to subscribe myself, (though the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints),

Your affectionate younger brother, and fellow-servant in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,

George Whitefield.

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1. N. B. The Methodists in Staffordshire were mobbed the Shrove-Tuesday before, and plundered of their substance to the amount of seven hundred pounds sterling.

A LETTER TO THE REVEREND THE PRESIDENT, AND PROFESSORS, TUTORS, AND HEBREW INSTRUCTOR, OF HARVARD-COLLEGE IN CAMBRIDGE; IN ANSWER TO A TESTIMONY PUBLISHED BY THEM AGAINST THE REVEREND MR. GEORGE WHITEFIELD, AND HIS CONDUCT.

2 Corinthians vi. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.— *As deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known: as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.*

A LETTER, &c.

Boston, January 23, 1745.

Reverend and honoured Gentlemen,

WHEN the great Apostle of the *Gentiles* was accused before the Governor of *Cæsarea*, *Acts* xxiv. by *Tertullus*, (employed for that purpose by *Ananias* the high-priest, and the *Elders*) as "a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition among all the *Jews* throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the *Nazarenes*," he thought it his duty (being beckoned to by the Governor) to answer for himself; and in his answer proved, that he was in no wise guilty of the things that were laid to his charge. You, Gentlemen, seem to view me in the same light, wherein *Tertullus*, *Ananias*, and the *Elders* viewed *Paul*; and accordingly have thought proper to publish a testimony against me and my conduct, wherein you have undertaken to prove, page 4, that "I am an enthusiast, a censorious, uncharitable person, and a deluder of the people." Will you give me leave, since I think the great Governor of the church beckons to me by his providence so to do, without minutely criticising upon the diction and method of your testimony, to answer for myself, and in the spirit of meekness examine the proofs you bring to make good your charges against me.

"By an *enthusiast* (you say, page 4.) we mean one that acts, either according to *dreams*, or some *sudden impulses* and *impressions* upon his mind, which he fondly imagines to be from the Spirit of God, persuading and inclining him thereby to such and such actions, though he hath no proof that such persuasions or impressions are from the Holy Spirit." This definition of an enthusiast, (whether exactly right or not) you are pleased to apply to me; and accordingly at the bottom of the aforementioned page you assert, that I am "a man that conducts himself according to his dreams, or some ridiculous and unaccountable impulses and impressions on his mind," and "that this is Mr. *Whitefield*'s manner, is evident both by his life, his Journals, and his sermons." "From these pieces (you add, page 5.) it is very

evident that he used to govern himself by his dreams: one instance of this we have in his life, page 12. ‘Near this time I dreamed that I was to see God on mount *Sinai*. This made a great impression upon me.’ Another like instance we have, pages 39, 40. ‘I prayed that God would open a door to visit the prisoners. Quickly after, I dreamed that one of the prisoners came to be instructed by me: the dream was impressed much upon my heart: in the morning I went to the door of the goal.’ Once more, a like instance we have, page 43. ‘I dreamed I was talking with the Bishop; and that he gave me some gold, which chinked in my hands:’ and, page 44. ‘The guineas chinking in my hand, put me in mind of my dream.’” Now, say you in the next paragraph, “if we consider these instances, we must suppose him *conducting himself by dreams*.” But, Gentlemen, how will these premises admit of such a conclusion? In writing a brief account of God’s dealings with me from my infancy to the time of my ordination, I have mentioned three particular dreams; but how does this prove, that I *conduct myself* (I suppose you mean in the general course of my life) by dreams; or that this denominates me an enthusiast, who (according to your definition) acts according to dreams or “some sudden impulses and impressions upon his mind, which he fondly imagines to be from the Spirit of God, persuading and inclining him thereby to such and such actions, though he hath no proof that such persuasions or impressions (I humbly apprehend to make up the sense there should be added, *or dreams*) are from the Holy Spirit?” May not a person, in a few instances of his life, have some remarkable dreams, which may be explained by subsequent providences, without being an enthusiast, or justly termed one that acts or conducts and governs himself according to dreams?

Besides, ought you not to have quoted the passages as they stand in my life, and then every one must see, I was far from acting according to dreams, even in these instances. The first I mentioned because it was a means under God of awakening me in some degree, as I suppose hath been the case of many; and is this a conducting of myself by a dream? As for the second, the case was thus: as I used to visit the prisoners at *Oxford*, so upon my coming to *Gloucester*, my compassion for the poor prisoners there, and the hopes I had of being serviceable to them, inclined me to visit them also; for which reason I prayed most earnestly, that God would open a door for me to visit them; quickly after I dreamed that one of the prisoners came to be instructed by me: the dream was impressed much upon my heart. In the morning I went to the door of the goal. This dream was no further a reason of my going thither, than as it was a means of exciting me to pursue the reasonable inclination I had before. And subsequent providences made me afterwards judge, that God directed the dream for that purpose. As to the third, I was so far from being conducted by it, that as I have said in the account I gave of it, which, Gentlemen, you would have done well to have observed, I always checked the impression it made upon me. These are the only dreams I think that are mentioned in any of my writings; and all these are in the account of my life: though you are pleased to say, page 5, "From these pieces [namely my Life, Journals, and Sermons] it is very evident that he used to govern himself by dreams."

"As plain it is, (you add, page *ibid.*) that he usually governed himself by some *sudden impulses* and *impressions* on his mind, and we have one instance that may satisfy us, that his first setting out upon his itinerant business, was from an enthusiastic turn. Journal from *London* to *Gibraltar*, page 3, he says, 'He will not mention the reasons that persuaded him it was

the divine will that he should go abroad, because they might not be deemed good reasons by another;' but saith, 'He was as much bent as ever to go, though strongly solicited to the contrary, having asked direction from heaven about it for a year and half.'" And does not this prove, Gentlemen, that I acted *cautiously* in the affair, and took time to consider of the step I was about to take? and consequently was not governed herein by some sudden impulse or impression on my mind, and without consulting Providence, continuing instant in prayer, and conferring with friends on the occasion, for the space of a year and half, as you well observe? And what if I did not mention "the reasons that persuaded me it was the divine will that I should go abroad, because they might not be deemed good reasons by another." Does it therefore follow, that I was governed in the affair by impulses and impressions, or that I had no good reasons to give? Besides, Gentlemen, how does it appear that this passage refers to my first setting out upon my itinerant business? I think I mention only going abroad to *Georgia*, whither I was then bound, and where I intended to settle. At this time I had no thought of being an itinerant. It did not appear to be my duty to set out upon that business, for a considerable time afterwards. How I was induced at length to set out upon it, I may give an account of in a future tract; but till that be published, how can any one fairly determine "whether my first setting out upon this itinerant business, was from an enthusiastical turn or not."

"Other instances (you say, page *ibid.*) there are, wherein he shews it to be his custom to attribute any common turn of his mind to a motion of the Holy Spirit upon him, without any more reason than any man may, any recollections of his memory, or sudden suggestion of his own understanding. Such a one you have, Journal from *Gibraltar* to *Savannah*,

page 3. ‘I went to bed with *unusual thoughts* and *convictions* that God would do some great things at *Gibraltar*.’” But, Gentlemen, if I say, I went to bed with unusual thoughts and convictions, how is this an instance of “my attributing any common turn of my mind to a motion of the Holy Spirit.” You endeavour to prove it further, page 6. by a second passage taken out of another Journal from *Savannah* to *England*, page 22. where it is said, “That the lesson before he left *Savannah*, being St. *Paul*’s shipwreck: and that before his leaving *Charles-Town*, being the first of *Jonah*, made such a deep impression upon him, that he wrote to his friend to acquaint him, he was apprehensive he should have a dangerous voyage; and it happening to be bad weather accordingly, he says, ‘God hath now shewed me wherefore he gave those previous notices.’” But, Gentlemen, how is this an instance of my attributing any common turn of my mind to a motion of the Holy Spirit? Was it a common turn of my mind to have *Paul*’s shipwreck, and the first of *Jonah* powerfully pressed upon me? I do not know that it was. But you are pleased to draw this further inference from the quotation, page ibid., “So that every scripture that came to his view, was received as the *bath-kol* of the *Jews*, and he plainly shews himself as much directed by this way of finding out the will of God as he calls it, as the old heathens were by their *sortes Homericæ Virgilianæ*.” But how does this prove, that every scripture that came to my view, was received as the *bath-kol*, &c. I think I mentioned only the first of *Jonah*, and the xxviith of *Acts*: but you say of this, (my receiving every scripture that came to my view as the *bath-kol*) we have a very full instance, same Journal, page 38, where you “have a particular application of the words which appeared upon the Doctor’s first opening the Common Prayer, ‘The Lord hath visited and redeemed his people’.” But how is this a very full instance, when these

words did not appear to my view at all, but to the Doctor's? It was he that was reading, not I; only as you are pleased to express yourselves, "I wisely observed that so it was, for about eight o'clock the men saw land." Was there any thing unwise in such an observation? Or was there any thing enthusiastical in saying, that God had visited and redeemed his people, when after we had been pinched with hunger, and almost starved, he was pleased to give us a sight of land?

You proceed, page 6, to lay something more to my charge: "Sometimes he speaks as if he had communications directly from the Spirit of God." And is it a crime for a believer, and a minister of Jesus, to speak of his having communications directly from the Spirit of God? I thought that was no new thing to the ministers and people in *New-England*, especially since such a remarkable revival of religion has been vouchsafed unto them. How are believers sealed; or how is the divine life begun and carried on, if there be no such thing as having divine communications directly from the Spirit of God?

Again, (page *ibid.*) you bring a fresh accusation against me. "Sometimes, and indeed very frequently, he (in a most enthusiastic manner) applies even the historical parts of scripture particularly to himself, and his own affairs; and this manner he endeavours particularly to vindicate, *Sermon on Searching the Scriptures*, page 246. of his Sermons: 'It is this application of the historical parts of scripture, when we are reading, that must render them profitable to us;' and appeals to the experience of the Christian, that if he hath so consulted the word of God, he has not been plainly directed how to act, as though he had consulted the *Urim* and the *Thummim*. For in this plain and full manner he says, page 38. of his life; 'The Holy Spirit hath from time to time let him into the knowledge of divine things, and hath

directed him in the minutest circumstances.' And, no doubt, hence it is, that he says, forementioned sermon, page 247, 'That God, at all times, circumstances, and places, though never so minute, never so particular, will, if we diligently seek the assistance of his Holy Spirit, apply general things to our hearts.' Which, though it may be true in some measure as to the doctrinal and preceptive parts of scripture, yet it is evidently enthusiastic to say so as to the historical parts of it." But, however the saying so may appear evidently enthusiastical to you, Gentlemen, after maturely weighing the case, it does not appear in that light to me: for does not the Apostle tell *Timothy*, *2 Timothy* iii. 16, 17. "That all scripture (therein, undoubtedly, including the historical as well as doctrinal and preceptive parts) is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness, to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work." And does not the same Apostle, speaking of scripture histories, say, *1 Corinthians* x. 11. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." And if it be evidently enthusiastical thus to apply the historical parts of scripture to our own cases in private, is it not equally enthusiastical to preach upon and apply the historical parts of scripture to particular cases or persons in public? And further, if it is evidently enthusiastical to apply the historical parts of scripture to ourselves and to our affairs, then supposing such words as these, "Go in peace, Be whole of thy plague, Son be of good chear;" or that historical passage in *John* vii. 37. should be applied to a particular soul in deep distress, (as no doubt they have often been) must not that soul reject them entirely for delusions? And if so, how many that are real believers, must be brought into unspeakable bondage?

Page 8, you go on thus: “To mention but one instance more, though we are not of such letter-learned as deny, that there is such an union of believers to Christ, whereby they are one in him, as the Father and he are one, as the Evangelist speaks, or rather the Spirit of God by him; yet so letter-learned we are, as to say, that the passage in Mr. *W——d*’s sermon of the *indwelling of the Spirit*, page 311. contains the true spirit of enthusiasm, where he says, ‘To talk of any having the Spirit of God without *feeling* of it, is really to deny the thing.’ Upon which we say, that the believer may have a satisfaction, that he hath the assistance of the Spirit of God with him in so continual and regular a manner, that he may be said to dwell in him, and yet have *no feeling* of it.” But, Gentlemen, is not this in effect to deny the indwelling of the Spirit? For how is it possible that the believer can have a satisfaction, that he hath the assistance of the Spirit of God with him in so continued and regular a manner, that he may be said to dwell in him, and yet the believer have no feeling of it? For my part I cannot comprehend it. I could as soon believe the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, and therefore cannot retract what you are pleased to say contains the true spirit of enthusiasm, “To talk of any having the Spirit of God without feeling it, is really to deny the thing.” The reason you give why the Spirit of God may dwell in a believer, and yet the believer himself have no feeling of it; in my apprehension carries no proof and conviction with it at all. I think you reason thus, page ib. “The metaphor is much too gross to express (however full) this satisfaction of the mind, and has led some to take the expression literally, and hath (we fear) given great satisfaction to many an enthusiast among us since the year 1740, from the swelling of their breasts and stomachs in their religious agitations, which they have thought to be *feeling the Spirit*, in its operations on them.” Who these enthusiasts, and what these

religious agitations are which you are pleased to mention, I cannot tell: neither do I know by whom this metaphor of feeling the Spirit, has been misunderstood, or taken in too gross a sense. But such a way of speaking and writing is very common amongst the most eminent divines, as well as in the articles of the Church of *England*. In her 17th article she speaks thus: "As the godly consideration of predestination and our election in Christ is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as *feel in themselves* the working of the Spirit of Christ, &c." Mr. *Guthrie*, in his *Trial of a saving Interest in Christ*, page 109. and which used to be Dr. *Owen*'s *Vade mecum*, hath this remarkable paragraph: "I speak with the experience of many saints, and I hope according to scripture, if I say there is a communication of the Spirit of God which is let out to some of his people sometimes, that is somewhat beside, if not beyond, that witnessing of a sonship spoken of before. It is a glorious manifestation of God unto the soul, shedding abroad God's love in the heart. It is a thing better *felt* than spoken of: it is no audible voice, but it is a flash of glory filling the soul with God, as he is life, light, love, and liberty, countervailing that audible voice, 'O man greatly beloved,' *Daniel* x. 19. putting a man in a transport with this on his heart, 'It is good to be here,' as *Matthew* xvii. 5. It is that which went out from Christ to *Mary*, when he but mentioned her name, *John* xx. 16. 'Jesus saith unto her, *Mary*: she turneth herself and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.' He had spoken some words to her before, and she understood not that it was he; but when he uttereth this one word, *Mary*, there was some admirable divine conveyance and manifestation made out unto her heart, by which she was so satisfyingly filled, that there was no place for arguing and disputing whether or no that was Christ, and if she had any interest in him. That manifestation made

faith to itself; and did purchase credit and trust to itself, and was equivalent with, ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ This is such a glance of glory, that it may in the highest sense be called the earnest, or first fruits of the inheritance, *Ephesians* i. 14. for it is a felt arm-full of the holy God.” Worthy Mr. *Baxter*, in his *Gildas Salvianus*, page 40. speaking of the danger of ministers preaching an unknown and unfelt Christ, writes thus: “O Sirs, all your preaching and persuading of others, will be but dreaming and trifling hypocrisy, till the work be thoroughly done upon yourselves. How can you set yourselves day and night to a work, that your carnal hearts are averse from? How can you call out with serious fervour upon poor sinners, with importunate solicitations, to take heed of sin, and to set themselves to a holy life, that never felt yourselves the evil of sin, or the worth of holiness? I tell you, these things are never well known till they are *felt*, nor well felt till *possessed*: and he that feeleth them not himself, is not so like to speak feelingly to others, nor to help others to the feeling of them.” Thus wrote Mr. *Guthrie* and Mr. *Baxter*: and even the Reverend President himself, in his sermon before the convention, *May 28, 1741*, page 34. hath these words; “Not but that the saints may *feel* this very sensibly, and it is a joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

But if such a way of writing displeases you now, and you are of the opinion, “That a believer may have a satisfaction, that he hath the assistance of the Spirit of God with him, in so continual and regular a manner, that he may be said to dwell in him, and yet have no feeling of it,” I cannot wonder, Gentlemen, that my writings are offensive; because, as you observe at the end of this paragraph page 8, my compositions are, and I hope always will be, full of these things.

You close your proofs of my being an *enthusiast*, with these words, “The whole tends to persuade the world (and it has done so with respect to many) that Mr. *W.* hath as familiar a converse and communion with God, as any of the Prophets and Apostles, and such, as we all acknowledge to have been under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.” What tendency my writings may have to make people think so highly of me, I cannot determine: but this I affirm, that I would not have undertaken to preach the gospel for ten thousand worlds, had I not been fully persuaded that I had a degree of that Spirit, and was admitted to a degree of that holy and familiar converse and communion with God, which the Prophets and Apostles were favoured with, in common with all believers. And if this had not been the case, should I not, Gentlemen, have lied to God as well as unto man, when I declared at my ordination, that “I was inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost,” who, I believe, according to Christ’s promise, will be with every faithful minister (and so as to be *felt* too) even to the end of the world.

“As a natural consequence of the heat of enthusiasm, by which (you are pleased to say) he was so evidently acted;” in a following paragraph, page 8. you say, “In the next place, we look upon Mr. *Whitefield* as an *uncharitable*, *censorious*, and *slanderous man*;” *habitually such*, for that is the idea your words seem to convey. But, Gentlemen, does it follow that *Peter* could properly be stiled a cursing, swearing man, because with oaths and curses he denied his Lord? Or could *David*, that man after God’s own heart, be properly stiled a murdering adulterous man, because he committed adultery with *Bathsheba* and murdered her husband *Uriah*? Or, can a believer be stiled properly an hypocrite, because he has yet got a great deal of hypocrisy remaining in his heart? I suppose, by no means. No more, according to my apprehensions, can any man be justly called an

uncharitable, censorious, and slanderous man, if he be not habitually so; supposing it should be proved either from his writings or conduct, that he may have been somewhat rash or uncharitable in his judgment passed upon some particular persons or things.

But how, Gentlemen, do you prove this charge, That I am an uncharitable, slanderous man? Why, page 9. “From his *monstrous reflections* upon the great and good Archbishop *Tillotson*, (as Dr. *Increase Mather* stiles him) comparing his sermons to the conjuring books which the Apostle persuaded the people to destroy.” But this, I humbly apprehend, does not prove that I cast reflections, which you call *monstrous*, upon Archbishop *Tillotson* as to his personal character, but only his books, which Dr. *Increase Mather* himself, as I have been informed by the Reverend Mr. *Gee*, who was brought up under his ministry, and directed by him in his studies, constantly warned the students against. And by the way, I cannot but observe, that this holy venerable man of God, Dr. *Increase Mather*, if we may credit the writer of his life, dealt as much in impressions and inward feelings, as the person against whom you are pleased to publish this testimony. And though he might call the Archbishop *a great and good man* for his eminency in station, and great generosity and moderation towards the Dissenters, yet I believe he never called him *a great and good divine*; nor do I think he would blame me for what I have said concerning Mr. *G——n*, and Mr. *H——n*.

But that which affords you the greatest occasion to denominate me a censorious, uncharitable, and slanderous man, and which I apprehend chiefly stirs up your resentment against me is, to make use of your own expression, page 9. “My reproachful reflections upon the Society which is immediately under our care.” I think the reflections are these: “And as far

as I could gather from some who well knew the state of it, [the College] not far superior to our Universities in piety and true godliness. Tutors neglect to pray with, and examine the hearts of the pupils; discipline is at too low an ebb; bad books are become fashionable among them; *Tillotson* and *Clarke* are read, instead of *Shepard*, *Stoddard*, and such like evangelical writers." And, Gentlemen, were not these things so at the time when I wrote? Wherein then, in writing thus, have I slandered *Harvard College*? But then you say, page 10, he goes further still, when he says, page 96, both of *Yale College*, as well as ours: "As for the Universities, I believe it may be said, Their light is now become darkness, darkness that may be felt." And must it not be so, when tutors neglect to pray with, and examine the hearts of the pupils, &c. And this is all I meant. For I had no idea of representing the Colleges in such a deplorable state of immorality and irreligion, as you, Gentlemen, in your testimony, seem to object. I meant no more, than what the Reverend President meant, when speaking of the degeneracy of the times, in his sermon at the annual convention of ministers, *May 28, 1741*, he adds, "But, alas! how is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed! We have lost our first love: and though religion is still in fashion with us, yet it is evident, that the power of it is greatly decayed." However, I am sorry, I published my private informations, though from credible persons, concerning the colleges, to the world: and assure you, that I should be glad to find, the Reverend President was not mistaken when he undertook, from his own examination of things, seven months after, to "assure that venerable audience on the day of the convention, that their society hath not deserved the aspersions which have of late been made upon it, either as to the principles there prevalent, or the books there read:" and assure you further, that what he adds is true in respect of me, "That such as

have given out a disadvantageous report of us, have done it in a godly jealousy for the churches of Christ, which are supplied from us." I would bless God, and at the same time, I would ask pardon for the mistake, if I was mistaken therein; for I unfeignedly wish your prosperity, and therefore was as willing to publish the reformation in the College, as ever I was to speak of its declension. From thence may there always proceed those streams, which may make glad the city of our God!

To proceed: again you say, page 11. "We think it highly proper to bear our testimony against Mr. *Whitefield*, as we look upon him to be a *deluder* of the people. And here we mean more especially, as to the collections of money, which, when here before, by an extraordinary mendicant faculty, he almost *extorted* from the people." Extorted from the people? How, Gentlemen, could that be, when it was a public contribution? I never heard the people themselves make any such objection. Nor did I ever see people, in all appearance, offer more willingly: they seemed to be those chearful givers, whom God declares he approves of. You go on to prove me a deluder thus: "As the argument he then used was, 'The support and education of his dear lambs at the Orphan-house,' who (he told us, he hoped) might, in time, preach the gospel to us and to our children; so it is not to be doubted, that the people were greatly encouraged to give him largely of their substance, supposing they were to be under the immediate tuition and instruction of himself, as he then made them to believe; and had not this been their thought, it is, to us, without all peradventure, they would never have been persuaded to any considerable contribution upon that head; and this notwithstanding, he hath scarce seen them for these four years." But how does all this prove me a deluder of the people? For can it be proved, that what was collected, was not made use of for the support and

education of the dear lambs at the Orphan-house? Or did I promise that any of these dear lambs should come in four years time to preach in *New-England*? Or did I in the least intimate that I had a design to be always resident at the Orphan-house? And if by various and unexpected interpositions of Providence, I have been prevented seeing them these four years, can I help that? "And besides, you say, he hath left the care of them with a person, whom the contributors know nothing of." I suppose, Gentlemen, you mean Mr. *Barber*. But do these contributors know nothing of him? Did I not mention him publicly at the time of collecting, as one of their own countrymen, and one bred up in one of their own colleges? Was he not with me in person? And did I not again and again declare, that he was to be intrusted with the education and spiritual concerns of the children and family? Assuredly I did. But you add, "And we ourselves have reason to believe that he is little better than a Quaker." What reason, Gentlemen, you may have thus to judge of him, I cannot tell, but I have great reason to believe he is a thorough Calvinist, and a dear man of God, much acquainted with the divine life, and sweetly taught rightly to divide the word of truth. I heartily wish all that had the care of youth, were like-minded, whatever name you are pleased to give him. But you say, "Furthermore, the account which Mr. *W*—— hath given the world of his disbursements of the several contributions, for the use of his Orphan-house, (wherein there are several large articles, and some of about a thousand pounds our currency charged in a very summary way, 'For sundries,' no mention being made therein what the sum was expended for, nor to whom it was paid) is by no means satisfactory." Would you not, Gentlemen, have done well to have said, by no means satisfactory to us? For, I am well persuaded most of the contributors depended on my veracity, and would have been satisfied as to

themselves, though I had given no account of the disbursements at all. Besides, Gentlemen, did you ever see an account of that nature more particular? Is that of the Society for propagating the gospel more so? Or would you yourselves, Gentlemen, be more particular, supposing an account of what has been received and disbursed for *Harvard-College*, should ever be required at your hands?

The manner of my preaching you seem, page 12. "as much to dislike, and bound to bear a testimony against, as the man himself." And why? because it is extempore preaching. This, to use your own words, page *ibid.*, "We think by no means proper; for that it is impossible that any man should be able to manage any argument with that strength, or any instruction with that clearness in an extempore manner, as he may with study and meditation." But, Gentlemen, does extempore preaching exclude study and meditation? *Timothy*, I believe, was an extempore preacher, and yet the Apostle advises him to give himself to reading: and I am of *Luther*'s opinion, that study, prayer, meditation, and temptation, are necessary for a minister of Christ. Now you say, "Mr. *W*—— evidently shows, that he would have us believe his discourses are *extempore*." And so they are, if you mean that they are not written down, and that I preach without notes: but they are *not extempore*, if you think that I preach always without study and meditation. Indeed, Gentlemen, I love to study, and delight to meditate, when I have opportunity, and yet would go into the pulpit by no means depending on my study and meditation, but on the blessed Spirit of God, who I believe now, as well as formerly, frequently gives his ministers utterance, and enables them to preach with such wisdom, that all their adversaries are not able to gainsay or resist. This, I think, is so far from being a *lazy manner* of preaching, and the preacher in doing thus, is so far from offering that which

cost him nothing, as you object, page *ibid.* that I have generally observed, extempore preachers are the most fervent, laborious preachers, and I believe (at least I speak for myself who have tried both ways) that it costs them as much, if not more close and solemn thought, as well as faith and confidence in God, as preaching by notes. And however you are pleased to add, page *ibid.* that this way of preaching "is little instructive to the mind, still less cogent to the reasonable powers," yet, I believe it is the preaching which God hath much honoured, and has been frequently attended with very great success in many ages of the Christian church. And if we may pray, I see no reason why we may not preach extempore. The rashness of some of my expressions, as well as the dangerous errors, which you are pleased to say, page 13, have been vented in my extempore discourses, I humbly apprehend, are no sufficient objections against extempore preaching itself; because we often see, that those who preach by notes, and write too, as may be supposed, with study and meditation, are guilty of as rash expressions, and vent as dangerous errors, as those who, you say, preach either without study or meditation. What the dangerous errors are, that have been vented in my extempore discourses, you have not thought proper to specify, unless it be that once or twice through mistake I said, "That Christ loves unregenerate sinners with a love of complacency; nay, and that God loves sinners as sinners." These were indeed unguarded expressions; but I recalled it publicly as soon as I was made sensible of my mistake: and I think too before your testimony against me was published. Were these my settled principles, I would agree with you in your enlargement upon it, page 13, "Which, if it be not an unguarded expression, must be a thousand times worse; for we cannot look upon it as much less than blasphemy, and shows him to be stronger in the *Antinomian scheme*, than most of the professors of

that heresy themselves." But as it was only a *lapsus linguæ*, and the whole current of my preaching and writing was, and is directly contrary to such principles, I would not have you, Gentlemen, by thus representing me as an Antinomian, enroll yourselves in the number of those "that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for them that speak in the gate." Indeed, Gentlemen, I utterly detest *Antinomianism*, both in principle and practice. And though you are pleased to say, "That it is not unlikely, and that it is to be suspected, (that I am an Antinomian) because the expression was repeated; and when he was taxed with it by a certain gentleman, he made no retraction:" yet I did, I thought, what amounted to it: for when he told me of my mistake, (if we understand the same gentleman) I bowed and thanked him for his kind information: as I would willingly do all, who at any time are so kind as to come in the spirit of meekness, to tell me of my faults, and freely converse with me face to face.

Lastly, you are pleased to say, page *ibid.* "We think it our duty to bear our strongest testimony against that itinerant way of preaching, which this Gentleman was the first promoter of among us, and still delights to continue in." Now by an itinerant preacher (you say) "We understand one that hath no peculiar charge of his own, but goes about from country to country, or from town to town, in any country, and stands ready to preach to any congregation that shall call him to it: and such a one is Mr. *W*——." I own the charge; and am willing to put the case on the same issue as you do, page 14: "Indeed if there were any thing leading to this manner of management, in the directions and instructions given either by our Saviour or his Apostles, we ought to be silent, and so would a man of any modesty; if (on the other hand) there be nothing in the New-Testament leading to it. And surely (you add) Mr. *W*—— will not have the face to pretend he acts now as

an *evangelist*." But indeed, Gentlemen, I do, if by an evangelist you mean, what the scripture I presume means, "One who hath no particular charge of his own, but goes about from country to country, or from town to town, in any country, and stands ready to preach to any congregation that shall call him to it." For does not that general commission given by our Lord to his Apostles, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," authorize the ministers of Christ, "even to the end of the world," to preach the gospel in any town and country, though not of their own head, yet whenever or wherever Providence should open a door, even though it should be in a place "where officers are already settled, and the gospel is fully and faithfully preached." This, I humbly apprehend, is every gospel minister's indisputable privilege, and therefore cannot judge that it is being wise above what is written, to give it as my opinion, as you say I have done, page 14. "That itinerant preaching may be very convenient for the furtherance of the good of the churches, if it were under a good regulation." For itinerant preaching is certainly founded upon the word of God, and has been agreeably approved of, and practised by many good men, with great and happy success both in ancient and later times? Was not the reformation begun and carried on by itinerant preaching? Were not *Knox*, *Welch*, *Wishart*, and those holy men of God, several of the good old *puritans*, itinerant preachers? Are not itinerants sent forth by the societies for propagating the gospel and promoting Christian knowledge both in *England*, *Scotland* and *Denmark*? And did not holy Mr. *Baxter* in his appendix to his *Gildas Salvianus* or *Reformed Pastor*, in conjunction with others, earnestly and with weighty reasons recommend itinerant preaching, even where the gospel was fully and faithfully preached, in 1657? Which is expressed in the following terms:

"*To the Reverend and faithful Ministers of Christ in the several Counties of this Land, and the Gentlemen and other natives of each County, now inhabiting the City of London.*

"*Reverend and beloved Brethren*,

THE whole design and business of this discourse, being the propagation of the gospel, and the saving of men's souls, I have thought it not unmeet to acquaint you with another work to that end, which we have set on foot in this county, and to propound it to your consideration, and humbly invite you to an universal imitation. You know, I doubt not, the great inequality in ministerial abilities, and that many places have ministers that are not qualified with convincing, lively, awakening gifts: some must be tolerated in the necessity of the church, that are not likely to do any great matters towards the conversion of ignorant, sensual, worldly men: and some that are learned, able men, and fitted for controversies, may yet be unfit to deal with those of the lower sort. I suppose if you peruse the whole ministry of a county, you will not find so many and such lively, convincing preachers as we could wish. And I take it for granted, that you are sensible of the weight of eternal things, and of the worth of souls; and that you will judge it a very desirable thing that every man should be employed according to his gifts, and the gospel in its light and power should be made as common, as possible we can: upon these and many the like considerations, the ministers in this county resolved to chuse out four of the most lively, yet sober, peaceable, orthodox men, and desire them once a month *to leave their own congregations*, to the assistance of some other, and to bestow their labour in the places where they thought there was most need; and as we were resolving upon this work, the natives of this county, inhabiting the city of *London*, having a custom of feasting together once a year, and having at

their feast collected some monies by contribution, for the maintaining of a *weekly lecture* in this county, (besides other good works) did (by their stewards) desire us to set up the said lecture, and to dispose of the said monies in order thereto: and their judgments upon consultation did correspond with our design. So that the said money, being sufficient to satisfy another, that shall in their absence preach in their own places, we employ it accordingly, and have prevailed with some brethren to undertake this work.

I propound to your consideration, *Reverend Brethren*, and to you, the natives of each county, in *London*, whether the same work may not tend much to the edification of the church, and the welfare of souls, if you will be pleased speedily and effectually to set it on foot through the land? Whether it may not, by God's blessing, be a likely means to illuminate the ignorant, and awaken the secure, and countermine seducers, and hinder the ill success of *Satan's itinerants*, and win over many souls to Christ, and stablish many weak ones in the faith? And not doubting but your judgments will approve of the design, I humbly move, that you will please to contribute your faculties to the work; that the *Londoners* of each county will be pleased to manifest their benevolence to this end, and commit the monies to the hands of the most faithful, orthodox ministers, and that they will readily and self-denyingly undertake the work.

I hope the Gentlemen, natives of this county, will be pleased to pardon my publishing their example, seeing my end is only the promoting of men's salvation, and the common good.

And that you may more fully understand the scope of our design, I shall annex the letters directed to the several ministers of the county, which the

lecturers send to the ministers of the place, and receive his answer, before they presume to preach in any congregation."

"*To all the rest of the Ministers of the Gospel in this County, our Reverend and beloved Brethren, grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

"*Reverend Brethren*,

THE communication of the heavenly evangelical light, for the glory of our Redeemer, in the conversion, edification and salvation of men's souls, is that which we are bound to by many obligations, as Christians, and as ministers of Christ, for his church, and therefore must needs be solicitous thereof: and it is that which the spirit of grace, where it abideth, doth proportionably dispose the heart to desire: by convictions of the excellency and necessity of this work, and of our own duty in order thereto, and by the excitation of undeserved grace, our hearts are carried out to long after a more general and effectual illumination and saving conversion of the inhabitants of this county in which we live: which while we were but entering upon a consultation to promote, it pleased God (without our knowledge of it) to put the same thoughts into the hearts of others. The natives of this *County of Worcester* who dwell in *London*, meeting at a feast, (as is their yearly use) collected a sum of money for the setting of eight poor boys to trades, and towards the maintaining of a weekly lecture, and have committed the execution of this last, to our care: and upon consultation with their stewards, and among ourselves, both they and we are satisfied, that a *moveable lecture* on the Lord's-day is the likeliest way for the improvement of their charity, to the attainment of their ends. For, 1st, many people through poverty cannot, and many through negligence will not come to a week day's lecture: experience telleth us, that such are usually

attended but little by those that have the greatest need: 2dly, and thus the benefit may extend to more, than if it were fixed in one place.

We have therefore desired our reverend and dear brethren, Mr. *Andrew Tristram*, minister at *Clent*, Mr. *Henry Oasland*, minister at *Bewdley*, and Mr. *Thomas Baldwin*, minister at *Wolverly*, and Mr. *Joseph Treble*, minister at *Church Lench*, to undertake this work, and that each of them will be pleased every fourth Lord's-day to preach twice in those places, where they shall judge their labours to be most necessary: and as we doubt not but their own congregations will so far consent for the good of others; so do we hereby request of you our brethren, that when any of them shall offer their labours for your congregations, in preaching the said lecture, you will receive them, and to your power further them in the work. For as we have no thoughts of obtruding their help upon you, without your consent, so we cannot but undoubtedly expect, that men fearing God, and desiring their people's everlasting good, will chearfully and gratefully entertain such assistance. And we hope, that none will think it needless, or take it as an accusing the ministry of insufficiency: for the Lord doth variously bestow his gifts: all that are upright are not equally fitted for the work: and many that are learned, judicious, and more able to teach the riper sort, are yet less able to condescend to the ignorant, and so convincingly and fervently to rouze up the secure, as some that are below them in other qualifications: and many that are able in both respects, have a barren people; and the ablest have found by experience that God hath sometimes blest the labours of a stranger to do that, which their own hath not done. We beseech you therefore interpret not this as an accusation of any, which proceedeth from the charity of our worthy country-men in *London*, and from the earnest desires of them and us, to further the salvation of as many as we can. And

that you may have no jealousies of the persons deputed to this work; we assure you that they are approved men, orthodox, sober, peaceable, and of upright lives, happily qualified for their ministerial work, and zealous and industrious therein; and so far from being likely to sow any errors or cause divisions, or to draw the hearts of people from their own faithful Pastors, that they will be forward to assist you against any such distempers in your flocks. Not doubting therefore, but as you serve the same Master, and are under the same obligations as we, so as many as are heartily addicted to his service, will readily promote so hopeful a work, we commend you and your labours to the blessing of the Lord.

Your brethren and fellow-labourers in the work of the gospel.

Kiderminster.

In the name and at the desire of the ministers of this association.

Evesham.

Richard Baxter, *John Boraston*, *Jarvis Bryant*.

In the name of the ministers of this association.

Giles Collier, *George Hopkins*, *John Dolphin*."

This is and shall be my endeavour, and was so when I was here last, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding some of my expressions have been made to speak things, and convey ideas which I never intended. And therefore, Gentlemen, judge ye, whether you have said right in page 11th, "And now is it possible, that we should not look upon him (Mr. *W.*) as the blameable cause of all the quarrels on the account of religion, which the churches are now engaged in: and this not only on account of his own behaviour, but also as the coming of those *hot men* afterwards (who together with the exhorters that accompanied them, cultivated the same uncharitable dispositions in our churches) was wholly

owing to his influence and example?" Is this, Gentlemen, a fair way of arguing? Is it not enough for me to answer for myself, without having the faults of others that came after me, laid to my charge also? Did not the papists as justly, who charged *Luther* with all the imprudencies of his adherents, and the confusions that attended the reformation? Besides, I do not understand, who you mean by those hot men. Surely you do not include the reverend Mr. *Tennent*. God did make me an instrument of sending him to *New-England*. I thank him for it, as I believe several of *Harvard College*, many ministers, and thousands of the common people, in the several parts of *New-England*, will be found to do, through the ages of eternity. As for others, I knew nothing of their coming, neither do I well know who you mean, and consequently can be no more justly charged with their misconduct, than the first founder of *Harvard College* can be charged with all the bad principles and practices which any of the members of that society have been guilty of, since his decease. That Mr. *Tennent*'s labours and mine were remarkably blessed, the reverend Mr. President himself testified in the fore-mentioned sermon, page 23, wherein are these words: "Indeed those *two pious and valuable men of God*, who have been lately labouring more abundantly among us, have been greatly instrumental in the hands of God, to revive this blessed work; and many, no doubt, have been savingly converted from the error of their ways, many more have been convicted, and all have been in some measure roused from their lethargy." And even in this testimony, you are all pleased to say, page 3, that "by a certain faculty which he hath of raising the passions, he hath been a means of rousing many from their stupidity, and setting them on thinking, whereby some may have been made really better." And if these things are so; if many have been roused from their stupidity, and made really better; if the blessed

work of God was revived, and there is no doubt but many have been savingly converted from the error of their ways, many more convicted, and all in some measure roused from their lethargy; is it to be wondered at, that many of the people should be strongly attached to such an instrument, though it should be most evident (as you say, page *ibid.*) "that he hath not any superior talent at instructing the mind, or shewing the force and energy of those arguments for a religious life, which are directed to in the everlasting gospel?" For, is it not natural for people to love their spiritual Father? Would not the *Galatians* have plucked out even their own eyes, and have given them to *Paul*? And is it not the bounden duty of all that love Jesus, to love those who labour in the word and doctrine, and are made greatly instrumental in the hands of God to revive his blessed work amongst them? And supposing that they have not any superior talent at instructing the mind, &c. ought they not the more to thank and adore the sovereignty of their heavenly father, who sends by whom he will send, and chuses the weak things of this world to confound the strong, and hides those things from the wise and prudent, which he is pleased to reveal unto babes?

Gentlemen, I profess myself a *Calvinist* as to principle, and preach no other doctrines than those which your pious ancestors, and the founders of *Harvard College*, preached long before I was born. And I am come to *New-England*, with no intention to meddle with, much less to destroy the order of the *New-England* churches, or turn out the generality of their ministers, or re-settle them with ministers from *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, as hath been hinted in a late letter written by the reverend Mr. *Clap*, Rector of *Yale-College*: such a thought never entered my heart; neither, as I know of, has my preaching the least tendency thereunto. I am determined to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ and him crucified. I have no intention

of setting up a party for myself, or to stir up people against their Pastors. Had not illness prevented, I had some weeks ago departed out of these coasts. But as it is not a season of the year for me to undertake a very long journey, and I have reason to think the great God daily blesses my poor labours, I think it my duty to comply with the invitations that are sent me; and, as I am enabled, to be instant in season and out of season, and to preach among poor sinners the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. This indeed I delight in. It is my meat and my drink. I esteem it more than my necessary food. This I think I may do, as a minister of the King of kings, and a subject to his present Majesty King *George*, upon whose royal head I pray God, the crown may long flourish. And as I have a right to preach, so I humbly apprehend the people, as Christians, as men, and *New-England* men in particular, have a right to invite and hear. If pulpits should be shut, blessed be God! the fields are open, and I can go without the camp, bearing the Redeemer's sacred reproach: this I am used to, and glory in; believing that if I suffer for it, I shall suffer for righteousness sake. At the same time I desire to be humbled, and ask public pardon for any rash word I have dropped, or any thing I have written or done amiss. This leads me also to ask forgiveness, Gentlemen, if I have done you or your society, in my journal, any wrong. Be pleased to accept unfeigned thanks for all tokens of respect you shewed me when here last. And if you have injured me in the testimony you have published against me and my conduct (as I think, to say no more, you really have) it is already forgiven without asking, by Gentlemen,

Your affectionate humble servant,

G. W.

P. S. I have been obliged to be very brief, on account of the variety of business in which I am necessarily engaged, and my daily calls to preach the everlasting gospel.

REMARKS ON A PAMPHLET, ENTITLED, THE ENTHUSIASM OF METHODISTS AND PAPISTS COMPARED;

WHEREIN SEVERAL MISTAKES IN SOME PARTS OF MY PAST WRITINGS AND CONDUCT ARE ACKNOWLEDGED, AND MY PRESENT SENTIMENTS CONCERNING THE METHODISTS EXPLAINED.

IN A LETTER TO THE AUTHOR.

Out of the eater came forth meat.

Judges xiv. 4.

REMARKS, &c.

SIR,

I HAVE perused your *anonymous Pamphlet*; and though upon some accounts it does not deserve an answer, yet, as it may serve a good purpose, and be a means of rectifying some mistakes, I shall trouble you with a few remarks upon it.

Who, or what you are, the world is left to guess. If a *clergyman*, you have done well to conceal yourself, the whole strain of your performance discovering a levity unbecoming such a character. You yourself seem

conscious of its needing an apology: for in your preface, after having just hinted at the "*extravagant freaks of Methodism*," you add, "And if in proving it, I am sometimes guilty of a levity of expression, 'tis to be hoped some allowance will be made, in consideration of the nature of the subject, it being no easy matter to keep one's countenance, and be steadily serious, where others are ridiculous." Assure yourself, Sir, I shall make all the allowance you can reasonably desire; but at the same time must observe to you, that if others are ridiculous, that is no reason why you should make yourself so; and if recovering the persons concerned out of their extravagant freaks, be only a remote design of your composition, you have unhappily fixed upon a most improbable, ineffectual remedy; I mean, *irreligious banter*.

However this be, your principal design is obvious, "As a caution to all Protestants, to draw a comparison between the wild and pernicious Enthusiasms of some of the most *eminent Saints* in the *Popish communion*, and those of the *Methodists* in our own country:" And who those eminent saints are you specify, page 9, section 2. "the most wild, and extravagant, the most ridiculous strolling, fanatical, delirious, and mischievous of all the saints in the *Romish* communion." For otherwise, you say, "the parallel would not hold, but come off defective; the whole conduct of the Methodists (not any one branch, it seems, to be excepted) being but a counter-part of the most wild fanaticism of the most abominable communion," in its most corrupt ages. *Vid. Pref.* This is avowedly your principal design (which though I think somewhat too restrained to answer exactly to your title page) must be acknowledged to be a very expedient one; if, besides cautioning protestants, you intended, at the same time, to

expose the Methodists, and to have them looked upon and treated as Papists.

How you have succeeded in this attempt, will appear when we come to examine the parallel you have drawn between them. To this I shall confine myself, and consequently, on purpose, omit making any direct reply to the account you give of the *Montanists*; it being not only quite foreign to the title page and principal design of your tract (as you say, "they arose in the second century, before popery had a being,") but at the best very precarious, being not founded upon writings of their own, which, as you inform us, are long since lost.

To come then to your more direct comparison between *popish* and *methodistical enthusiasts*: "From a commiseration or horror, arising from the grievous corruptions of the world, perhaps from a real motive of sincere piety, they both set out with warm pretences to reformation:" page 10. section 2. And is not this commendable, whether in Methodists or in Papists? Or ought any one, think you, to take upon him holy orders, and witness that good confession before many witnesses, "That he is inwardly moved thereto by the Holy Ghost," without having a real motive of sincere piety, and a warm intention at least (if that be what you mean by a pretence) to promote, as much as in him lies, a real reformation? If by pretence, you would have us understand a mere hypocritical pretence, you are then guilty of a self-contradiction: for how can pretence and reality be reconciled? Which of the two was the case of the Methodists at their first setting out, if you please, we will leave to the great day, to be determined by Him who is appointed to be judge of quick and dead; to whom alone all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid. Actions are

cognizable by us, and not intentions. Let us see how your parallel holds good in respect to these.

"For the better advancement of their purposes, both, commonly (you say, page 11. section 4.) begin their *adventures* with *field preaching*. In which particular, though the practice of the Methodists be notorious, it may not be amiss to produce some of their own words, were it only for the sake of the comparison." But, good Sir, ought any one, merely for the sake of making a comparison, (though ever so just) to exceed the bounds of truth, which you have here confessedly done? For what words have you produced, or indeed can you produce, to prove that the Methodists began their adventures with field-preaching? If we may believe your own words, is not the quite contrary notorious? For, section 5. page 15. you tell us, "That after the Methodists had traduced the clergy, as long as they were permitted to do it, in their own churches and pulpits, they set about this pious work of defamation more heartily in the fields."

Here then your parallel fails at first setting out, you yourself being judge. And here I would dismiss this article, being founded on a mistake, was it not proper to take notice of a cursory remark or two, which you have thought proper to make upon it. You ask, page 14. "How comes Mr. *Whitefield* to say, there was never any such thing as field-preaching before? Was it from the mere vanity of being thought the founder of it? Or was he ignorant of the practice several years ago, and even in our own nation?" I thank you, Sir, for informing me better, and am glad to find that field-preaching was practised in our nation several years ago. Why then such a noise about it now?

From what degrees of vanity my expressing myself in that manner might proceed, I cannot now remember: but if, as you insinuate, page 33. "It is

easy to foresee there is to be some future *calendar* or *legend of the saints*," (I presume you mean *Methodist saints*) I care not if the following article be inserted concerning me. "Such a day the Reverend *George Whitefield*, having had an university education, and been regularly ordained deacon and priest of the Church of *England*, and invited to preach in most churches of the cities of *Gloucester*, *Bristol*, *Westminster*, and *London*, in the last of which places he collected near a thousand pounds for the charity children, being causelesly denied the further use of the churches, because he preached up the necessity of the new birth, and justification in the sight of God by faith alone in the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, *began to preach the same doctrines in the fields*."

This is the real truth: and whether I was the *founder* or *reviver* of such field-preaching in this nation, need I be ashamed, merely because St. *Peter* of *Verona*, St. *Nicholas* of *Nolasco*, St. *Anthony* of *Padua*, and St. *Ignatius* were field-preachers before me? Can you recollect no earlier, or more unexceptionable field-preachers than these? What do you think of Jesus Christ and his Apostles? Were they not field-preachers? Was not the best sermon that was ever delivered, delivered from a *Mount*? Was not another very excellent one preached from a place called *Mars-Hill*? And did not *Peter* and *John* preach above seventeen hundred years ago in *Solomon's Porch*, and elsewhere, though the clergy of that generation commanded them to speak no more in the name of Jesus? These were the persons that I had in view, when I begun my *adventures* of field-preaching. Animated by their example, when causelesly thrust out, I took the field; and if this be my shame, I glory in it: for, (to make use of the words of the late great Colonel *Gardiner*, when he once looked upon the spot where this adventure was carried on; and O that I may speak it with a becoming humility,) "I am

persuaded it will be said at the great day of this and that man, that they were brought to God there."

Another of your cursory remarks on field-preaching, is this; "Have not the Methodist preachers, as well as St. *Anthony*, been attended with a *sturdy set* of followers, as their guards, armed with clubs under their cloaths, menacing and terrifying such as should dare to speak lightly of their apostle?" You add, "I have heard it often affirmed." And so might the heathens have said, that they heard it often affirmed, "that when the primitive Christians received the blessed sacrament, they killed a young child, and then sucked its blood." But was that any reason why they should believe it? It is true indeed, some of the Methodist preachers have more than once been attended with a *sturdy set* of followers armed with clubs and other weapons, not as their guards, but opposers, and persecutors; and who have not only menaced and terrified, but actually abused and beat many of those, who came to hear him, whom you, I suppose, would call their apostle. Both Methodist preachers and Methodist hearers too, for want of better arguments, have often felt the weight of such *irresistible power*, which, literally speaking, hath struck many of them dumb; and I verily believe, had it not been for some superior invisible guard, must have struck them dead. These are all the sturdy set of armed followers, that the Methodists know of. Other guards, besides those common to all Christians, they desire none. And whatever you may unkindly insinuate, about my being aware of a turbulent spirit, a fighting enthusiasm amongst them, because I said, "I dread nothing more than the false zeal of my friends in a suffering hour;" I think many years experience may convince the world, that the weapons of their warfare, like those of their blessed Redeemer and his apostles, have not been carnal: but thanks be to God, however you may

ridicule his irresistible power, they have, through him, been mighty to the pulling down of Satan's strong-holds, in many a sturdy sinner's heart.

But to return to the church, where in reality the Methodist adventures were begun. Section 5th, page 15, you tell the world, "that after they had traduced the clergy, as long as they were permitted to do it, in their own churches and pulpits, in order to seduce their flocks, and collect a staring rabble, (pretty language this, Sir,) they set about this pious work of *defamation* mere heartily in the fields." I was reading further, expecting to find your parallel. But I see it is wanting. Are the Methodists then originals in this particular? Or could you, among all the histories of your eminent saints, find no instances of St. *Anthony*'s, St. *Francis*'s, and St. *Ignatius*'s carrying on this pious work of defamation in their days? Will you suffer me to supply the deficiency, by laying before you some examples, which, though of an earlier date, may, by unprejudiced persons, be esteemed as suitable, as any of a popish extraction? In the New Testament, (a book you seem to have laid aside, or at least little adverted to, when writing your pamphlet) we are informed, That when *John Baptist*, "saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" The same book tells us, that St. *Stephen* being full of the *Holy Ghost*, and within a few moments of his death, said to the whole *Jewish* sanhedrim, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in hearts and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye." And our Lord Jesus Christ himself, the master of both these, in one chapter denounces no less than thirteen woes against the scribes and pharisees, whose chief power of doing good, and promoting the common salvation, he well knew, depended upon their character, as much as any clergy in any age of the church whatsoever.

Not that I would be understood by this to insinuate, that all which the Methodist preachers have spoken against the clergy, was spoken in the same Spirit, or with the like divine authority, as our Lord, his harbinger, and his protomartyr, spoke. That would be carrying the parallel too far indeed. There is generally much, too much severity in our first zeal. At least there was in mine. All I would therefore infer is this, that what some (not to say you, Sir,) may term "Gall of bitterness and black art of calumny," may be nothing but an honest testimony against the corruptions of a degenerate church, and may, without any degree of wickedness, be supposed to come from the "Spirit and power given from God." If we deny this, not only *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, and almost all the prophets, but likewise Jesus Christ and his Apostles, must be looked upon by us, (as I suppose they were by the men in whose day they lived) as great *slanderers*, and dealing much in this black art of calumny and defamation.

But, if the Methodists have been so much to blame, for carrying on this pious work of defamation, in the church and their journals; will that authorise you in practising the same *black art* in your pamphlet? Give me leave (since you have taken that liberty with me) to gather some of your flowers on this occasion.

"This dangerous and presumptuous sect; strolling predicants; itinerant enthusiasts; methodistical enthusiasts;" with many other flowers of a like nature, though not of a very scriptural scent, may be picked off almost every page of your performance. Upon the review of which, I suppose you will own, that you are at least even with the Methodists. Only it must be allowed, there is this difference; you are taking up a trade, which they, as far as I know to the contrary, have for some time laid down.

And why must you disturb the dead on this occasion? Were there not flowers enough to be gathered out of Mr. *Wesley*'s Journal and mine, without calling up Mr. *Seward*'s ghost (as you have in effect done, by quoting his Journal) in order to terrify your readers? Good man! He has long since entered into his rest, and consequently cannot now answer for himself. Permit me to speak a word or two in behalf of my deceased friend. He was certainly a serious warm Christian, but (like his fellow-traveller) in the heat of his zeal, spoke and wrote some unguarded things. His and my treatment of Archbishop *Tillotson*, was by far too severe. We condemned his state, when we ought only in a candid manner, (which I would do again if called to it) to have mentioned what we judged wrong in his doctrines. I do not justify it. I condemn myself most heartily, and ask pardon for it; as, I believe, he would do, was he now alive. But then, do not you still go on, Sir, to imitate us in our faults: Let the surviving Methodists answer for themselves: let *Seward* and *Tillotson* lie undisturbed. And if you think me blameworthy (as I certainly was) to write so disrespectful of the one; why should you, by making an ill-natured quotation, rake as it were into the very ashes of the dead, only for the poor gratification of digging up a flower, to blacken the memory of the other?

But to proceed. For several pages, you go on imitating us in this same *pious work of defamation*. If you can bear to read your own words, I will transcribe a few of them: section 6. page 17. "But though these strolling predicants have allured some itching ears, and drawn them aside by calumniating their proper pastors, they have sense enough to know the itch will go off, and their trade not continue long, unless they can produce something novel or uncommon; what the wandering sheep have not been used to in their churches. Therefore they must find out, or rather revive such

peculiarities, as have formally attended enthusiasms, and are most likely to captivate the vulgar. Hence their"—But hold, Sir;—and before you run yourself quite out of breath, I intreat you to stop a little, whilst I put to you one or two questions. Believe you these things of the Methodists? I suppose you believe them: otherwise, Why assert them so strongly? How then can you put even a *perhaps* to your supposition of their "setting out with a *real motive* of sincere piety?" Had not you best alter the title of your book, or at least make some addition to it? Let it run thus: "The enthusiasm and *imposture* of the Methodists and Papists compared." For surely, unless persons were arrived at a very high degree of imposture, they could not purposely (as you seem to infer they did) design these things.

By your leave, we will examine the evidence you produce in proof of these bold assertions: "The first necessary point for drawing followers, is to put on a *sanctified appearance*, by a demure look, and precise behaviour, in discourse or silence, in apparel and food; and other marks of external piety." Section 7. page 18. Again, section 8. page 20. "At first, the Methodists, as a *shew of humility*, made it a point not to ride, either on horseback or in a coach, though occasionally, and for conveniency-sake, they have since thought proper to deviate from their rule." Well, Sir, you see then they are not altogether incorrigible. Let them alone; and who knows but for their conveniency-sake, and it may be from a deeper knowledge of the world, of themselves, and of God, they may be reformed in some other particulars?

"Upon the same account, you say, section 9. page *ibid. fine cloaths* and *rich furniture* stand absolutely condemned:" (not by me, it seems, for I find no quotations out of my Journals annexed) "But oh! (as a part or consequence of this) how good and saint-like it is, to go dirty, ragged, and slovenly! And how piously did Mr. *Whitefield* therefore take care of the

outward man! My apparel was mean, &c." Section 10. page 21. Really, Sir, whilst I read this part of your performance, I could not help thinking, that a person of your turn of mind, would have been apt to have joined with those naughty boys, who, when they saw that demure, rough, hairy, slovenly enthusiast, called *Elijah*, followed after him, and cried, "Go up, thou bald pate, go." Or, if you had lived in *John Baptist*'s time, and seen him come preaching in the wilderness, with a camel-hair garment, and a leathern girdle about his loins; especially if you had heard, that his meat was only locusts and wild honey; would you not have been tempted, think you, to give in your verdict amongst those who said, "He had a devil?" Know you not, that these are extremes which young awakened persons are apt to run into when under a sense of sin, and influenced by what the Apostle calls the *spirit of bondage*? Do I not mention them as such? And are they not things which of themselves fall off, when persons are brought into the comforts of religion, and have received the *spirit of adoption*, whereby they cry, Abba, Father? But I shall leave you at present, to make as merry as you will with the sanctified appearances, and dirty ragged cloaths of these enthusiastical Methodists. Let us pass on to your 11th section, page 22. "Of this nature likewise, is their utter condemnation of all *recreation*, in every kind and degree. Mr. *Whitefield* laments," (indeed I do, Sir, even now I am grown older) "that in his younger days he was not convinced of the absolute unlawfulness of playing at cards, and of reading and seeing plays." And if you are in advanced years, and a *clergyman* too, and are not convinced of the unlawfulness of cards, and can find time from your other studies and duties of your calling, to see or read such plays as the generality of ours are, I think you ought to lament it too. For what says our church in her 75th canon? "No ecclesiastical persons shall at any time, other than for their

honest necessities, resort to any *taverns* or *alehouses*; neither shall they board or lodge in any such places. Furthermore, they shall not give themselves to any base or servile labour, or to *drinking* or *riot*, spending their time idly by day or night, playing at *dice*, *cards*, or *tables*, or any *other unlawful game*; but at all times convenient, they shall hear or read somewhat of the Holy Scriptures, or shall occupy themselves with some other honest study or exercise, always doing the things which shall appertain to honesty, and endeavouring to profit the church of God; having always in mind, that they ought to excel all others in purity of life, and should be examples to the people to live well and Christianly, under pain of ecclesiastical censures to be inflicted with severity, according to the qualities of their offences." O when shall this once be!

In your 12th section page 24. you go on to rally these enthusiastical Methodists for their *seeming contempt of money*. And again, section 13. page 26. you say, "Another bait to catch admirers, and very common among enthusiasts, is a restless impatience and insatiable thirst of *travelling*, and undertaking *dangerous voyages* for the conversion of *infidels*; together with a declared contempt of all dangers, pains, and sufferings." And then, after drawing your usual comparison between these enthusiastical Methodists and popish saints, you make this judicious remark, "The windmill is indeed in all their heads."

Had I a mind to return your false and low wit, I might reply, "There is a greater windmill in thine own;" but at present, I am too serious to make sport with my own deceivings. Surely, Sir, you forget yourself, or you never would write thus at random: for is there any thing, that the blessed Author of our religion more recommends to his disciples, than to "take heed and beware of covetousness," and to "take heed, lest at any time their hearts

should be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, or the cares of this life?" What said St. *Peter*? "Silver and gold have I none." What says St. *Paul*? "But thou, O man of God, flee these things." And in respect to contempt, and sufferings for the gospel, does not our Lord command us to expect, to prepare for, and rejoice in them? Nay, does he not bid us to leap for joy, and be exceeding glad, when we have all manner of evil spoken against us falsely for his name's sake? In obedience to this command, did not the great Apostle of the *Gentiles* declare, that he took pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake? Did he not, like his Lord, go about doing good? Was he not filled with a holy restless impatience and insatiable thirst of *travelling*, and undertaking *dangerous voyages* for the conversion of infidels? And had he not a declared contempt of all dangers, pains, and sufferings, when, like a true Christian hero, he said to his mourning friends, "What mean ye to weep and break my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but to die also for the Lord Jesus?" Dare you, Sir, call the Apostles enthusiasts? Or think you all this was only a *bait* to catch admirers? And yet, what have you done less, by asserting, that an insatiable thirst of travelling, &c. is very common among enthusiasts? I add, among our Lord and his Apostles also: and can we copy after more unexceptionable examples?

"But the Methodists contempt of money is only a *seeming contempt*." That is more than you know. Here you are again invading the divine prerogative. The great day will determine this. In the mean while, I would observe to you, that whatever can be produced out of any of my writings, to prove that I have desired, or prayed for ill usage, persecution, martyrdom, death, &c. I retract it with all my heart, as proceeding from the overflowings of an irregular, though well-meant zeal. However it might be

with me formerly, I now find myself no ways disposed to say with *Peter*, "Though all men deny thee, yet will not I." Alas! alas! we know not what feathers we shall be, when tossed in the wind of temptation! Sufferings for the cause and cross of Christ, will come fast enough of themselves, without our praying for them. But should the Methodists be called even to die for the cause in which they are embarked, as I am verily persuaded it is the cause of God, so I doubt not but suffering grace will be given for suffering times, and the Spirit of Christ and of glory will rest upon the sufferers souls.

But it is time to follow you to your 14th section page 31. "The pious cruelty of *corporal severities*, or mortification by tormenting the flesh, is another common method of gaining a reputation for sanctity. Such as long and rigorous fastings, gashing and flaying the body with scourges, armed with rowels and sharp tags, and rolling naked in thorns and thistles." But these last particulars, you say, "Our own *disciplinarians* cannot, in any tolerable measure, pretend to come up to." What occasion was there then for mentioning them? Only to cast a popular odium upon these enthusiastical Methodists. *Hoc est æerugo mera.* "However, something of this kind we have from their own relation." And something of this kind we have in the Evangelist's relation of the life of Jesus of *Nazareth*; who, as we are informed, before he came out into his public ministry, underwent a long and rigorous fasting, even of forty days and forty nights. And something of this kind we have in the relation that disciplinarian the Apostle *Paul* gives of himself; for he tells us he was in fastings often. It is true he does condemn (as you observe, page 33.) that ἀφειδία σώματος, the not sparing of the body, as useless and superstitious, when done in order to recommend us to the favour of God, or put in the place, or joined with the merits of Jesus Christ. Yet elsewhere, he informs us, that he made it his common

practice to keep his body under, (ὑπωπιάζω) and bring it into subjection: and think you all this was only to "gain a reputation for sanctity?" If you will believe himself, it was for a nobler and more important end, "Lest while he preached to others, he himself should be a cast-away." And how do you know but these Methodists might, at their first setting out, have used, and even now may use abstinence for the same purpose? Nay, that this very motive led them into some extremes in it, which however must be esteemed an error of the right side? Why will you still persist in taking the keys out of the hands of Omniscience, and presumptuously judge the intentions of people's hearts? If we had a mind to imitate you in this rash way of judging, might not we suspect, (as your pamphlet came out in that season) that in order to wound our church governors through the sides of the Methodists, you intended this part of your pamphlet as a burlesque upon them, for enjoining such a *long and rigorous fasting*, as that of forty days, commonly called *Lent*?

I should now proceed, in order, to the examination of your 15th, 16th, and 17th sections; but as these, together with the 19th, wholly refer to Mr. *Wesley*, I shall leave you to his correction, if he thinks proper to take you in hand. However, there is something so extraordinary in your 17th section, that, I think, it calls for a cursory remark. "But, previous to this elevated state, that we may not wander too far from the saints progress, comes their *conversion*; which, as another instance of fanatical peculiarities, they represent as sudden and *instantaneous*." Instantaneous conversion, a fanatical peculiarity! I presume instantaneous regeneration must be a *fanatical peculiarity* also. What then becomes of that *Diana* of the present age, *baptismal regeneration*? Which must be instantaneous, and that always too, if every child is really regenerated when baptized?

But this only by the by. In your 18th section, page 43. you return to me. "After these *sudden conversions*, usually they receive their *assurances of salvation*; and these (as also the proofs of their conversion) are certainly known, heard, seen or felt; they can ascertain the particular time and place of their receiving them; as so many seals of the Spirit." These you call, page 44. "*Presumptuous imaginations*." Is assurance of faith then, in your opinion, a presumptuous imagination? For you not only ridicule the Methodists way of expressing it, which in several respects may have been unguarded; nor are you content with asserting, that some who really had not this assurance, have presumptuously imagined they had it, which we readily grant; for there is counterfeit as well as current coin: but you seem to explode the thing itself. And yet you intend in this pamphlet, to draw a *parallel* between the Methodists and Papists. Could you give a greater proof of your symbolizing with the Papists yourself? Or need you be informed, that one grand article of the council of *Trent* is this, "That there is no such thing as a person's knowing that his sins are forgiven him, or being assured of his salvation;" and that with good reason: for if there be such a thing as being assured of the forgiveness of our sins by the internal testimony, whether mediate or immediate, of the Spirit of God; and if a person ought to be satisfied only with that, then how could the people be brought to believe in, and trust to the mere external *verbal absolution of a priest*? Our church, on the contrary, in one of her homilies, says, that a true faith "is a sure trust and confidence in God, that by the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God." And that the Scriptures every where promise to believers, a sure and internal witness from the Spirit of God, to witness with their spirits that they are his children, is so evident, that he who runs may read. What says our Lord? "He that believeth in me,

out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive. What says St. *Paul*? "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God." Saith another, "He that believeth hath the witness in himself." And a third exhorts all "to give diligence to make their calling and election sure." Art thou a master in *Israel*, a protestant minister, and a minister of the Church of *England*, and knowest not these things?

But to come nearer to a close. Your 20th section is introduced thus: "And where will these bold enthusiasts *stop*?" I answer for one, in order to relieve both myself and you, even *here*, Sir. And without giving you the trouble of taking a flight after us to heaven, from whence, you say, page 48. "These methodistical enthusiasts have taken the sacred light and fire, in order to compass effectually their own, and others delusion," I will freely and readily acknowledge, that you and others have had too much occasion for reflection, by several things that have been *unwarily dropped* up and down in my Journals.

These, you inform us in your preface, are what you have chiefly consulted. In this you have acted wisely enough for your purpose; though whether *candidly* or not, I will leave you and the world to judge, since there were later writings of mine, which might as easily have been procured. My Journals were some of my most *early performances*, wrote too in the very heights of my first popularity (which is apt to make the strongest head run giddy) in the midst of which, persons very often do things, which after-experience and riper judgment teach them to correct and amend.

This is true, however, in respect to myself; and, to convince you that this is the real language of my heart, and not extorted from me by your pamphlet, I will lay before you an extract of a letter written by me to a worthy friend in *South-Carolina*, in my late return from *Bermudas*, and published, with very little alteration, in *Scotland* months ago [1].

On board the Brigg Betsey, June 24, 1748.

"*Reverend Sir*,

——YESTERDAY I made an end of revising all my Journals. Blessed be God for letting me have leisure to do it. I purpose to have a new edition before I see *America*. Alas! alas! in how many things have I judged, and acted wrong! I have been too rash and hasty in giving characters both of places and persons. Being fond of scripture language, I have often used a style too apostolical, and at the same time I have been too bitter in my zeal, wild-fire has been mixed with it; and I find that I have frequently written and spoken too much in my own spirit, when I thought I was writing and speaking entirely by the assistance of the Spirit of God. I have likewise too much made impressions, without the written word, my rule of acting; and too soon, and too explicitly, published what had better been kept in longer, or left to have been told after my death. By these things, I have given some wrong touches to God's ark, hurt the blessed cause I would defend, and stirred up needless opposition. This has humbled me much since I have been on board, and made me think of a saying of Mr. *Henry*'s, "*Joseph* had more *honesty* than he had *policy*, or he never would have told his dreams." At the same time, I cannot but bless, and praise, and magnify that good and gracious God, who imparted to me so much of his holy fire, and carried me, a poor weak youth, through such a torrent both of popularity and contempt, and set so many seals to my unworthy ministrations. I bless him for

ripening my judgment a little more, for giving me to see, confess, and I hope in some degree to correct and amend some of its mistakes. I thank God for giving me grace to embark in such a blessed cause, and pray him to give me strength to hold on, and increase in zeal and love to the end. Thus, dear Sir, I have unburdened my heart to you. I look upon you to be my *Fidus Achates*, and therefore deal thus freely. If I have time and freedom before we land, I think to begin and write a short account of what has happened for these seven years last past; and when I get on shore, God willing, I purpose to revise and correct the first part of my life."

This I am now about, and when finished, shall send it into the world, I hope in a more unexceptionable dress; though I am fully satisfied beforehand, that write or speak of the things of God as unexceptionably as may be, they will be always esteemed foolishness by the natural man, because they can only be spiritually discerned. However, the way of duty is the way of safety. Let me but be found in that, and I can then chearfully leave the consequences with God. In the mean while, I thank you, Sir, for pointing out to me a very wrong expression in the last part of my life. My words are these; "I could no longer walk on foot as usual; but was constrained to go in a coach, to avoid the *Hosanna*'s of the multitude." Your remark runs thus, section 8. page 20. "*Very profane*, unless it be a false print for *huzza*'s." I could wish it had been so; but the word was my own; and though not intended to convey a *profane idea*, was very wrong and unguarded, and I desire may be buried in oblivion, unless you, or some other kind person, are pleased to remind me of it, in order to lay me low before God and man.

A review of all this, together with my having dropped some too strong expressions concerning *absolute reprobation*; and more especially, my mentioning Mr. *Wesley*'s casting a lot on a private occasion, known only to

God and ourselves, have put me to great pain. Speaking of this last, you say, page 75. “A more *judicious sentiment*, perhaps, never dropt from Mr. *Whitefield*’s pen.” I believe, Sir, the advice given was right and good; but then it was wrong in me to publish a private transaction to the world; and very ill judged, to think the glory of God could be promoted by unnecessarily exposing my friend. For this I have asked both God and him pardon years ago. And though I believe both have forgiven me, yet I believe I shall never be able to forgive myself. As it was a public fault, I think it should be publicly acknowledged; and I thank a kind providence for giving me this opportunity of doing it.

As for the *letters*, out of which you, and the author of the “Observations on the conduct and behaviour of the *Methodists*,” have taken so many extracts, I acknowledge that many things in them were very exceptionable, though good in the main; and therefore they have been suppressed some time. *Casting lots*, I do not now approve of, nor have I for several years; neither do I think it a safe way (though practised, I doubt not, by many good men) to make a *lottery of the scriptures*, by dipping into them upon every occasion.

And now, Sir, I am somewhat prepared to hear what follows in your 48th page. “Nothing less than *inspirations*, *revelations*, *illuminations*, and all the extraordinary and immediate actions of all the persons in the *sacred Trinity*, will serve their turn. So that now every flash of zeal and devotion; every wild pretension, scheme, tenet, and over-bearing dictate; impulses, impressions, feelings, impetuous transports and raptures; intoxicating vapours, and fumes of imagination; phantoms of a crazy brain, &c. all are ascribed, with an amazing presumption, to the extraordinary interposition of heaven setting its seal to their mission.”

Judge you now, Sir, whether I am one of those, of whom you are pleased to speak thus, page 49. “In short, whatever they think, say, or do, is from God; and whatever opposeth, and stands in their way, is from the Devil.” No, Sir, my mistakes have been too many, and my blunders too frequent, to make me set up for infallibility. I came soon into the world; I have carried high sail, whilst running through a whole torrent of popularity and contempt; and, by this means, have sometimes been in danger of oversetting. But many and frequent as my mistakes have been, or may be, as I have no part to act, if I know any thing of my heart, but to promote God’s glory, and the good of souls, as soon as I am made sensible of them, they shall be publicly acknowledged and retracted.

At the same time, I should lie against reason, scripture, and above fourteen years experience, if I denied, that God has been pleased, from time to time, to vouchsafe me *comfortable assistance* and *supports*; or that a great and glorious work (if the *conversion of souls* may be termed so) has been begun, and is now carrying on in these, and several other parts of the world, by the instrumentality of those whom you stile enthusiastical Methodists.

Indeed, the ingenious author of the “Considerations upon the conversion and apostleship of St. *Paul*,” speaking of the enthusiasm that appears not only in the lives of some enthusiastical heretics, but even some of the methodists now, ventures to say, that “all the divine communications, illuminations, and extacies to which they have pretended, evidently sprung from much self-conceit, working together with the vapours of melancholy upon a warm imagination.” That the mentioning these divine communications so freely to the world, might be mixed with some degrees of unobserved vanity, or want of caution, may be probable. But roundly to

assert, that all their communications were *only pretended*, and sprung from no other sources but self-conceit, vapours of melancholy, and a warm imagination, is I think unbecoming so *young a convert* as that author, is a blemish to his performance, and a mistake which, I trust, he himself will be happily convinced of, when he comes to experience more of the power of that Redeemer's resurrection, which the Apostle, of whose conversion he in the main so excellently treats, longed so much to know.

Without running such lengths in judging others, or needlessly fearing to be accounted enthusiasts or methodists ourselves; when writing in defence of Christianity, I think we may rationally allow, that there may be much light and assistance given from God, though at the same time something of our own imaginations may possibly be blended with it.

This I take to be true with respect to the Methodists. That imagination has mixed itself with the work, cannot be denied; and is no more than what must necessarily be expected; for whoever saw fire without some smoke? but that the work itself is of God; and as good Bishop *Latimer* said, when the papists laid a lighted faggot at Dr. *Ridley*'s feet, so we may venture to affirm, "a candle is lighted in *England* (through the instrumentality of the Methodists,) which will not easily be put out."

The doctrines which they chiefly insist upon, are the great doctrines of the reformation: "That man is very far gone from original righteousness. That he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God. That we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. That albeit good works, which are fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and

acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; insomuch that by them a lively faith may be evidently known, as a tree is discerned by its fruits." These are doctrines as diametrically opposite to the church of *Rome*, as light to darkness. They are the very doctrines, for which *Ridley*, *Latimer*, *Cranmer*, and so many of our first reformers were burned at the stake. And I will venture to say, are doctrines which, when attended with a divine energy, and preached with power, "without taking to their assistance the several arts of management and craft," always have, and always will, maugre all opposition, make their way through the world, however weak the instruments that deliver them may be, and whatever offences and divisions about some *non-essentials* may arise among themselves.

These are things which always did, and always will happen in the purest ages of the church. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were permitted not only to fall out, but to separate from each other, merely on account of a dispute that arose about taking with them one *John*, whose surname was *Mark*. And yet this was over-ruled for the furtherance of the gospel. There was an incestuous person in the church of *Corinth*, when under even a truly apostolical inspection. And to what heights the contentions arose between *Luther*, *Calvin*, and *Zwinglius*, at the first dawnings of the reformation, about predestination and the sacrament; and that of Bishop *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, and *Hooper*, many years after, about the vestments, is too notorious to be mentioned. It must needs be, that such offences come, whilst good men carry about with them the remainders of indwelling sin, prejudices of education, blindness in their understandings, and have an artful enemy always near at hand, and always ready to blow up the coals of contention, in order to raise a smoke, whereby he may blacken or blemish the work of

God. The blessed Jesus wisely permits such things, to cure us of spiritual pride, to remind us of the necessity of looking to himself, to teach us to cease from man, by convincing us, that the best of men are but men at the best, to inure us to long-suffering and forbearance one towards another, to excite in us a more eager desire after heaven, where these disorders will be at an end, and for a more glorious display of his infinite wisdom and power at the day of judgment; when he will convince the wondering world, that in spite of all the subtlety, malice, and rage of his enemies, together with the weaknesses, blindnesses, and jarrings of his friends, he has fully accomplished that glorious work, for which he came to shed his blood; I mean the renewal of a multitude of souls, which no man can number, out of every nation, language, and tongue, by making them partakers of his righteousness, and, through the powerful operations of his blessed Spirit, bringing them back to, and re-instamping upon them that divine image, in which they were originally created.

To awaken a drowsy world to a sense of this, to rouse them out of their formality, as well as profaneness, and put them upon seeking after a present and great salvation, to point out to them a glorious rest, which not only remains for the people of God hereafter, but which by a living faith the very chief of sinners may enter into even here, and without which the most blazing profession is nothing worth; is, as far as I know, the *one thing*, the grand and common point, in which all the Methodists endeavours do center.

This is what some of all denominations want to be reminded of; and to stir them up to seek after the life and power of godliness, that they may be Christians not only in word and profession, but in spirit and in truth, is, and, through Jesus Christ strengthening me, shall be the one sole business of my life. “As for all those (as one expresses it) who are for clipping the wings of

the mystic dove, and for confining the power and Spirit of God within the bounds of *human establishments*, I am well aware of what opposition I must continue to meet with from that quarter. But blessed be God, there are some few amongst us that are men of greater latitude, who can think, and dare speak, more worthily of God's sovereignty, and acknowledge a work to be his, though it be not according to the exact measure of *canonical fitness*." Amongst these, I shall be sure to find hearty friends and well-wishers. And if by others of more confined principles, I am for this accounted an enthusiast, papist, or any thing else, they or you are very welcome to confer that, or any other title, upon, Sir,

Your very humble servant,

G. W.

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1. Vide the Letter at full length, volume ii. page 143.

AN EXPOSTULATORY LETTER, ADDRESSED TO NICHOLAS LEWIS, COUNT ZINZENDORFF, AND LORD ADVOCATE OF THE UNITAS FRATRUM.

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?
Galatians iii. 1.

AN EXPOSTULATORY LETTER, &c.

London, April 24, 1753.

My Lord,

ALTHOUGH I am persuaded, that nothing hath a greater tendency to strengthen the hands of infidels, than too frequent altercations between the professors of Christianity; yet there are certain occasions, wherein the necessary defence of the principles of our holy religion, as well as the practice of it, renders public remonstrances of the greatest use and importance. The sacred pages afford us many examples of this nature. When *Aaron* was prevailed on by the *Israelites*, to make a golden calf, and offer sacrifice to it, what an holy indignation did *Moses* express against him and them? When *Peter* and *Barnabas* were carried away with the dissimulation of the *Jews*, how openly did the Apostle *Paul* withstand them

to the face, and reprove them before all, “Because they were to be blamed?” And when this same Apostle saw the churches of *Corinth* and *Galatia* in danger of being drawn away from the simplicity of the gospel, what a fervent testimony did he bear against the authors and abettors of such a destructive scheme?

I mention these instances, my Lord, because I hope they will serve as a sufficient apology for my troubling your Lordship with this letter. For these many years past, have I been a silent, and I trust I can say, an impartial observer of the progress and effects of *Moravianism*, both in *England* and *America*; but such shocking things have been lately brought to our ears, and offences have swelled to such an enormous bulk, that a real regard for my king and my country, and, if I am not greatly mistaken, a disinterested love for the ever-blessed Jesus, that King of kings, and the church which he hath purchased with his own blood, will not suffer me to be silent any longer.

Pardon me, therefore, my Lord, if at length, though with great regret, as the Searcher of hearts knows, I am constrained to inform your Lordship, that *you*, together with some of your *leading brethren*, have been unhappily instrumental in *misguiding* many real, simple, honest-hearted Christians; of *distressing*, if not *totally ruining* numerous families, and introducing a whole *farrago* of superstitious, not to say *idolatrous fopperies*, into the *English* nation.

For my own part, my Lord, notwithstanding the folio that was published (I presume under your Lordship’s direction) about three years ago, I am as much at a loss as ever, to know what were the principles and usages of the ancient *Moravian* church; but if she was originally attired in the same garb, in which she hath appeared of late amongst many true-hearted though deluded protestants, she is not that simple, apostolical church the *English*

brethren were made to believe about twelve years ago. Sure I am, that we can find no traces of many of her present practices in the yet more ancient, I mean the primitive churches, and which we all know were really under an immediate and truly apostolical inspection.

Will your Lordship be pleased to give me leave to descend to a few particulars? Pray, my Lord, what instances have we of the first Christians walking round the graves of their deceased friends on *Easter-day*, attended with hautboys, trumpets, french-horns, violins, and other kinds of musical instruments? Or where have we the least mention made of pictures of particular persons being brought into the first Christian assemblies, and of candles being placed behind them, in order to give a transparent view of the figures? Where was it ever known, that the picture of the Apostle *Paul*, representing him handing a gentleman and lady up to the side of Jesus Christ, was ever introduced into the primitive love-feasts? Or do we ever hear, my Lord, of *incense*, or something like it, being burnt for him, in order to perfume the room before he made his entrance among the brethren? Or can it be supposed that he, who, together with *Barnabas*, so eagerly repelled the *Lycaonians*, when they brought oxen and garlands in order to sacrifice unto them, would ever have suffered such things to be done for him, without expressing his abhorrence and detestation of them? And yet your Lordship knows both these have been done for you, and suffered by you, without your having shewn, as far as I can hear, the least dislike [1].

Again, my Lord, I beg leave to enquire, whether we hear any thing in scripture of eldresses or deaconesses of the apostolical churches seating themselves before a table, covered with artificial flowers, and against that, a little altar surrounded with wax tapers, on which stood a cross, composed either of mock or real diamonds, or other glittering stones? And yet your

Lordship must be sensible this was done in *Fetter-lane* chapel, for Mrs. *Hannah Nitschman*, the present general eldress of your congregation, with this addition, that all the sisters were seated, cloathed in white, and with *German* caps; the organ also illuminated with three pyramids of wax tapers, each of which was tied with a red ribbon; and over the head of the general Eldress, was placed her own picture, and over that (*horresco referens*) the picture of the Son of God. A goodly sight this, my Lord, for a company of *English* protestants to behold! Alas! to what a long series of childish and superstitious devotions, and unscriptural impositions, must they have been habituated, before they could sit silent and tame spectators of such an antichristian scene. Surely, had *Gideon*, though but an Old Testament saint, been present, he would have risen and pulled down this, as he formerly did his father's altar. Or had even that meek man *Moses* been there, I cannot help thinking, but he would have addressed your Lordship, partly at least, in the words with which he addressed his brother *Aaron*, "What did this people unto thee, that thou hast introduced such superstitious customs among them [2]?"

But this is not all: I have another question to propose to your Lordship. Pray, my Lord, did any of the *Apostles* or leaders of the primitive churches, ever usurp an authority, not only over people's consciences, but their properties also? Or draw in the members of their respective congregations to dispose of whole patrimonies at once, or to be bound for thousands of pounds more than they well knew they were worth? And yet your Lordship knows this has been done again and again, in order to serve the purposes of the brethren for several years last past; and that too, at, or very near the time, when, in order to procure an act in their favour to go abroad, (which

now appears to be rather a scheme to settle at home) they boasted to an *English* parliament, how immensely rich they were [3].

I suppose it was a consciousness of this, that induced Mr. *Cossart*, one of the Count's chief agents, to suggest to Mr. *Linde* some time before its publication, that it would be as good as three hundred pounds in his way, if Mr. *Rimius*'s book could be suppressed. This looks bad; but I think it was still worse in another of the brethren roundly to affirm, in order to quiet some who were dissatisfied by reading this book, "that the author of the above-mentioned treatise, was one that personated Mr. *Rimius*, and that the whole was lies." Now they cannot but know, that this gentleman resides in *Oxenden-street*, and addressed his book to his Grace the Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, by permission, and that he proves almost every word he says, from the brethren's own writings. The above-mentioned brother was pleased to add, "that the real M. *Rimius* was a friend, and therefore would not write against them." I answer, that I verily believe he therefore wrote, as God knows I do, because he is a *friend*; or to use his own words, "from a strict regard to truth, justice, and the public good." And I think, if instead of adding sin to sin, by continuing still to misguide, enslave, and put out the eyes of many of God's dear children, who, I am persuaded, know no more of their secret mysteries and intended purposes, than those who never heard of them at all, it would shew a much better spirit in the leading brethren, either publicly to refute, or ingenuously confess, and amend the things laid to their charge. This is what God and the world may justly require at their hands, and without this, I cannot see how they can expect any future blessing from above; since the wisest of men hath told us, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall

have mercy." Grant us all this mercy, heavenly Father, for thy dear Son's sake!

As I am not personally acquainted with Mr. *Rimius*, I take this opportunity of informing him, that it is the desire of many, the Latin appendices may be translated into *English*, and the whole printed in a small edition, in order to make it more extensively useful.

Your Lordship cannot but be sensible, that at this present time you stand indebted to sundry persons to the value of forty thousand pounds sterling; and unless some of your brethren had agreed to stay six years for about twenty thousand pounds, due to them; (though after the expiration of that term, as they have no security, in all probability they will be just where they are now) and if the other creditors also, upon consideration of some bonds given, and mortgages made [4] for principal and interest, had not agreed to stay four years, for twenty one thousand pounds more, many of the *English* brethren, who, out of I know not what kind of infatuation, have not only given their all, but have been bound for thousands more than they are able to pay, must either have immediately become bankrupts, and thereby the creditors perhaps, not have had a shilling in the pound, or have been obliged to shut up their shops, go to prison, or be turned out into the wide world, to the utter ruin of themselves and families.

The distress and anguish of mind that hundreds have been involved in upon this very account, is, I believe, unspeakable [5]. And the bare reflection upon it, whilst I am writing, makes my heart almost to bleed within me. Who, who, but themselves, my Lord, can tell the late perplexity of their minds, who have been already arrested, or obliged to break off their respective partnerships? Or what words can express the great concern, which Mr. *Freeman* and Mr. *Thomas Grace* must have been necessarily

under, when they found that bills had been drawn in their name, unknown to them, to the value of forty-eight thousand pounds? [6] And how pitiable, my Lord, must the present circumstances of young Mr. *Rhodes* be, who, to stop a little of the above-mentioned gap, was prevailed on, (your Lordship knows by whom,) about eighteen months ago, to sell his estate of above four hundred pounds a year, and went or was sent off very lately, as I am assured, to *France*, (leaving a destitute mother behind him) and only with twenty-five pounds, for the payment of which he left his watch, bureau, horse and saddle? [7]

These are but a few instances, my Lord, amongst many; indeed too too many, that might be given. The brethren's agents, and those concerned with them, can best tell what horrid equivocations, untruths and low artifices have been used, to procure money, at high interest, wherever it was to be had, in order to keep up the brethren's credit; and in that poor lame manner, it hath been kept up for a considerable time. Was the whole scene to be opened, I believe every one would be of opinion, that such an ecclesiastical project, never was heard of before, in any part of his Majesty's dominions.

Of this, my Lord, the *Royal-Exchange* hath long since rung; and if the same part hath been acted abroad, [8] how many families must have been ruined there, and how many more may be yet ruined, in order to fill up the present *English* chasm; and consequently, what loads of guilt must needs lie at the door of somebody? Surely, the Lord of all Lords, whose eyes are like a flame of fire, and who requires truth in the inward parts, will one day or other visit for these things, by bringing to light the hidden things of darkness, and thereby making manifest the counsels of the heart.

I need not inform your Lordship, that *Babels* are generally suffered to be built pretty high, before God comes down to confound the language of the

builders. If knaves are employed (as commonly they are) God's honour is concerned to discover them. And if any of his own children are undesignedly drawn in, (which is frequently the case) he, who hath promised not to suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear, will in mercy, some way or other, rebuke the tempter, and make a way for them to escape. It is true, this, in public concerns, may sometimes expose them to a little worldly contempt, and for a while they may seemingly be crushed under the rubbish of the fallen fabric, but even this shall work together for their good; and happy will it be for them, if after all, they at length learn this important lesson, "That it is dangerous, upon any pretence whatsoever, to go from the written word, or give up their consciences to the guidance of any man, or body of men under heaven." This, your Lordship well knows, is what weak and unstable souls are too apt to do; and artful and designing men, who are fond of power, especially if naturally they are of an ambitious turn of mind, easily catch at the pleasing bait. But honesty, my Lord, will be found to be the best policy after all; and therefore, God forbid that any who call themselves the followers of the Lamb, should glory in any thing save the cross of Christ.

At present, I shall add no more, but earnestly say *amen*, to that part of the brethren's litany, however exceptionable in other respects, "From untimely projects, and from unhappily becoming great, keep us our good Lord and God!" And I as heartily pray, that the glorious Jesus may prosper all that is right, and give grace to correct and amend all that is wrong, among all his people of all denominations. I subscribe myself, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

George Whitefield.

1. I might here take notice of the married women's being ordered to wear blue knots, the single women pink, and those that are just marriageable, pink and white; the widows that are past child-bearing, to wear white, and those that are not so, blue and white knots; and also of the episcopal knot of Mrs. Hannah Nitschman, (who is, I am informed, the present general Eldress of the congregation) which is sometimes of a purple, and sometimes of a rose colour. These, with many other fanciful things, might be considered; but my mind at present is too full of concern to dwell upon any thing but what more immediately strikes at the welfare of society, and what hath a still more fatal tendency to draw away unwary souls from the simplicity of the gospel. Would to God I could with a safe conscience be excused even from this!

2. A like scene to this was exhibited by the single brethren, in a room of their house at Hatton Garden. One of them, who helped to furnish it, gave me the following account. The floor was covered with sand and moss, and in the middle of it, was paved a star of different coloured pebbles, upon that was placed a gilded dove, which spouted water out of its mouth into a vessel prepared for its reception, which was curiously decked with artificial leaves and flags; the room was hung with moss and shells; the Count, his son, and son-in-law, in honour of whom all this was done, with Mrs. Hannah Nitschman, and Mr. Peter Boehler, and some other labourers, were present. These were seated under an alcove, supported by columns made of pasteboard, and over their heads was painted an oval, in imitation of marble, containing the cyphers of Count Zinzendorff's family. Upon a side-table, was a little altar covered with shells, and on each side of the altar was

a bloody heart, out of, or near which proceeded flames. The room was illuminated with wax tapers, and musicians placed in an adjacent apartment, while the company performed their devotions, and regaled themselves with sweet-meats, coffee, tea, and wine. After this the labourers departed, and the single brethren were admitted in. I am told, that most, if not all of these leading persons were present also at the celebration of Mrs. Hannah Nitschman's birth-day.

3. M. Rimius, aulic counsellor to the late King of Prussia, in a treatise he lately published, I think makes it plainly appear, that the agents for the Moravian affairs, have misinformed the parliament in several respects, and upon the whole, treated that august body little better than the Gibeonitish ambassadors once treated Joshua, the captain of the Lord's host. To this I refer the reader. It is written with great candour, and contains such incontestable proofs of the many dangerous principles and practices of the leading brethren, that must, I think, constrain all that read it to say, "My soul, come not thou into their secret, and to their assembly, mine honour be not thou united."

4. The buildings in Yorkshire, Bedfordshire, &c. Besides this, there are some thousands due to others upon bond, and many thousands to a particular gentleman, for which the Count has mortgaged one of the German settlements; I think it is Marienburg.

5. Since my writing this, I have been told of a very singular expedient made use of by Mr. Peter Boehler, one of the brethren's bishops, in order to strengthen the faith, and to raise the drooping spirits of Mr. William Bell, who hath been unhappily drawn in (with several others) to be one of their agents. It was this: It being Mr. Bell's birth-day, he was sent for from his house in Nevil's-alley, Fetter-lane; but for a while, having had some words

with Mr. Boehler, he refused to come; at length he complied, and was introduced into a hall, in the same alley, where was placed an artificial mountain, which, upon singing a particular verse, was made to fall down, and then behind it was discovered an illumination, representing Jesus Christ and Mr. Bell, sitting very near, or embracing each other; and out of the clouds was also represented plenty of money falling round Mr. Bell and the Saviour. This story appeared to me so incredible at the first hearing, that, though I could not doubt the veracity of the relator, yet hearing he might be misinformed, I sent for him again, and he assured me, that Mr. Bell told this story himself some time ago in company, and a person of good reputation of that company related it to an acquaintance of mine. May God grant him and all others who have been undesignedly concerned, a more sure and stable prop for their faith, even his own word, in which he causes his people to trust! then, and not till then, even upon the greatest emergency, they may without any fanciful representations, boldly say, "Who art thou, O great mountain? before the Lord Jesus, our all conquering Zerubbabel, thou shalt become a plain."

6. This Mr. Grace told me himself in public company; he and Mr. Freeman do live in Throgmorton-street.

7. The case of this Mr. Rhodes is very singular. He was of mean birth and occupation, but upon the unexpected falling of many lives, became suddenly possessed of an estate of above four hundred pounds a year; and to serve the brethren, after many importunities, he was induced to dispose of it. Mr. Lee the banker purchased it, and Messrs. Freeman and Grace received six thousand pounds of the money towards what was due to them: besides this, Mr. Rhodes was bound for many thousands more. This made him very uneasy, and fearing the consequence, he one afternoon, about ten

weeks ago, stole an interview with two single brethren, and beseeched them, for Christ's sake, to let him have twenty-five pounds, for the payment of which he left them his watch, bureau, horse and saddle. He then took his leave, saying, in all probability he should never see them any more, and having nothing to spare to leave behind for his poor mother, (who I hear is since dead) was content to send her a few parting lines: since he has been gone, the horse, watch, bureau and saddle were sold for twenty-seven pounds three shillings; so that the young man has the balance in bank. God grant, that this may prove the last person that may be imposed on in this way!

8. It appears too plain from Mr. Rimius that this hath been the case. And no wonder, since he quotes this assertion of the Count's from his own writings, "The œconomists of the society may say to a young rich man, either give us all thou hast, or get thee gone."

A SHORT ADDRESS TO PERSONS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS, OCCASIONED BY THE ALARM OF AN INTENDED INVASION, IN THE YEAR 1756.

I also will shew my Opinion.
Job xxxii. 10.

A SHORT ADDRESS, &c.

Men, Brethren, and Fathers,

THOUGH so many alarming warnings, pathetic exhortations, and suitable directions, have already been given both from the press and pulpit, by way of preparatives to our late public day of humiliation; yet should one, who is less than the least of all his brethren, now that solemnity is over, presume to trouble his dear countrymen with a *short address*, by way of supplement to what hath already been offered; it is to be hoped, none will be so unkind as to look upon it as altogether superfluous and needless, much less, be so ungenerous as to censure it as proceeding from the pride and naughtiness of his heart. But should this be the case, I shall make no other apology (as I think there needs no other) than that which *David* the youngest of the sons of *Jesse* made long ago upon a like occasion, “Is there not a cause?”

An insulting, enraged, and perfidious enemy is now advancing nearer and nearer to the *British* borders. Not content with invading and ravaging our rightful Sovereign King *George*'s dominions in *America*, our popish adversaries have now the ambition to attempt, at least to threaten, an invasion of *England* itself; hoping, no doubt, thereby, not only to throw us into confusion at home, but also to divert us from more effectually defeating their malicious designs abroad. That such a design (however chimerical it may seem) is now actually on foot, the *royal proclamation* lately issued forth, renders indisputable. Which proclamation, as it plainly bespeaks his Majesty's paternal care, doth at the same time loudly call upon all his faithful and loving subjects, not only to stand upon their guard, but also to exert their utmost efforts, in dependance on divine protection, to prevent and render abortive such an unjust and daring enterprize.

Blessed be God! as a professing, though sinful people, we have lately taken one effectual step towards bringing about such a salutary end.

In obedience to a call from the throne, we have been humbling ourselves in the most public and solemn manner before the most high God. And it is to be hoped, that the many tears which were that day shed, and the thousands and thousands of prayers that were then offered up, have long since been regarded by, and entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Infidels may perhaps laugh, and make themselves merry with such an insinuation; but serious people (and to such in a more peculiar manner is this address directed) will account it no ways enthusiastic to affirm, that solemn humiliations, whether performed by public communities in general, or individuals in particular, have always met with such a divine acceptance, as to obtain at least a reprieve from, if not a total removal of, the threatened evil. The deferring of an impending judgment, only upon the hypocritical,

but public humiliation of a wicked *Ahab*; The mature and providential deliverance of the *Jewish* people from the cruel plot of an ambitious *Haman*, for which queen *Esther*, *Mordecai*, and the other distressed *Jews* sought so earnestly by public fasting and prayer: And what is yet more, the total and entire suspension of the destruction of *Nineveh*, that exceeding great city, (though so peremptorily denounced) upon the fasting, praying, and repenting of the king, nobles and commons, at the preaching of *Jonah*. These, not to mention many more that might be adduced from sacred story, are most pregnant, and, at the same time, very encouraging proofs, that they that humble themselves, shall in God's due time be exalted; and therefore, as a nation, we may boldly infer, that the righteous Lord, who delights to shew himself strong in behalf of those who are of an upright heart, will favour, plead, and vindicate our righteous cause.

I am very sensible, that artful insinuations have been industriously published, in order to lay all the blame of this war upon us. But bold assertions and solid proofs are two different things; for it is plain, beyond all contradiction, that the *French*, fond of rivalling us both at home and abroad, have most unjustly invaded his Majesty's dominions in *America*; and have also, by the most vile artifices and lies, been endeavouring to draw the six nations of *Indians* from our interest; in short, almost all their proceedings ever since the late treaty of *Aix la Chapelle*, have been little else than preparations for, or a tacit declaration of war. But he that sitteth in heaven, as we may humbly hope, laughs them to scorn; and, as he once defeated the counsel of *Achitophel*, and came down to confound the language of those aspiring projectors who would fain have built a tower, the top of which should reach even to heaven; so we trust (whatever dark providences may intervene) that he will in the end frustrate the devices of

our adversary's most subtle politicians, and speak confusion to all their projects; who, by aiming at universal monarchy, are more than attempting to erect a second *Babel*.

I have heard, or read somewhere of a *Turkish* General, who, being called to engage with a Christian army that had broken through the most solemn ties, stood up at the head of his troops, and then drawing the treaty which they had broken, out of his bosom, and holding it up in the air, thus addressed the throne of heaven: "O almighty Being, if thou art, as they say, thou art, these Christians God, thou lovest what is right, and hateth perfidy; look down therefore and behold this treaty which they have broken; and, as thou canst not favour what is wrong, render their arms, O God, successless, and make mine victorious." He ended; immediately the sword was drawn. The two parties vigorously engaged, and the perfidious Christians were beaten off the field. Thus may our protestant Generals, or at least their Chaplains, deal with our enemy's forces, in respect to the treaty of *Aix la Chapelle*. They, not we, have broken it. They, not we, have been the aggressors: and therefore, notwithstanding we are looked upon as *heretics*, and they fight under the banner of one who stiles himself *His most Christian Majesty*; a righteous God, we trust, in answer to prayer, will humble *France*, and make the *British* arms both by sea and land, more than conquerors through his love. It is true (and God knows with grief of heart I speak it) praying is become too unfashionable amongst our people in general, and among our military men in particular; but wherein the piety, and consequently the true policy, of such a procedure consists, I believe will be very difficult to determine. If we have recourse to *Rollin*'s ancient history, I believe we shall find, that neither *Darius*, *Cyrus*, *Alexander*, nor indeed scarce any of the *Egyptian*, *Grecian*, *Persian*, or *Roman* Generals,

ever undertook any hazardous enterprize, without making some public acknowledgment of a deity. And if we consult that *history of histories*, that too much neglected book (as Sir *Richard Steel* expresses himself) emphatically called the Scriptures, we may always remark, that those heroic worthies, who by faith subdued kingdoms, and put to flight the armies of the aliens, were *men of prayer* as well as men of *valour*. And if our researches descend down to our own annals, we shall soon be satisfied, that the *British* arms were never more formidable, than when our soldiers went forth in the strength of the Lord; and with a bible in one hand, and a sword in the other, chearfully fought under his banner who hath condescended to stile himself "a man of war."

Such an appellation as this, methinks, may sufficiently justify the lawfulness of bearing arms, and drawing the sword in defence of our civil and religious liberties. For if God himself is pleased to stile himself a man of war, surely in a just and righteous cause (such as the *British* war at present is) we may as lawfully draw our swords, in order to defend ourselves against our common and public enemy, as a civil magistrate may sit on a bench, and condemn a public robber to death. Our excellent reformers, sensible of this, in the thirty-second article of our church, after having declared "that the laws of the realm may punish Christian men with death for heinous offences;" immediately subjoins, "that it is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the magistrate, to wear weapons and serve in the wars." And therefore, what Bishop *Sanderson* says of study, may be likewise said of fighting: "fighting without prayer is atheism, and prayer without fighting is presumption." And I would be the more particular on this point, because through a *fatal scrupulosity* against bearing arms, even in a defensive war, his Majesty hath been, and is not yet out of danger

of losing that large, extensive, and but lately most flourishing province of *Pensylvania*, the very centre and garden of all *North America*. But whilst I see such very scrupulous persons grasping at every degree of worldly power, and by all the arts of worldly policy labouring to monopolize, and retain in their own hands all parts both of the legislative and executive branches of civil government; to speak in the mildest terms, we may honestly affirm, that they certainly act a most inconsistent, and if not prevented here at home, to thousands of their neighbours, I fear a very fatal part. For, say what we will to the contrary, if we search to the bottom of things, we may soon be convinced, that civil magistracy and defensive war must stand or fall together. Both are built upon the same basis; and there cannot be so much as one single argument urged to establish the one, which doth not at the same time corroborate and confirm the other.

Far be it from me, who profess myself a disciple and minister of the Prince of peace, to sound a trumpet for war: but when the trumpet is already sounded by a perfidious enemy, and our king, our country, our civil and religious liberties, are all, as it were, lying at stake, did we not at such a season lend our purses, our tongues, our arms, as well as our prayers, in defence of them, should we not justly incur that curse which an inspired *Deborah*, when under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit, once uttered, "Curse ye *Meroz*, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty?" Known unto God, and God alone, are all our hearts. Daily and repeated experience convinceth us, that the greatest talkers are not always the greatest doers. How therefore any of us may behave when put to the trial, the trial itself can only prove. But, for my own part, whatever my future conduct may be, (and I know it will be downright cowardly, if left to

myself) yet, upon the maturest deliberation, I am at present so fully convinced of the justice of the *British* cause, that supposing it should be said of me, as it is of *Zwinglius*, "*Cecidit in prœlio*, He fell in battle;" I hope, if whilst the silver cords of life were loosing, and I should be attended by any who may be bewailing mine, as the friends of *Zwinglius* did his misfortune, I should like him cry out, "*Ecquid hoc infortunii?* Is this a misfortune?" And not only so, but with my expiring breath add, as he did, "*O faustum infortunium!* O happy misfortune!" For, surely, it is far more preferable to die, though by a popish sword, and be carried from the din and noise of war by angels into *Abraham*'s bosom, than to be suffered to survive, only to drag on a wearisome life, and to be a mournful spectator, and daily bewailer of one's country's ruin.

Awful and tremendous are the judgments that have lately been abroad. Twice hath the earth on which this great metropolis stands, unable, as it were, any longer to sustain the weight of its inhabitants sins, been made to tremble and totter under us. Since that, how amazingly hath the shock been extended! *Africa*, (nor hath *America* itself been exempted) hath in a most destructive manner felt its dire effects. And what a dreadful consumption it hath made in various parts of *Spain*, and, in a more especial manner, at *Lisbon*, the metropolis of *Portugal*, is beyond conception, and beyond the power of the most masterly pen to describe. It is to be questioned, whether the like hath ever been heard of since the deluge. Surely nothing was wanting to figure out, and realize to that distressed people the horror of the last day, but the sound of the trump, and the actual appearance of the great Judge of quick and dead. But awful and tremendous as such phænomenas of nature may be; yet, if we consider the consequences of things, was even the like judgment to befal us, (which may God avert!) it would be but a small

one, in comparison of our hearing that a *French* army, accompanied with a popish Pretender, and thousands of *Romish* priests, was suffered to invade, subdue, and destroy the bodies and substance, and, as the necessary consequences of both these, to blind, deceive, and tyrannize over the souls and consciences of the people belonging to this happy isle.

God forbid, that I should give flattering titles to any; for in so doing, I should provoke him to take away my soul. But surely we must have eyes that see not, and ears that hear not, as well as hearts that do not understand, if we do not know, and see, and feel, that in respect to our civil and religious liberties, we are undoubtedly the freest people under heaven. And I dare appeal to the most ungrateful and malicious malecontent, to produce any æra in the *British* annals, wherein we have enjoyed such a continued series of civil and religious liberty, as we have been favoured with for these twenty-eight years last past, under the mild and gentle administration of our dread and rightful Sovereign King *George*. Surely he hath been a nursing father to people of all denominations; and however he may be denied it, yet he may, without a compliment, justly claim from the present, as well as future ages, the deserved title of George the Great. But notwithstanding this, such is the degeneracy of human nature, it must necessarily be expected, that, in a nation grown wanton with liberty like ours, there are a great multitude of unhappy persons, who being men of lax principles, loose lives, and broken fortunes, will be so abandoned, as to break through all restraints of gratitude, loyalty and religion; and, like *Cataline* and his wicked confederates, be fond of joining in any change of government, whereby they may entertain the most distant prospect of bettering their fortunes, and gratifying their ambition, though it be at the expence of their country's blood. This hath been, and no doubt still continues to be, the fate of all civil

governments in the world, and consequently is no more than what we may expect, in times of tumult and danger, will be acted over again in our own land by men of such corrupt minds. But how any serious and judicious, much less religious and devout person, can be so stupid to all principles of self-interest, and so dead even to all maxims of common sense, as to prefer a *French* to an *English* government; or a *popish* Pretender, born, nursed, and bred up in all the arbitrary and destructive principles of the court and church of *Rome*, to the present *protestant succession* settled in the illustrious line of *Hanover*, must be imputed to nothing else but an awful infatuation.

Hear ye, (if there be any into whose hands this address may fall, that are desirous of such a change) not to dwell entirely upon the many innumerable civil or temporal losses we should sustain: hear ye, I say, the mild and gentle language of one or his Most Christian Majesty's late declarations concerning religion.

"Being informed, that there have sprung up, and still are springing up, daily in our realm, a great number of preachers, whose sole business is to stir up the people to rebellion, and to dissuade them from the practice of the *Roman* catholic and apostolic religion; we do command that all preachers, who shall call assemblies, preach in them, or discharge any other function, be put to death; the punishment appointed by the declaration in *July 1686*, for the minister of the pretended reformed religion, which we would not, for the future, have any one esteem a mere threatening, which will not be put in execution. We do likewise forbid our subjects to receive the said ministers or preachers, to conceal, aid, or assist them, or have, directly or indirectly, any intercourse or correspondence with them. We farther enjoin all those, who shall know any of the said preachers, to inform against them to the

officers of the respective places; the whole under pain, in case of trespass, of being condemned to the gallies for life, if men; and, if women, of being shorn, and shut up the remainder of their days in such places as our judges shall think expedient; and whether they be men or women, under pain of confiscation."

After perusing this, read, read also, I beseech you, the shocking accounts of the horrid butcheries, and cruel murders committed on the bodies of many of our fellow-subjects in *America*, by the hands of *savage Indians*, instigated thereto by more than *savage popish priests*. [1] And if this be the beginning, what may we suppose the end will be, should a *French* power, or popish Pretender, be permitted to subdue either us or them? Speak, *Smithfield*, speak, and by thy dumb, but very persuasive oratory, declare to all that pass by and over thee, how many *English* protestant martyrs thou hast seen burnt to death in the reign of a cruel popish Queen, to whom the present Pretender to the *British* throne at least claims a kind of a distant kindred? Speak *Ireland*, speak, and tell if thou canst, how many thousands, and tens of thousands of innocent unprovoking protestants were massacred in cold blood by the hands of cruel papists within thy borders, about a century ago? Nay, speak *Paris*, speak, (for though popish, on this occasion we will admit thy evidence) and say, how many thousands of protestants were once slaughtered, on purpose, as it were, to serve up as a bloody dessert, to grace the solemnity of a marriage-feast. But why go we back to such distant æras? Speak, *Languedoc*, speak, and tell if thou canst, how many protestant ministers have been lately executed; how many more of their hearers have been dragooned and sent to the gallies; and how many hundreds are now, in consequence of the above-mentioned edict, lying in prisons, and fast bound in misery and iron, for no other crime than that

unpardonable one in the *Romish* church, “hearing and preaching the pure gospel of the meek and lowly Jesus.”

And think you, my dear countrymen, that *Rome*, glutted as it were with protestant blood, will now rest satisfied, and say, “I have enough!” No, on the contrary, having, through the good hand of God upon us, been kept so long fasting, we may reasonably suppose, that the popish priests are only grown more voracious, and (like so many hungry and ravenous wolves pursuing the harmless and innocent flocks of sheep) will with double eagerness pursue after, seize upon, and devour their wished-for protestant prey; and, attended with their bloody red-coats, those gallic instruments of reformation, who know they must either fight or die, will necessarily breathe out nothing but threatening and slaughter, and carry along with them desolation and destruction in all its various shapes and tortures, go where they will.

But I humbly hope, vile as we are, a gracious, long-suffering and merciful God, will not suffer us to fall into their blood-thirsty and cruel hands. He hath formerly most remarkably interposed in *England*’s favour; and why should we in the least doubt, but that he will again reveal his omnipotent arm, and make our extremity to be his opportunity, to help and defend us, against such threatening and unjust invaders? Invincible as the *Spanish* armada was supposed to be, and all-powerful as the Pope, under whose broad seal they acted, might boast he was in heaven or hell, it is plain he had no power over the water. “For thou didst blow, O Lord, with thy wind, and the enemy was scattered.” And is not this God the same now as he was yesterday? And will he not continue the same for ever? Of whom then should the inhabitants of *Great Britain* be afraid? Blessed be God, if we look to second causes, we have a glorious fleet, brave admirals, a well-

disciplined army, experienced officers, and, if occasion should require, thousands and thousands of hearty voluntiers, with a *Royal Hero*, who hath once been made happily instrumental to save his country from impending ruin, if not Majesty itself prepared to head them. And if by fasting from as well as for sin, and by flying, through a living faith, to the merits of a dying, risen, ascended and interceding Mediator, we can but make God our friend, we need not fear what *France* and *Rome*, and *Hell*, with all their united force, can do unto, or plot against us. The way of duty is the way of safety, And if we are but found in the due use of proper means, we may confidently leave the issue and event of things with God. Be that event what it will (and I trust it will be a prosperous one) we have a divine authority to say unto the righteous, it shall be well with them. God's own people, amidst all the wars and rumours of wars, may rest secure; for they not only dwell under the shadow of the most High, but have his own royal word for it, that all things shall work together for their good. And not only so, but they may be fully assured, that all the malicious efforts and designs of men and devils shall be so far from obstructing, that, on the contrary, through the sure, though secret hand of an ever-watchful, over-ruling, and omnipotent providence, they shall at present, (howbeit they think not so) be made not only to subserve the present further enlargement of his interests, who, in spight of all the strivings of the potsherds of the earth, will hold the balance of UNIVERSAL MONARCHY in his own hands; but at last shall terminate in the full and compleat establishment and perfection of that blessed kingdom, whose law is truth, whose king is love, and whose duration is eternity. *Fiat! Fiat!* Amen and Amen.

1. See a pamphlet, intitled, A brief View of the Conduct of Pensylvania, for the Year 1755.

A PREFACE TO THE SERIOUS READER, ON BEHALF OF THE REV. SAMUEL CLARKE'S EDITION OF THE BIBLE.

A PREFACE, &c.

WHEN *Philip* the Evangelist was commanded by the Holy Spirit, to go near and join himself to the chariot of a *man of Ethiopia*, and found him reading *Esaias* the prophet, we are told, *Acts* viii. verse 30. that he introduced himself with this question, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" The *Ethiopian*, though an eunuch, a person of great authority under Queen *Candace*, instead of being offended at this seeming impertinence, mildly answered, verse 31. "How can I, except some man guide me?" And as a proof of his willingness to be guided, he desires *Philip* that he would come up and sit with him. Upon which, as we are further informed, verse 35. "*Philip* opened his mouth and began at the same scripture," which the eunuch was then providentially reading, "and preached unto him Jesus." An instructive passage this! Not merely as it shews us, that the greatest personages ought not to think themselves above perusing God's lively oracles; but also as it points out to us that teachable and child-like disposition, with which all ought to come to the reading of

them; as well as the care which the Holy Spirit of God takes, to furnish such as have a mind to do his will, with proper instructors, that they may know it. “The meek will he guide in his way.”

Now what the Evangelist *Philip* was then to this devout *Ethiopian*, that, spiritual and gospel commentators are to us now. For though the grand lines of our Christian faith and practice, are written in such plain and legible characters, “that he who runs may read;” yet if we duly search the scriptures, we shall find many things both in the Old and New Testament, into the due knowledge of which, we have need of some men, or of some good men’s works, to guide us. Various and abundant are the helps of this kind, with which the present age and people of this land are favoured; but amongst them all, in my poor opinion, next to holy Mr. *Mathew Henry’s* incomparable comment upon the Bible; the Reverend *Samuel Clarke*’s Old and New Testament with annotations, seem to be the best calculated for universal edification. For they contain, though a short, yet (generally speaking) a full and spiritual interpretation of the most difficult words and phrases. A great many parallel scriptures, both as to matter and words, are most judiciously inserted. To this is added, an analysis, or the contents not only of near every book and chapter, but of almost every verse of every chapter in the whole Bible: and yet the notes and references are so disposed in the manner of printing, that the reader, if he hath no time for a further enquiry, may read the bare text without any interruption, or if but little time, he may almost with a single glance, see the meaning of any particular word, phrase, or passage, as he goes along. It must be confessed, indeed, that in the former editions, a few expressions in the explanatory notes seemed not so unexceptionable; but then it must be observed, that they were but few, and those in this edition, as I am informed, are for the most part corrected.

It may be, that the curious and very critical reader may meet with some few that may have escaped present notice. But alas! if we forbear reading any book or comment, 'till we meet with one that will suit every taste and is liable to no exception, I fear we must never read at all. The best of mens books, as well as the best of men, are but men and the books of men, at the best: it is the peculiar property of thy life, and of thy book, O blessed Jesus! to be exempt from all real imperfections. Happy they who both in their writings and conduct come nearest to thy divine copy, and most blessed example!

If it should now be enquired who this Reverend *Samuel Clarke* might be? Must I tell thee? He was one of the many worthies who were ejected by the *black Bartholomew act*. But let not this startle thee, courteous reader; for thou wilt here find no disputes about church government, no controversy about rites or ceremonies; but (as far as I am capable of judging) the mind of the ever-blessed God, opened and explained in a manner equally necessary and useful for all serious Christians of all denominations. As such, I have spoken of it, both from the pulpit, and in private conversation, many years ago; and if any thing I have said, hath been, or shall be, in the least instrumental in promoting its present publication, or future usefulness, whatever exceptions may be made by persons of different sentiments, I shall look upon it as an honour conferred upon me, by our great and common Lord.

At the same time, I must confess, it gave me pleasure about a year ago, to find this very book recommended in the strongest manner, in the second volume of Dr. *Calamy*'s lives. His words are these, "I cannot forbear here adding a particular account of the Bible which he published. He first formed the design in his younger years, in the university; and made it the work of

his most retired leisure, and solemn thoughts. It ripened with years and experience, and was the result of great reading and consideration, both of the best practical writers and the most celebrated criticks. It is a work of great exactness and judgment; commonly fixes on the true sense of the place; diligently observes the connection of things; freely represents the principal matters that occur; and contains the fullest account of parallel places, of any other extant." He was so happy in this performance, as to obtain the concurring testimony of two great and excellent men, who were thought to have different sentiments of some points of religion; viz. Dr. *Owen* and Mr. *Baxter* in their respective epistles before the quarto edition of the New Testament. The words of the former are remarkable. "But this I must say, that to the best of my understanding, he has made his choice of the especial sense which he gives of the word, in all places, with great diligence and judgment. And it is evident, that in the whole, he has so carefully and constantly attended to the analogy of faith, that the reader may safely trust to him, without fear of being led into the snare of any error, or unsound opinion." The words of the latter are: "And I especially commend it as orthodox, in explaining those texts which meddle with justification, remission of sin, with faith and works, and such great and practical points of doctrine; so that the reader need not fear the corrupting his understanding, by any secret insinuation of errors, or dangerous mixture of private, and unsound opinions." Since both of them, herein freely expressed their proper sentiments, it is scarce conceivable how there could be any very important difference remaining between them. But be it as it will as to that; this was in a manner the work of Mr. *Clarke*'s life, and bears the lively signatures of his exact learning, singular piety, and indefatigable industry; and has been valued by good judges of different sentiments and

persuasions, considering the brevity of the parts, and intireness of the whole, as the best single book upon the Bible in the world.

To these may be added the joint opinions of Dr. *Bates* and Mr. *How*, who thus expressed themselves. “Having seriously perused this laborious work, we cannot but judge, the usefulness will answer the author’s great industry; whose excellent skill hath with that conciseness, and yet clearness, given the mind of God in the sacred oracles of the New Testament, that we cannot doubt, but God will render it serviceable, to the edifying of conscientious and humble readers, in knowledge, faith and obedience.” If it should be objected that these were Dissenters, Dr. *Calamy* adds, to our author’s honour, “that his annotations on the Bible were so highly valued by some of the most eminent of the clergy of the Church of *England*, that one of the learned body declared them to be so useful (especially that part that contained parallel scriptures) that he could not compose his sermons without them. Another said, that if they could not be had under fifty pounds, he would give that sum rather than not have them. And one of the highest rank thought fit to recommend them to young divines, at their ordination.”

In respect to Mr. *Clarke*’s personal character, Dr. *Calamy* further informs us that, “He was a man of very considerable learning; a good critic; especially in the scriptures; a great textuary, an excellent preacher; a great enemy of superstition and bigotry: yet zealous for unaffected piety. He was one of great moderation, both in his principles and temper, lived usefully, and in much esteem; and in his last hours had great peace and serenity.” After such encomiums from such tall cedars in our *Lebanon*, any further recommendation from one of so small a growth, or such a shrub as I am, can be but of little weight. I shall therefore detain the intelligent and religious reader no longer, than whilst I subjoin my hearty prayers, that

whether he or I, or any other Christian of any denomination, read this or any other comment, or the pure scriptures, without any comment, that we may in such wise read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them; that by patience and comfort of God's holy word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which he hath given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Christian reader,

Thine in our common Lord,

George Whitefield.

London, October 1, 1759.

OBSERVATIONS ON SOME FATAL MISTAKES,

IN A BOOK LATELY PUBLISHED, AND INTITLED, "THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE; OR, THE OFFICE AND OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT VINDICATED FROM THE INSULTS OF INFIDELITY, AND THE ABUSES OF FANATICISM. BY *WILLIAM* LORD BISHOP OF *GLOUCESTER*."

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

Truth is never more grosly abused, nor its Advocates more dishonoured, than when they employ the foolish Arts of Sophistry, Buffoonery, and Scurrility in its Defence.

Bishop of Gloucester's Preface.

OBSERVATIONS, &c.

My dear Friend,

WHEN the great St. *Paul*, in his epistle to the *Romans*, had a mind to lay a solid foundation for the grand distinguishing doctrines of the gospel, I need not inform you, that, like a wise master-builder, he took care to dig deep into the corruption of human nature: and after having given us a lively

portraiture of the universal depravity of the *Gentile* world, he proceeded, in a most masterly manner, to bring down the proud thoughts and high imaginations of the self-righteous and formal Pharisees; by proving, to a demonstration, that the *Jewish* professors, notwithstanding all their peculiar advantages of external revelation, circumcision, near affinity to *Abraham*, and such-like, were all equally included under sin, were all equally guilty before God, had all equally fallen short of his glory, consequently were all upon an equal level with the rest of mankind, and stood as much in need of the free grace of God in Christ Jesus, and the sanctifying operations of his Holy Spirit, as the most savage barbarian, or disputing Greek. This was acting like as did the forerunner or harbinger of our blessed Lord; for, when he saw many of the Sadducees and Pharisees (the infidels and professors of that age) coming to his baptism, disregarding as it were the former, in a very pungent, and what some would term, a very unpolite manner, he thus addresseth himself to the latter: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? And think not to say within yourselves, We have *Abraham* for our father; for I say unto you, God is able of these stones to raise up children unto *Abraham*." But why speak I of acting like the forerunner? I should rather have said, this was imitating our common Lord himself, who, in his glorious and divine sermon, (when, to use the words of the seraphic *Hervey*, "a mount was his pulpit, and the heavens were his sounding-board") employs himself chiefly in detecting the false glosses and corrupt interpretations of the then masters of *Israel*; withal adding this cutting assertion, "Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

What a pity is it, my dear friend, that our modern defenders of Christianity, in their elaborate and undoubtedly well-meant treatises, have not been more studious to copy after such bright and unerring examples! Many of these tracts I know you have read; and am persuaded, out of your usual candour, you will do them so much justice as to acknowledge, that, in respect to the outworks of religion, such as clearing up the prophecies of the Old, and vindicating the miracles of the New Testament, against the attacks of infidels and free-thinkers, they have shewn themselves, as far as bare human learning, added to external revelation, can carry them, to be masters of strong reasoning, nervous language, and conclusive arguments. But then, as I have often heard you lament, one thing they seem to lack, a deeper and more experimental knowledge of themselves, and of Jesus Christ. Hence it is, that when they come to touch upon the internals and vitals of Christianity, they are quite grappled, and write so unguardedly of the all-powerful influences of the Holy Ghost, as to sink us into a state of *downright formality*; which, if the Apostle *Paul* may be our judge, we have need as much to be cautioned against, as of fanaticism, superstition, or infidelity itself: for in his second epistle to *Timothy*, after giving us a dreadful account of the abounding of wicked men in the last perilous times, such as "lovers of their own selves, coveteous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false-accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;" he brings up the rear in this awful manner, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, from such, turn away;" and to use the words of our Lord, "Publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of God before them."

Sorry am I to send you word, that a writer of this unhappy stamp now lies upon my table: a writer, who, although he entitles his book, "The Offices and Operations of the Holy Ghost vindicated from the Insults of Infidelity and Abuses of Fanaticism," yet, in his great zeal against the latter, and to the no small encouragement of the former, as far as perverted reason and disguised sophistry could carry him, hath, in effect, robbed the church of Christ of its promised Comforter; and thereby left us, upon whom the ends of the world are come, without any supernatural influence or divine operations whatsoever. Often have I heard you observe, that there never was an age in which the stewards of the mysteries of Christ were more loudly called upon to vindicate the offices and operations of the Holy Spirit, than this wherein we live. And, for my own part, I cannot help thinking, that the most accomplished and duly qualified person in the universe, could he write or speak so extensively, that the whole world might hear or read him, could not possibly express his love to mankind in general, and to the church of God, purchased with his own blood, in particular, in a more necessary, commendable, and useful way, than by declaring, upon the house-top, that the Holy Ghost, like its almighty Purchaser, is the same to-day as he was yesterday; that he is now, as well as formerly, in the use of all instituted means, appointed to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and judgment; to lead them into all truth, by spiritually opening their understandings, that they may understand the scriptures; and to renew a clean heart and right spirit within them here, in order that they may be thereby prepared for the full enjoyment of a triune, and ever-blessed God hereafter. This you will judge, my dear friend, is what any one might have reasonably expected to have met with, in a book bearing such a promising title. But alas, how was I disappointed! And how will you be equally

surprised, when I tell you, that upon perusing the book itself, I found that the author, instead of vindicating or asserting, rather denies and ridicules the standing and unalterable operations of the Holy Ghost. For, having ingeniously taken a great deal of learned pains against the insinuations of Doctor *Middleton*, to prove that there once was a Holy Ghost; and that he did once actually descend upon the Apostles, on the day of Pentecost; and further, that he did once inspire the sacred writers to settle the canon of scripture; he then, in order to tear up superstition, and what he calls fanaticism, by the roots, takes infinitely greater pains (as well he might, being a most arduous task indeed) to shew, that what true believers, in all ages, have always looked upon to be the *standing* and *ordinary operations* of the Spirit, "Such as manifest themselves in grace and knowledge, and which administer aid in spiritual distresses, are to be accounted and called *miraculous*, as much as those which extended outwards, in the gift of healing, and the relief of other corporeal infirmities." And these "miraculous powers (he adds) being now, upon the perfect establishment of Christianity, *totally withdrawn*, it consequently must be superstitious and fanatical to look for, or pretend to be possessed of, any of those operations which manifest themselves in grace and knowledge, and which administer aid in spiritual distresses." Pages 75, 82, 83, octavo edition. Strange assertions these, you will say, for a vindicator of the offices and operations of the Holy Ghost, against the insults of infidelity, and the abuses of fanaticism! Alas! what could a *Middleton* say more? Nay, I could almost add, where hath he expressly said so much? But if it be superstition to look for, if it be fanaticism to seek after, and not rest till we are actually and experimentally possessed of, the supernatural influences of the Blessed Spirit, manifesting themselves in grace and divine knowledge, and

affording aid in spiritual distresses, then may you and I, my dear friend, become more and more superstitious and fanatical every day! For I am persuaded, that without such divine manifestations as exceed the powers of humanity, were we to be signed with the sign of the cross in baptism, a thousand times over, we could never successfully fight under Christ's banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and consequently not so much as truly commence, much less continue to be, his faithful servants and soldiers even to the end of our lives.

Surely, was the Apostle *Paul* to rise from the dead, and read over, or hear of such strange positions, his spirit, as once at *Athens*, would again be stirred in him; to see a writer thus attempting to erect an altar for the public worship of an unknown God: I say, an unknown God. For how is it possible, in the very nature of the thing, for us, who are by nature carnal and sold under sin, ever to worship God, who is a spirit, in spirit and in truth, without some inward manifestations of grace and spiritual knowledge, superadded to the light of external revelation, to enable us so to do? For, to apply what this Apostle observes upon a like occasion, "he is not a real Christian, who is only one outwardly; but he alone is a true Christian, who is one inwardly, whose baptism is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not merely of the water, whose praise is not of man, but of God." And yet (would you think it?) this writer is so unwary as to attempt to press this very Apostle, that true assertor of the doctrine of grace, that genuine, irrefragable vindicator of the offices and operations of the Holy Spirit, into his mistaken service. Never, I believe, were the saint and the scholar, the gentleman and the Christian, more sweetly blended together, than in the character and writings of this favourite of heaven. How often, my dear friend, in our more retired moments, when conversing together concerning the lively oracles of

God, have you called upon me to take notice of this truly great man's pertinent and powerful preaching before *Felix* the governor, as well as his inexpressibly polite and persuasive address to King *Agrippa*? And how have you again and again read over to me, and made remarks upon, those striking images, and those divine characteristics, which this accomplished master of human and divine rhetoric lays before us, in the xiiith chapter of his first epistle to the *Corinthians*, of that most excellent grace charity, or the love of God? A grace so absolutely necessary to the Christian life, that without it, to use the inimitable language of this inspired writer, "Though we had a miraculous faith, so as to remove mountains, nay though we should give all our goods to feed the poor, and even our bodies to be burnt, it would profit us nothing." A grace that never faileth, but a sacred something of which we shall eternally remain possessed, and be increasing in, even when faith shall end in the vision, and hope in the endless fruition of the ever-blessed God. O my dear friend, how frequently have our hearts burned within us, under the glowing warmth of such an animating prospect? And yet, incredible as it may seem to you, I assure you, that this very chapter is singled out by our hapless Author, to prove, "That supernatural manifestations of grace and knowledge, and spiritual aids in spiritual distresses, were the miraculous gifts of the primitive church, and were totally withdrawn on its perfect establishment." Surely a more pertinent one could not be selected out of the whole New Testament, to prove directly the contrary. For let any man impartially examine the glorious inseparable properties and concomitants of this divine grace and gift, CHARITY, recorded in this chapter, can he then make the least doubt, whether any person living, can possibly be possessed of this most excellent gift, without those very supernatural manifestations of grace and knowledge, and those

divine influences of the Holy Spirit exceeding the powers of humanity, which this unhappy writer would fain persuade us are now abated or totally withdrawn. “Charity (says our Apostle) suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.” Now can human reason, with all its heights; can calm philosophy, with all its depths; or moral suasion, with all its insinuating arts; so much as pretend to kindle, much less to maintain and blow up into a settled habitual flame of holy fire, such a spark as this in the human heart? Sooner might one attempt to extinguish the most rapid and devouring flames, by reading a lecture upon the benefit of cold water; or reach out one’s presumptuous hand to create a new heaven and a new earth; than to dream of extinguishing those innate, fiery passions of envy, selfishness, or malice, which this charity or love of God is here said to militate against; or, to work or form the soul into any of those divine tempers here spoken of, as the genuine effects and fruits of the love of God. No, my dear friend, these are flowers not to be gathered in nature’s garden. They are exotics; planted originally in heaven, and in the great work of the new birth, are transplanted by the Holy Ghost, not only into the hearts of the first Apostles, or primitive Christians, but into the hearts of all true believers, even to the end of the world. For doubtless of all such St. *Paul* speaks, when he says, “Tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” And hence, doubtless, it is, that we were all in general, directed in one of the collects of our church, to “pray to that Lord who hath taught us, that all our doings without charity, are

nothing worth, that he would send the Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity." So that, according to our reformers, supernatural influence and manifestations of grace and knowledge, are so far from being totally withdrawn, that, in the end of this very collect, they teach us to confess, that "without them," or, which is the same, without the love of God poured into the heart by the Holy Ghost, "whosoever liveth, is counted dead before him." But, if we will believe our Author, charity signifies little more than the outward establishment of the Christian church, and consequently, that the Apostle means no more in this chapter than to shew us, "That prophecies, mysteries, knowledge," (*i. e.* according to this writer, all supernatural knowledge) "were to cease when Christianity arrived to a perfect establishment." Page 82.—Nay, scorning to tread in the steps of *Whitby*, *Hammond*, *Burkit*, and every consistent spiritual expositor of holy writ, our new commentator, out of his paradoxical genius, labours to prove, that when the great Apostle asserts, that "charity never fails," and therefore hath the preference over faith and hope, he means nothing less than to assert its eternal duration, and that consequently his true meaning hath hitherto escaped every unwary reader but himself, pages 75, 6, 7. Conscious, no doubt, of this singularity, and justly aware of its needing some apology, he very properly adds, page 82. that such an uncommon interpretation "instructs the unwary reader, with what caution and application he should come to the study of that profound reasoning with which all St. *Paul*'s epistles abound." And may I not, at least with as great propriety subjoin, that this may also instruct every unwary reader, with what caution he should come to the study of that profound reasoning with which this treatise abounds? so very profound, that I believe it exceeds the

powers of humanity to fathom its depths, so far as to draw out of it any true, consistent interpretation of the Apostle's reasoning on this chapter at all.

I might here add, my dear friend, some other specimens of our Author's manner of explaining scripture, by his fine human reason: for instance, 'Keeping ourselves unspotted from the world, he says, page 157, signifies only our using the means of grace.' And again, when the Apostle informs us, *Ephesians* v. 9. "that the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth," he tells us, that "truth refers to Christian doctrine, goodness to Christian practice, and by righteousness is meant, the conduct of the whole to particulars, and consists in that equal gentleness of government, where church-authority is made to coincide with the private rights of conscience; and this refers to Christian discipline [1];" with several such like instances, which even the most unwary reader, without much study or application, may meet with, scattered up and down this Author's performance; but this would be too great a digression. Indeed I should not have dwelt so long even upon this extraordinary interpretation of the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the *Corinthians*, had not the writer himself called it, *this decisive passage*, and given it as his opinion, page 76, "That this is the only express declaration recorded in scripture, to prove, that all supernatural knowledge or divine influence was to cease, when Christianity was perfectly established, or the world arrived at a perfect Christian state." But every day's experience, nay this Author's very book, proving beyond a doubt, that Christianity is not as yet thus perfectly established; we may yet, according to his own principles, expect divine manifestations of grace and knowledge, and spiritual aids under spiritual distresses, without justly incurring the imputation either of superstition or fanaticism.

But to proceed. However profound and unintelligible our Author's comments may be, yet, when he comes to shew the reasonableness and fitness of an abatement or total withdrawing of divine influence in these last days, (but woe to the Christian world if he succeeds in his unhallowed attempt!) he speaks intelligibly enough. "On the Spirit's first descent upon the Apostles, he found their minds rude and uninformed, strangers to all celestial knowledge, prejudiced in favour of a carnal law, and utterly averse to the dictates of the everlasting gospel. The minds of these he illuminated, and, by degrees, led into all truths necessary for the professors of the faith to know, or for the propagators of it to teach."—True.—"Secondly, the nature and genius of the gospel were so averse to all the religious institutions of the world, that the whole strength of human prejudices was set in opposition to it. To overcome the obstinacy and violence of those prejudices, nothing less than the power of the Holy One was sufficient."—Good.—"And, thirdly and lastly, There was a time when the powers of this world were combined together for its destruction. At such a period, nothing but superior aid from above, could support humanity in sustaining so great a conflict as that which the holy martyrs encountered with joy and rapture, the horrors of death and torment."—Excellent.—But what follows?—According to our Author,

Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.

"But now," (a dreadful *but* it is!) "the profession of Christianity is attended with ease and honour;" and we are now, it seems, so far from being "rude and uninformed, and utterly averse to the dictates of the everlasting gospel, that whatever there may be of prejudice, it draws another way. Consequently, a rule of faith being now established, the conviction which the weight of human testimony, and the conclusions of

human reason afford us of its truth, are abundantly sufficient to support us in our religious perseverance; and therefore it must certainly be a great mark of fanaticism, to expect such divine communications, as though no such rule of faith was established; and also as highly presumptuous or fanatical to imagine, that rule to be so obscure, as to need the further assistance of the Holy Spirit to explain his own meaning." Pages 85, 86, 87, 88. This, you will say, my dear friend, is going pretty far; and indeed, supposing matters to be as this writer represents them, I do not see what great need we have of any established rule at all, at least in respect to practice, since corrupt nature is abundantly sufficient of itself, to help us to persevere in a religion attended with ease and honour. And I verily believe, that the Deists throw aside this rule of faith entirely, not barely on account of a deficiency in argument to support its authenticity, but because, they daily see so many who profess to hold this established, self-denying rule of faith with their lips, persevering all their lives long in nothing else but an endless and insatiable pursuit after worldly ease and honour. But what a total ignorance of human nature, and of the true unalterable genius of the everlasting gospel, doth our Author's arguing discover? For supposing, my dear friend, that this or any other writer should undertake to prove, that the ancient *Greeks* and *Romans* were born with sickly, disordered, and crazy bodies, but that we, in modern days, being made of a firmer mould, and being blessed with the established rules of *Galen* and *Hippocrates*, need now no further assistance from any present physician, either to explain or apply those rules to our present ails and corporeal distresses; though we could not, without the help of some linguist superior to ourselves, so much as understand the language in which those authors wrote. Supposing, I say, any one was to take it into his head to write in this manner, would he not be

justly deemed a dreaming enthusiast or real fanatic? And yet this would be just as rational as to insinuate, with our Author, that we who are born in these last days, have less depravity in our natures, less enmity to, and less prejudice against the Lord Jesus Christ, and less need of the divine teachings of the Blessed Spirit to help us to understand the true spiritual meaning of the holy scriptures, than those who were born in the first ages of the gospel. For as it was formerly, so it is now, the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit: and why? "Because they can only be spiritually discerned." But when is it that we must believe this Author? For, page 73. he talks of "some of the first Christians, who were in the happy circumstance of being found innocent, when they were led into the practice of all virtue by the Holy Spirit." And what occasion for that, if found innocent? But how innocent did the Holy Spirit find them? Doubtless, just as innocent as it finds us, "Conceived and born in sin." Having in our flesh, our depraved nature, no good thing; bringing into the world with us a corruption, which renders us liable to God's wrath and eternal damnation; with a carnal mind, which is enmity against God, and a heart, the thoughts and imaginations of which, are declared to be only evil, and that continually; and whose native and habitual language, though born and educated under a Christian dispensation, is identically the same as that of the *Jews*, "We will not have the Lord Jesus to reign over us." This, and this alone, my dear friend, is all the innocence that every man, naturally the offspring of *Adam*, whether born in the antideluvian, patriarchal, mosaic, apostolic, or present age, can boast of. And if this be matter of fact, (and who that knows himself can deny it?) it is so far from being superstitious or fanatical to assert the absolute necessity of a divine influence, or a power superior to that of humanity; that it is a most irrefragable argument for its

continuance without the least abatement, or withdrawing whatsoever. Daily experience proves, that without such a power, our understandings cannot be enlightened, our wills subdued, our prejudices and enmity overcome, our affections turned into a proper channel, or, in short, any one individual of the apostate fallen race of *Adam* be saved. And if so, what becomes of our Author's arguments, to shew the fitness of an abatement or total withdrawing of divine influence in these gospel days? Might he not with as great consistency, have undertaken to shew, the fitness of an abatement or total withdrawing of the irradiating light and genial warmth of the natural sun? For, as the earth on which we tread, stands as much in need now of the abiding influence of the genial rays of that great luminary, in order to produce, keep up, and complete the vegetative life in grass, fruits, plants, and flowers, as it did in any preceding age of the world; so our earthly hearts do now, and always will stand in as much need of the quickening, enlivening, transforming influences of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, that glorious sun of righteousness, as the hearts of the first apostles: if not to make us preachers, yet to make us Christians, by beginning, carrying on, and compleating that holiness in the heart and life of every believer in every age, without which no man living shall see the Lord. And the scriptures are so far from encouraging us to plead for a diminution of divine influence in these last days of the gospel, because an *external rule of faith* is thereby established, that on the contrary, we are encouraged by this very established rule to expect, hope, long, and pray for larger and more extensive showers of divine influence than any former age hath ever yet experienced. For, are we not therein taught to pray, "That we may be filled with all the fulness of God," and to wait for a glorious epocha, "When the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas?" Do not all

the saints on earth, and all the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven; nay, all the angels and archangels about the throne of the Most High God, night and day, join in this united cry, Lord Jesus, thus let thy kingdom come!

But, by this time, my dear friend, I imagine you would be glad to know against whom these *bruta fulmina*, this unscriptural artillery is levelled. Our Author shall inform you: "All modern pretenders to divine influence in general;" and you may be assured "the *poor Methodists* (those scourges and eye-sores of formal, self-righteous, letter-learned professors) in particular." To expose, and set these off in a ridiculous light, (a method that *Julian*, after all his various tortures, found most effectual) this writer runs from *Dan* to *Beersheba*; gives us quotation upon quotation out of the Rev. Mr. *John Wesley*'s Journals; and to use his own simile upon another occasion, by a kind of *Egyptian* husbandry, draws together whole droves of obscene animals, of his own formation, who rush in furiously, and then trample the Journals, and this sect, already every-where spoken against, under their feet. In reading this part of his work, I could not help thinking of the Papists dressing *John Huss* in a cap of painted devils, before they delivered him up to the secular arm. For our Author calls the Rev. Mr. *John Wesley*, "Paltry mimick, spiritual empiric, spiritual martialist, meek apostle, new adventurer." The Methodists, according to him, are "modern apostles, the saints, new missionaries, illuminated doctors, this sect of fanatics. Methodism itself is modern saintship. Mr. *Law* begat it, and Count *Zinzendorff* rocked the cradle; and the devil himself is man-midwife to their new birth." And yet this is the man, my dear friend, who in his preface to this very book, lays it down, as an invariable maxim, "That truth is never so grossly injured, or its advocates so dishonoured, as when they employ the

foolish arts of sophistry, buffoonery, and personal abuse in its defence." By thy own pen thou shalt be tried, thou hapless, mistaken advocate of the Christian cause. Nay, not content with dressing up this meek apostle, this spiritual empiric, these new missionaries, in bear-skins, in order to throw them out to be bated by an ill-natured world, he proceeds to rake up the very ashes of the dead; and, like the Witch of *Endor*, as far as in him lies, attempts to bring up and disquiet the ghosts of one of the most venerable sets of men that ever lived upon the earth; I mean the *good old Puritans*: "For these, (says our Author) who now go under the name of Methodists, in the days of our fore-fathers, under the firm reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, were called Precisians; but then, as a precious metal which had undergone its trial in the fire, and left all its dross, the sect, with great propriety, changed its name," (a very likely thing, to give themselves a nick-name, indeed) from Precisian to Puritan. Then, in the weak and distracted times of *Charles the First*, it ventured to throw off the mask, and under the new name of Independant, became the chief agent of all the dreadful disorders which terminated that unhappy reign." So that according to this Author's heraldic, genealogical fiction, "Methodism is the younger daughter to Independancy, and now a Methodist is an apostolic Independant;" (God grant he may always deserve such a glorious appellation) "But an Independant was then a *Mahometan* Methodist." Pages 142, 143, 144. What! an Independant a *Mahometan* Methodist? What! the learned Dr. *Owen*, the great Dr. *Goodwin*, the amiable Mr. *Howe*, and those glorious worthies who first planted the *New-England* churches, *Mahometan* Methodists! Would to God, that not only this writer, but all who now profess to preach Christ in this land, were not only almost, but altogether such *Mahometan* Methodists, in respect to the doctrine of divine influence, as they were! For I will venture

to affirm, that if it had not been for such *Mahometan* Methodists, and their successors, the free-grace dissenters, we should some years ago, have been in danger of sinking into Mahometan Methodism indeed; I mean, into a Christianity destitute of any divine influence manifesting itself in grace and knowledge, and void of any spiritual aid in spiritual distresses. But from such a Christianity, good Lord deliver this happy land! The design our author had in view in drawing such a parallel, is easily seen through. Doubtless, to expose the present Methodists to the jealousy of the civil government. For, says he, page 142, "We see methodism at present under a well established government, where it is obliged to wear a less audacious look. To know its true character, we should see it in all its fortunes." And doth this writer then, in order to gratify a sinful curiosity of seeing methodism in all its fortunes, desire to have the pleasure of seeing the weak and distracted times of *Charles* the first brought back again! Or dares he insinuate, that because, as he immediately adds, our country hath been productive of every strange thing, "that we are in the least danger now of any such distracting turn, since we have a King upon the throne, who in his first most gracious speech to both houses of parliament, declared, he would preserve the act of toleration inviolable? And that being the case, blessed be God, we are in no danger of any return of such weak and distracted times, either from the apostolic independants, Mahometan Methodists, or any religious sect or party whatsoever." My dear friend, "if this is not gibetting up names with unregenerate malice, to everlasting infamy," I know not what is. But it happens in this, as in similar cases, whilst men are thus busy in gibbeting up the names of others, they unwittingly, like *Haman*, when preparing a gallows for that apostolic Independent, that Mahometan Methodist, *Mordecai*, all the while are only erecting a gibbet for their own.

But, methinks, I see you now begin to be impatient to know, (and indeed I have neither inclination nor leisure at present to pursue our author any further) who this can be that takes such gigantic strides? I assure you, he is a *perfect Goliah* in the retinue of human learning.——Will you guess?—Perhaps Dr. *T——r* of *Norwich*;—no—he is dead. Certainly not a churchman? Yes; a member, a minister, a dignitary, a bishop of the church of *England*;—and, to keep you no longer in suspence, it is no less a man than Dr. *Warburton*, the author of "The Divine Legation of *Moses*," and now *William Lord Bishop of Gloucester*. I know you are ready to say, "Tell it not in *Gath*, publish it not in the streets of *Ascalon*." But, my dear friend, what can be done? His Lordship hath published it himself: nay, his book hath just gone through a second impression; and that you may see and judge for yourself, whether I have wronged his Lordship or not, (as it is not very weighty) I have sent you the book itself. Upon the perusal, I am persuaded you will at least be thus far of my opinion, that however *decus et tutamen* is always the motto engraven upon a *bishop's mitre*, it is not always most certain, though his Lordship says it is, page 202, that they are written in every *prelate's breast*? And how can this prelate in particular, be said to be the *ornament* and *safeguard* of the Church of *England*? when his principles are as directly contrary to the offices of that church, over which he is by divine permission made overseer, as light is contrary to darkness. You know, my dear friend, what our ministers are taught to say when they baptize: "I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous goodness he will grant to this child that thing which by nature he cannot have." But what says his Lordship? "All influence exceeding the *power of humility*, is miraculous, and therefore to abate or be totally withdrawn, now the church is perfectly established."

What say they when they catechise? “My good child, know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commands of God, and to serve him without *his special grace*.” But what says his Lordship? “A rule of faith being now established, the conviction which the weight of *human testimony*, and the conclusions of *human reason* afford, are abundantly sufficient to support us in our religious perseverance.” What says his Lordship himself, when he confirms children thus catechised? “Strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength.” But what says his Lordship, when he speaks his own sentiments? “All aids in spiritual distresses, as well as those which administered help in corporeal diseases, are now abated or totally withdrawn.” What says his Lordship when he ordains? “Dost thou trust that thou art inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost? then, receive thou the Holy Ghost.”

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire:
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost thy seven-fold gifts impart.
Thy blessed unction from above,
Is comfort, life, and power of love;
Enable with perpetual light,
The dulness of our blinded sight.

What says his Lordship when pronouncing the blessing? “The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God.” But what says his Lordship when retired to his study? “All supernatural influence, manifesting itself in grace and

knowledge, is miraculous, and therefore to cease under a perfect establishment."—What says?—But I check myself; for the time would fail me, was I to urge all those quotations that might be produced out of the articles, homilies, and public offices, to confront and invalidate the whole tenor and foundation of his Lordship's performance. But how it is consistent with that wisdom which is from above, (and by which his Lordship attempts to arraign, try, and condemn the Reverend Mr. *John Wesley*) to subscribe to, and make use of public offices, in the church, and then as publicly deny and contradict them in the press, I leave to his Lordship's more calm and deliberate consideration. Sure I am, if weighed in the same balance, his Lordship would be found equally wanting, at least. Indeed, during the whole trial, I could scarcely refrain breaking out into the language of the eunuch of Queen *Candace*, to *Philip* the evangelist, "Speaketh the prophet this of himself, or of some other man?" I hope, my dear friend, you know me better than to suspect I thus retort upon his Lordship, in order to throw dust in your eyes to prevent your seeing what his Lordship may justly except against, in the conduct of the Methodists in general, or in the journals of the Reverend Mr. *John Wesley* in particular. Whatever that indefatigable labourer may think of his, you know I have long since publicly acknowledged, that there were, and doubtless, though now sent forth in a more correct attire, there are yet, many *exceptionable passages* in my journals. And I hope it will be one of the constant employments of my declining years, to humble myself daily before the Most High God, for the innumerable mixtures of corruption which have blended themselves with my feeble, but, I trust, sincere endeavours, whether from the press or pulpit, to promote the Redeemer's glory, and the eternal welfare of precious and immortal souls. And, I assure you, that if his

Lordship had contented himself with pointing out, or even ridiculing any such blemishes or imprudencies, or yet still more important mistakes, in my own, or any of the Methodists conduct or performances, I should have stood intirely silent. But when I observed his Lordship, through almost his whole book, not only wantonly throwing about the arrows and firebrands of scurrility, buffoonery, and personal abuse, but, at the same time, on account of some unguarded expressions and indiscretions of a particular set of honest, though fallible, men, taking occasion to wound, vilify, and totally deny the all-powerful, standing operations of the Blessed Spirit, by which alone, his Lordship or any other man living can be sanctified and sealed to the day of eternal redemption, I must own that I was constrained to vent myself to you, as a dear, and intimate friend, in the manner I have done. Make what use of it you please; perhaps hereafter I may trouble you with some further remarks.

At present, you know I am on the road to *Scotland*, in order to embark for *America*. And therefore I would now only observe to you further, that the unguarded unwary method made use of by his Lordship to stop, will rather serve to increase and establish, what he is pleased to term a sect of fanatics. The more judicious Bishop *Burnet*, (as I heard an acute advocate once observe,) in the general assembly of the Church of *Scotland*, prescribed a much better (and indeed the only effectual and truly apostolic) way to stop the progress of the puritan ministers, when complained against by some of the clergy, for breaking into and preaching in their parochial charges; "Out-live, out-labour, out-preach them," said his Lordship. And that the Reverend Mr. *John Wesley* himself (that famed leader of the Methodists) and every Methodist preacher in *England* may be thus outed and intirely annihilated, is, and shall be, the hearty prayer of one, who, though less than the least of

them all, begs leave to subscribe himself, in great haste, but greater love and esteem,

Yours most affectionately,

In a never-failing *Emmanuel*,

George Whitefield.

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1. How much more pertinent is Mr. Clark's interpretation? According to him, "Goodness is an inclination to do good to others, truth is freedom from hypocrisy and dissimulation, righteousness is just dealing." Ephesians v. 9.

A RECOMMENDATORY PREFACE TO THE WORKS OF MR. JOHN BUNYAN.

A RECOMMENDATORY PREFACE TO THE WORKS OF MR. JOHN BUNYAN.

Christian Reader,

IF such thou art in reality, or if only a bare outward professor, thou needest not be informed, that the all-gracious *Emmanuel*, in the days of his flesh, after he had given us a glorious display of the divine sovereignty in dispensing the everlasting gospel, broke forth into these emphatic words, “I thank thee, Holy Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.” Agreeable to this, says the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, “God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise: and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are.” And why? That no flesh should glory in his presence.

Perhaps, next to the first publishers of the gospel of the blessed God, these sayings were never more strongly exemplified in any single individual (at least in this, or the last century) than in the conversion, ministry and writings of that eminent servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. *John Bunyan*, who was of the meanest occupation, and a notorious sabbath-breaker, drunkard, swearer, blasphemer, &c. by habitual practice: And yet, through rich, free, sovereign, distinguishing grace, he was chosen, called, and afterwards formed, by the all-powerful operations of the Holy Ghost, to be a scribe ready instructed to the kingdom of God. The two volumes of his works formerly published; with the great success that attended them in pulling down Satan's strong-holds in sinners hearts, when sent forth in small detached parties, are pregnant proofs of this. Some of them have gone through a great variety of editions. His *Pilgrims Progress* in particular, hath been translated into various languages, and to this day is read with the greatest pleasure, not only by the truly serious, of divers religious persuasions, but likewise by those, to whom pleasure is the end of reading. Surely it is an original, and we may say of it, to use the words of the great Doctor *Goodwin* in his preface to the epistle to the *Ephesians*, that it smells of the prison. It was written when the author was confined in *Bedford-goal*. And ministers never write or preach so well as when under the cross: the spirit of Christ and of glory then rests upon them.

It was this, no doubt, that made the *Puritans* of the last century such burning and shining lights. When cast out by the black *Bartholomew-act*, and driven from their respective charges to preach in barns and fields, in the highways and hedges, they in an especial manner wrote and preached as men having authority. Though dead, by their writings they yet speak: a peculiar unction attends them to this very hour; and for these thirty years

past I have remarked, that the more, true and vital religion hath revived either at home or abroad, the more the good old puritanical writings, or the authors of a like stamp who lived and died in communion of the church of *England*, have been called for. Among these may be justly reckoned those great luminaries, Bishop *Jewel*, *Usher*, *Andrews*, *Hall*, *Reynolds*, *Hopkins*, *Wilkins*, *Edwards*, who, notwithstanding a difference of judgment in respect to outward church-government, all agreed (as their printed works manifestly evince) in asserting and defending the grand essential truths for which the Puritans, though matters of an inferior nature were urged as a pretext, chiefly suffered, and were ejected. The impartial Doctor *Hodges* therefore (late provost of *Oriel College* in *Oxford*) in his elaborate treatise intitled *Elihu*, hath done himself honour in saying, that "the old Puritans and Presbyterians in general, till a division happened lately among them, deserve praise for their steady and firm adherence to the principal and fundamental doctrines of Christianity." Their works still praise them in the gates; and without pretending to a spirit of prophecy, we may venture to affirm, that they will live and flourish, when more modern performances, of a contrary cast, notwithstanding their gaudy and tinselled trappings, will languish and die in the esteem of those, whose understandings are opened to discern what comes nearest to the scripture standard.

This consideration, hath induced me to preface the present large and elegant edition of the Reverend Mr. *John Bunyan*'s works; which, with the unparalleled commentary of the good Mr. *Matthew Henry*, the pious and practical writings of the excellent Mr. *Flavel*, and the critical and judicious commentaries and tracts of the accurate Doctor *Owen*, I hear are enquired after, and bought up, more and more every day. The last forementioned worthy, though himself so great a scholar; and for some time chancellor of

one of our most famous universities, as I have been credibly informed, attended on the sermons, and countenanced the ministerial labours of our Reverend author; when, by reason of his being unskilled in the learned languages, and a few differences in lesser matters (as will always be the case in this mixed state of things) he was lightly esteemed by some of less enlarged sentiments. But this, I must own, more particularly endears Mr. *Bunyan* to my heart; he was of a catholic spirit, the want of *water adult baptism* with this man of God, was no bar to outward Christian communion. And I am persuaded, that if, like him, we were more deeply and experimentally baptized into the benign and gracious influences of the blessed Spirit, we should be less baptized into the waters of strife, about circumstantials and non-essentials. For being thereby rooted and grounded in the love of God, we should necessarily be constrained to think, and let think, bear with and forbear one another in love; and without saying "I am of *Paul*, *Apollos*, or *Cephas*," have but one grand, laudable, disinterested strife, namely, who should live, preach and exalt the ever-loving, altogether lovely Jesus most. That these volumes may be blest to beget, promote and increase such divine fruits of real and undefiled religion in the hearts, lips and lives of readers, of all ranks and denominations, is the earnest prayer of,

Christian reader,

Thy soul's well-wisher in our common Lord,

George Whitefield.

London, January 3, 1767.

A LETTER TO THE REVEREND DR. DURELL, VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

OCCASIONED BY A LATE EXPULSION OF SIX STUDENTS FROM EDMUND-HALL.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

Luke xii. 57.

Judge righteous judgment.

John vii. 24.

A LETTER TO THE REVEREND DR. DURELL.

London, April 12, 1768.

Reverend Sir,

YOU being a Master of *Israel*, and placed at the head of one of the most renowned seats of learning in the world, need not be informed, that the mission of the Holy Ghost is the one grand promise of the new, as the coming of Jesus Christ was the great promise of the Old Testament dispensation. “I will pray the Father, (says our blessed Lord to his almost disconsolate Disciples) and he shall give you another Comforter.” And again, “It is expedient for you, that I go away; for if I go not away, the

Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart (it being the purchase of his all-atoning blood, and designed to be the immediate fruit and proof of the reality of his resurrection, and subsequent ascension into heaven) I will send him unto you." And that they might know, that this Comforter was not to be confined to, or monopolized by them, but was to be of standing general use, he immediately gives them intimations of the design and nature of his office; and therefore adds, "and when he is come, he will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

A strange, and till then unheard of, promise, this! Such as a *Confucius*, *Zoroaster*, or any other fictitious uninspired prophet or lawgiver never dreamt of. A promise, which none but one, who was God over all, could dare to make; a promise, which none but one, who was God over all, could possibly fulfil.

Agreeable to this promise, he having ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and received this gift for men, the divine Paraclete, this Holy Ghost, "on the day of Pentecost, came down from heaven like a rushing mighty wind; and there appeared cloven tongues, like as of fire, and sat upon each of the Apostles." The effects were immediate and visible; poor, illiterate fishermen, instantaneously commenced scholars, preachers, orators. And well they might; for, being filled with the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit gave them utterance, they began to speak with other tongues the wonderful things of God.

But what was all this divine apparatus, this divine preaching, this divine oratory intended for? The following verses inform us: the hearers of those wonderful things, the spectators of this transcendently amazing scene, "were pricked to the heart, and were made to cry out, Men and brethren, what shall we do? And the same day were added to this infant church about

three thousand souls." Here were proofs, substantial, incontestable proofs, of the reality of the resurrection and ascension, and likewise of the efficacy of the all-powerful intercession of their once crucified, but now exalted Lord; not only substantial and incontestable, but at the same time entirely suitable to the nature of his mission, who in the days of his flesh, by his doctrines and miracles declared, that his only design in coming into our world, was to save sinners.

Upon this rock, namely, "an experimental manifestation and application of his divinity to the renewed heart," (which flesh and blood, human reason, vain philosophy, moral suasion, or any, or all barely external evidence whatsoever, cannot reveal) hath he built, doth he now build, and will continue to build his church; and therefore it is, that the gates, neither the power nor policy of hell, shall ever be able to prevail against it. By the influence of this almighty Agent, hath he promised to be with his ministers and people, even to the end of the world. And agreeable to this, hath taught us daily to pray, that his kingdom may come; which being to be begun, carried on and completed, by one continued emanation of divine influence communicated to believers in the use of all appointed means, can alone enable us to do God's will on earth, with any degree of that unanimity, chearfulness, universality and perseverance, as it is done by the holy Angels above. And as this is the daily united prayer of the whole catholic church, however distressed or dispersed, and however varying as to circumstantials and non-essentials, over the whole earth; it followeth, that every addition of any individual monument of divine mercy, out of every nation, language, or tongue, must be looked upon in part, as an answer to the daily prayer of every individual believer under heaven.

Hence, no doubt, it is, that as the angels are sent forth to be ministring spirits, to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, that there is said to be "joy in heaven over every sinner that repenteth." And as there is joy in heaven, so in proportion as men rise into the nature of angels, will there be joy also upon the same account amongst good men on earth. Accordingly, the lively oracles inform us, that "when the Apostles and Brethren which were in *Judea* heard that the *Gentiles* also had received the word of God, they glorified him, saying, then hath God also to the *Gentiles* granted repentance unto life."

And conformably to this, we are told, that "when *Barnabas* came to *Antioch*, and saw the grace of God, he was glad." And why? Because he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith. And as the same cause will always be productive of the same effect, persons endued with the same benign and godlike disposition with this good man, will always be glad when they see or hear of any scriptural marks, or practical evidences of true and undefiled religion, wrought in, or appearing upon any subject of divine grace whatsoever. And this joy must necessarily rise, in proportion as such subjects, either by their abilities, or circumstances, and situation in life, promise more important and extensive usefulness in the world and church of God.

No wonder therefore, reverend Sir, that it hath gladdened the hearts of many, and afforded matter of uncommon joy and thanksgiving to the Father of mercies and God of all consolation, to hear, that for some time past there hath been a more than common religious concern and zeal for promoting their own and others salvation, among some of the *sons of the Prophets*. What a pleasing prospect hath hereby been opened of a future blessing to the rising generation! A blessing, which we well hoped, would be not less

salutary and beneficial to the moral, than the new cruse of salt was to part of the natural world, which the Prophet *Elisha*, when complaint was made that the water was naught and the ground barren, cast into the spring of waters, with a "thus saith the Lord, there shall not be from thence, any more dearth or barren land: so the waters were healed unto this day."

But alas! how is this general joy damped, and the pleasing prospect almost totally eclipsed, by a late melancholy scene exhibited in that very place, from whence, as from a fountain, many of their preachers frequently and expresly pray, that pure streams may for ever flow, to water the city of the living God? You need not be told, reverend Sir, what place I mean: it was the famous university of *Oxford*. Nor need I mention the scene exhibited; it was a tribunal, a visitatorial tribunal, erected in *Edmund-Hall*; six pious students, who promised to be the salt of the earth, and lights of the world, entire friends to the doctrines and liturgy of our church, by a citation previously fixed upon the college door, were summoned to appear before this tribunal. They did appear; and, as some were pleased to term it, were tried, convicted, and to close the scene, in the chapel of the same hall, consecrated and set apart for nobler purposes, had the sentence of expulsion publicly read and pronounced against them.

So severe a sentence, in an age when almost every kind of proper discipline is held with so lax a rein, hath naturally excited a curiosity in all that have heard of it, to inquire, of what notable crime these delinquents may have been guilty, to deserve such uncommonly rigorous treatment. But how will their curiosity be turned into indignation, when they are told, that they were thus rigorously handled for doing no evil at all, and that "no fault could be found in them, save in the law of their God?"

It is true indeed, one article of impeachment was, “that some of them were of trades before they entered into the university.” But what evil or crime worthy of expulsion can there be in that? To be called from any, though the meanest mechanic employ, to the study of the liberal arts, where a natural genius hath been given, was never yet looked upon as a reproach to, or diminution of, any great and public character whatsoever. *Profane history* affords us a variety of examples of the greatest heroes, who have been fetched even from the plough, to command armies, and who performed the greatest exploits for their country’s good. And if we examine *sacred history*, we shall find, that even *David*, after he was anointed king, looked back with sweet complacence to the rock from whence he was hewn, and is not ashamed to leave it upon record, that “God took him away from the sheep-folds, as he was following the ewes great with young ones;” and as though he loved to repeat it, “he took him, (says he) that he might feed *Jacob* his people, and *Israel* his inheritance.”

But why speak I of *David*? When Jesus of *Nazareth*, *David*’s Lord, and *David*’s King, had for his reputed father a carpenter, and in all probability, as it was a common proverb among the *Jews*, that “he who did not teach his son a trade, taught him to be a thief;” he worked at the trade of a carpenter himself? For this, indeed, he was reproached and maligned; “Is not this, said they, the carpenter’s son? Nay, is not this the carpenter?” But who were those maligners? The greatest enemies to the power of godliness which the world ever saw, the Scribes and Pharisees; that “generation of vipers,” as *John the Baptist* calls them, who upon every occasion were spitting out their venom, and shooting forth their arrows, even bitter words, against that Son of man, even that Son of God, who, to display his sovereignty, and confound the wisdom of the worldly wise, chose poor fishermen to be his

Apostles; and whose chief of the Apostles, though bred up at the feet of *Gamaliel*, both before and after his call to the apostleship, laboured with his own hands, and worked at the trade of a tent-maker.

If from such exalted and more distant, we descend to more modern and inferior characters, we shall find, that very late, not to say our present times, furnish us with instances of some, even of our *dignitaries*, who have been called from trades that tended to help and feed the body, not only to higher employs of a spiritual nature, but even to preside over those that are entrusted with the cure of souls. And who knows but some of these young students, though originally mechanics, if they had been suffered to have pursued their studies, might have either climbed after them to some preferment in the church, or been advanced to some office in that university from which they are now expelled? One of the present reverend and worthy Proctors, we are told, was formerly a Lieutenant in the army; and as such a military employ was no impediment to his being a minister or Proctor, it may be presumed, that being formerly of trades could have been no just impediment to these young men becoming, in process of time, true gospel ministers and good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

Their being accustomed to prayer, whether with or without a form, I humbly apprehend, would by no means disqualify them for the private or public discharge of any part of their ministerial function. “In that day, that gospel-day, (these last days wherein we live) saith the great God, I will pour out a Spirit of grace and a Spirit of supplication upon the house of *David*, and upon the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*.” And the Apostle *Paul* speaks of it as the common privilege of all believers, that “the Holy Spirit helps their infirmities, and maketh intercession for them with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Forms of prayer, certainly, have their use; and take it altogether,

our *English* liturgy is, without doubt, one of the most excellent established forms of public prayer in the world: but then, as no form, in the very nature of the thing, can possibly suit every particular case, it is to be feared that many must never pray, at least for the particular things they most stand in need of, if they are so to be tied up to their forms, that they cannot vary from them, or use free prayer at all.

The great Bishop *Wilkins* therefore wisely wrote an excellent treatise on the benefit and importance of this kind of prayer: and could our university-youth be trained up to use proper extempore prayer, both before and after sermon; in the opinion of all good judges, it would be as commendable, as that strange custom of putting off our auditories with what is called the *bidding prayer*; in which there is not one petition for a blessing upon the following sermon, and scarce any thing mentioned, but what hath been prayed for over and over again, in the preceding common service of our church.

But supposing such liberty should be denied in public, as, blessed be God it is not, surely we may be allowed, at least it cannot be deemed sinful, to use free prayer in our secret, or private social exercises of devotion. If so, what sinners, what great sinners must they have been, who prayed, and that too out of necessity, in an extempore way, before any forms of prayer were or could be printed or heard of? The prayers we read of in scripture, the prayers which opened and shut heaven, the effectual, fervent, energetic prayers of those righteous and holy men of old, which availed so much with God, were all of an extempore nature. And I am apt to believe, if not only our students and ministers, but private Christians, were born from above, and taught of God, as those wrestlers with God were, they would not want

forms of prayer, though we have such a variety of them, any more than they did.

The sick, the lame, the blind, the lepers that came to our Lord for healing, wanted no book to teach them how to express their wants. Though some were only poor beggars, and others, as the self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees superciliously chose to term them, "*Gentile* dogs," yet, conscious of their wants, and having a heart-felt sense of their distress, "out of the abundance of their hearts their mouths spake;" and the compassionate *Emmanuel*, who came to heal our sicknesses and bear our infirmities, sent them away with a "Go in peace, thy faith hath made thee whole: be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

How unlike, yea how very unlike such a blessed dismission, is the treatment these young students have lately met with at *Edmund-Hall*? who, amongst other crimes of a like nature, were *expelled for using extempore prayer*. A crime not so much as mentioned in any of our law-books; a crime, for which, in this last century at least, no one hath ever been called to the bar of any public court of judicature; and a crime, for which, it is to be hoped, no student will ever hereafter be summoned to appear and hear himself expelled, at the bar of any of the reverend Doctors of divinity, or heads of houses in the university of Oxford. But should any be so infatuated as to determine, *Jehu*-like, to drive on thus furiously; as judgment hath unhappily begun, as it were, at the very house of God, it is to be hoped, that as some have been expelled for *extempore praying*, we shall hear of some few others of a contrary stamp, being expelled for *extempore swearing*, which by all impartial judges must undoubtedly be acknowledged to be the greater crime of the two.

Singing, composing, or reading hymns composed by others, and doing this in company, seems to be as little criminal, as praying extempore. When the last words of *David* are about to be recorded, he is not only stiled, "the son of *Jesse*, the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of *Jacob*," but the grand title of being "the sweet Psalmist of *Israel*," brings up the rear. And "to teach and admonish one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs," is as truly a scriptural command, as "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself."

When *Elisha* the Prophet was about to prophesy before two kings, he called for a minstrel, on which he played, to sooth his ruffled passions, and prepare his heart the better for the reception of the Holy Spirit. And were the sons of the Prophets more frequently to entertain themselves thus, I believe it would be as suitable to the ministerial character, and recommend them as much, perhaps more, to all serious Christians, than their tripping up their heels, skipping and dancing at the music of a ball-room, or playing even a first fiddle at a concert. And was the *voice of spiritual melody* more frequently heard by those who come occasionally to visit our colleges, it might be as much to the honour of the university, as the more common and too, too frequent *noise of box and dice*, at the unlawful games of hazard and back-gammon.

Popish countries, popish seminaries, think it no shame, no disgrace to be heard singing the high praises of their God in their convents, their houses, or even in their streets; and why protestants in general, and protestant students in particular, should be any more ashamed of, or restrained from the free exercise of such acts of devotion, either alone, or in private societies, no good reason can be given; unless it be proved to be good

reasoning to assert, that “Protestants ought to be less devout than Papists.” We must confess, that Papists, though they take this liberty of singing and chanting privately and publicly themselves, yet deny this liberty of conscience to our protestant assemblies; those attending divine worship at our ambassadors chapels not excepted. But for Protestants to disuse it themselves, and at the same time lay as it were a spiritual embargo upon their fellow Protestants, nay punish and expel them for so doing, is very unaccountable.

What spirit then must those be of, *Reverend Sir*, who have lately joined in pronouncing the sentence of expulsion against six religious students, not only for having been of trades, and praying extempore, but for *reading* and *singing hymns* also? His Royal Highness the late Duke of *Cumberland*, was of a very different disposition, for when abroad in *Germany*, in one of our late wars, (as I was informed by a person then on guard) hearing one evening, as he was passing by, a company of soldiers singing at some little distance in a cave, he asked the centinel what noise that was; and being answered, that some devout soldiers were singing hymns; instead of citing them to appear before their officers, ordering them to the whipping post, or commanding them to be drummed out of the regiment; acting like himself, he only pleasingly replied, “Are they so? Let them go on then, and be as merry as they can.” In this he acted wisely; for he knew, and found by repeated experience, as did other commanding officers, that singing, nay, and praying extempore too, in these private societies, did not hinder, but rather fitted and animated these devout soldiers to engage, and to fight their country’s battles in the field. And it may be presumed, that if these students had not been expelled for singing hymns, and praying extempore, they certainly would not have been less, but in all probability much better

prepared for handling the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, and fighting therewith, either from the press or the pulpit, the battles of the Lord of hosts.

To see or hear such divine exercises treated with reproach, and spoken of with contempt by common and open blasphemers, is bad; but that any who came on purpose to be trained up for the sacred work of the ministry, should be looked on as criminal, and expelled at university for being sometimes employed in them, is too sad a proof, not only that "our gold is become dim, and our fine gold changed, but that our very foundations are out of course." What then must the righteous do?

What indeed, but weep and lament! And weep and lament indeed they must, especially when they hear further, that *meeting in a religious society*, giving a word of exhortation, or *expounding* and commenting a little now and then upon some portion of scripture, are not the least of the accusations for which some of these young worthies had the sentence of expulsion pronounced against them.

It is recorded in the Old Testament, that in a degenerate age, "those that feared the Lord spake often one to another; that the Lord hearkened and heard, and that a book of remembrance was written before him for those that feared the Lord, and thought on his name: and they shall be mine in that day, saith the Lord, when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Thus it was in the Old Testament times. Nor are such meetings mentioned with less approbation in the new: for therein, in order that we may hold the profession of our faith without wavering, we are commanded to "consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works; not forsaking the assembling ourselves together, but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as we see the

day approaching." Nay, one immediate consequence of that grand effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, we are told, was this, that "they who gladly received the word, and were baptized, continued stedfast in the Apostles doctrine, in fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayer." This is a short, but withal a full and blessed account of the first truly apostolic primitive church; and we may venture to affirm, that as we are more or less partakers of a true apostolic primitive spirit, such kind of religious, fellowship-meetings, will in proportion increase or decrease among us. To talk therefore, or write, or preach against, or by private persuasion or open violence to oppose, or endeavour to suppress, and discountenance such kind of religious societies, is flying, as it were, in the very face of the scriptures of truth, and of the Holy Ghost himself.

In all charters granted by the crown, wherein authority is given to bodies corporate to enact laws, it is always with this limitation, "that no laws shall be enacted by such bodies corporate, contrary to the laws of the realm." And as the scriptures are our grand *Codex Legum* and *Magna Charta*, in respect to our religious principles and practices; what affront must we put upon our country in general, and the church of *England* in particular, even by barely imagining, that any law now exists which prohibits her members from frequenting such societies as have the divine authority and superscription, so apparently stamped upon them?

The private meetings that are in any wise deemed and denounced *illegal*, are such, and such only, as are seditious, and composed of seditious persons; who associate, indeed under a pretence of religion, but in reality to plot against the state. The sooner any that can be convicted of this, are made to forsake the assembling themselves together, the better; and though composed of a threefold, three hundred fold, nay a three thousand fold cord,

no matter if, like the cords wherewith the *Philistines* bound *Sampson*, they were immediately broken. But as nothing of this nature can with the least shadow of truth be objected against the meetings and societies frequented by these students, but quite the contrary urged in their favour; if scripture and the practice of the primitive Christians are to be our guides, they ought not only to be permitted, but be countenanced and encouraged by every true lover of our church and nation.

And supposing, that in any such religious society one of them should venture now and then to drop a word of exhortation, or even attempt in a small degree to open, expound, or enlarge upon some practical text of scripture, how can even this be looked upon as illegal, much less sinful, or worthy of expulsion? when, I could almost say, it is a necessary preparation for the future service of the sanctuary. To be "apt to teach," is one indispensable qualification required by scripture in a Bishop and Presbyter. But how can this aptness or an habit of teaching be acquired, without the exercise of previous acts? Or what business is there in the world, even from the lowest mechanic, to the highest profession amongst us, (except that of divinity) wherein pupils, clerks, nay common apprentices, are not by previous exercises trained up for a complete proficiency in their respective callings and occupations?

Our all-wise Master, we know, sent his Disciples on short excursions, before he gave them the more extensive commission to go into all the world: and were our students in general, under proper limitations, to be thus exercised and employed, while they are keeping terms at the university, or among their poor neighbours in the country, when they return home in time of vacation, they would not turn out such meer novices, or make such awkward figures, as too many raw creatures do, when they make their first

appearance in the pulpit. I remember, above thirty years ago, after some young students had been visiting the sick and imprisoned, and had been giving a word of exhortation in a private house, that upon meeting the ordinary and minister of the parish in their return to college, they frankly told him what they had been doing; upon which, he turned to them, and said, “God bless you; I wish we had more such young curates.” A milder, and therefore a more Christian *sentence* this, than that of a late expulsion for the very same supposed crimes and misdemeanors.

As for the reports of these young students being accused or condemned, for barely being acquainted with, or the occasional visitors of some of the most laborious, pains-taking, worthy parish-ministers in *England*, it is almost altogether incredible. And yet the standers-by, as well as the supposed culprits themselves, we are informed, aver this to be real matter of fact: attended with this melancholy aggravation, that they were hissed at, pushed about, and treated in a manner that the vilest criminal is not allowed to be treated, either at the *Old-Baily*, or any court of justice in the kingdom. We are likewise told, that a copy of their indictment was asked for, but denied them; and not only so, but that one, from whose polite behaviour in the worldly walk, better things might have been expected, was heard to say, as he came out of chapel, to their grand accuser, after sentence of expulsion was pronounced, that “he would have the thanks of the whole university for that day’s work.”

Pudet hæc opprobria nobis

Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.

What thanks, reverend Sir, he may meet with from the whole university, I know not; but one thing I know, that he will receive no thanks for that day’s work from the innumerable company of angels, the general assembly of the

first-born, which are written in heaven, or from God the judge of all, in that day when Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant shall come in his own glory, in the glory of the Father, and his holy angels, and gather in his elect from all the four corners of the world.

But, reverend Sir, may we not presume to hope, that this voluntary speaker for the whole university, whoever he be, it maketh no matter to me, was somewhat out, and mistaken in his calculation. For it seems, not above three or four doctors, if so many, were present, at least sat as judges at this extraordinary tribunal. The *worthy Provost of Queen*'s (and undoubtedly many other worthy heads of houses were and are like-minded) was for prescribing more lenient methods; and all are glad to hear, that these young students worthy principal, who must necessarily be supposed to be the best judge of their principles, practices, and qualifications, boldly stood up in their defence, asserted their innocence, confronted their accusers, and brought in books to vindicate both their principles and conduct. But how this worthy principal, as well as the pupils, were treated, is best known to those who had an active hand in all.

However, as the Holy Ghost hath left it upon record, to the honour of *Nicodemus*, that he stood up in defence of our Lord before the whole *Jewish* sanhedrim, and was not consenting to his death; so wherever this act of expulsion is recorded (and recorded it will be, even to latest posterity) it will be mentioned to the honour of Doctor Dixon, (and for acting thus he will have the thanks of all moderate, serious, sober-minded Christians in the three kingdoms) that he had no hand in, but did all he possibly could to prevent these young mens expulsion. An expulsion for articles of impeachment to which indeed the accused pleaded guilty; but for articles which (wherever hereafter they may be called to minister in holy things)

will be their best testimonial; and their expulsion for holding and confessing those articles, the strongest letters of recommendation.

How these young worthies are now to be disposed of, or how they will dispose of themselves, as it was not so much as hinted that they had the least connection with me, is not my business to inquire. But surely such an expulsion as this, cannot deter them from pursuing their preparations for their ministerial calling: friends they cannot want, because “he is faithful who hath promised, that whosoever forsaketh father or mother, houses or lands, for his sake or the gospel’s, he shall have an hundred fold in this life, with persecution, and in the world to come life everlasting.” But if any act so dastardly, as to make unscriptural concessions, or be terrified by unscriptural, and therefore mere *bruta fulmina*, if they were of trades before, the sooner they return again to their trades the better: for it is to be feared, such cowards would only make a trade of the ministry if they were admitted into the church, and the fewer of such kind of tradesmen our church is troubled with, the safer she will be.

But what a mercy is it, reverend Sir, that we live under a free government, under a King whose royal grandfather repeatedly declared (and he was as good as his word through a long and glorious reign) that there should be no persecution in his time; under a King who in his first most gracious and never to be forgotten speech from the throne, gave his people the strongest assurances “that it was his fixt purpose, as the best means to draw down the divine favour on his reign, to countenance and encourage the practice of true religion and virtue, and maintain the toleration inviolable.”

That both students and common people will be in danger of being tempted by such violent proceedings, to put themselves under the act of toleration, may easily be foreseen: and it may as easily be guessed, how such treatment

will necessarily discourage serious people from sending their sons to the university, at least to the university of *Oxford*; and at the same time will furnish them with a new argument for entering their youth in some of our dissenting academies, where they will be in no danger, it is presumed, of being expelled for singing hymns, speaking a little now and then in a religious society, or using extempore prayer.

Alas! alas! in what a disadvantageous point of light, must all concerned in such an extraordinary stretch of university-discipline stand, among all foreign universities whatsoever? In what point of light it will be viewed by our ecclesiastical superiors at home, a very little time will discover. Nay, it is to be feared, the discovery is made already: for by a letter dated so lately as *March 29*, it appears that a certain venerable society "on account of some circumstances that have lately happened (probably the circumstances of a late expulsion) are under a necessity of coming to a resolution, to accept of no recommendation for persons to go abroad as missionaries, but such as have had a literary education, and have been bred up with a design to dedicate themselves to the ministry." This resolution seems to be taken, in order the better to prevent any of these cast-outs, or any other laymen, however otherwise well qualified and recommended, from applying to the society for holy orders, that they may be employed and sent abroad as missionaries. But to what a sad dilemma will many serious persons be hereby reduced? They must not, by such resolutions it seems, be allowed to be lay-preachers, and yet if sent by their friends to the university to pursue their studies, in order that they may be regularly and episcopally ordained, if they sing hymns, pray extempore, or give a word of exhortation in a religious society, though entirely made up of the members of the established church, they must be *ipso facto* expelled for so doing. *O tempora! O mores!*

If matters proceed in this channel, of what stamp, Reverend Sir, may we not suppose, our future missionaries to the islands and continent will be? To my certain knowledge, all of them are not looked upon as very burning and shining lights already. But if what little light of true religion some may have, is to be thus damped by acts of expulsion before they leave the university, and even this little light, as far as lies in the power of man, is to be thus turned into total darkness, how great must that darkness be! Surely it must be worse than *Egyptian* darkness; a darkness that will be most deplorably felt by all true lovers of our common salvation both at home and abroad.

You need not be apprized, Reverend Sir, that a design for the establishment of episcopacy in our islands and plantations, hath been long upon the tapis; and that it hath been, in part at least, the subject of annual sermons for several years last past. No longer ago than in the year 1766, the present Bishop of *Landaff* insisted upon the necessity and expediency of it in the most explicit manner; nay, his Lordship carries the matter so far, as to assure us that this point, *the establishment of episcopacy*, being obtained, "the *American* church will go out of its infant state; be able to stand upon its own legs, and without foreign help support and spread itself: and then this society will have been brought to the happy issue intended." Whether these assertions of his Lordship, when weighed in a proper balance, will not in some degree be found wanting, is not for me to determine. But supposing the reasoning to be just, and his Lordship's assertions true, then I fear it will follow, that a society, which since its first institution hath been looked upon as a society for propagating the Gospel, hath been all the while rather a *society for propagating Episcopacy in foreign parts*: and if so, and if it ever should appear, that our Right Reverend Archbishops and Bishops do in the

least countenance and encourage the unscriptural proceedings at *Edmund-Hall*, how must it increase the prejudices of our colonists, both in the islands and on the continent, against the establishment of episcopacy! That persons of all ranks, from *Quebec* down to the two *Floridas*, are at this time prejudiced, and more than prejudiced against it, is very notorious; but how will the very thought of the introduction of *Lords Bishops* even make them shudder? if their Lordships should think proper to countenance the expulsion of such worthy and truly religious students, whilst those who have no religion at all perhaps, may not only meet with countenance, but approbation and applause.

Besides, if such proceedings should be continued, (which God forbid!) what little credit may we suppose will hereafter be given to future *university-testimonials*, that the bearers of them have behaved studiously, soberly, and piously; and how must we in time be put under a disagreeable necessity of having a new, or at least of altering some part of our present most excellent ordination-office? As it now stands, one of the questions proposed to every candidate for holy orders runs thus: “Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the holy ghost?” But if all students are to be expelled that sing hymns, pray extempore, attend upon, or expound a verse now and then, in a religious church of *England* society, should it not rather, Reverend Sir, be worded thus, namely, “Do ye trust that ye are NOT inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you the office and administration of the church?”

You will excuse this freedom, Reverend Sir.

Agitur de vitâ et sanguine turni.

Love to God, love to mankind in general, and love to that university, that *alma mater* where I had the honour of being educated, and, what is

infinitely more, where I had the happiness of receiving the witness of the Spirit of God in my heart, all together constrain me.

The news of these young mens expulsion hath made, and will make the ears of all who have heard, or shall hear of it, to tingle: and therefore if some do not speak, and use great plainness of speech too, the very stones would, as it were, cry out against us. In respect to myself, Reverend Sir, I hope, that in taking the freedom of troubling you with this, I do not justly incur the censure of acting as a busy-body in other mens matters. For, whatever other pretences may be made, such as disqualification in respect to learning, age, the being of trades, &c. &c. &c. (*Nugæ tricæque calendæ*) it is notorious and obvious to all intelligent persons, that the grand cause of these young mens expulsion was this, namely, that they were either real or reputed Methodists. An honour this indeed, unwittingly put on Methodists, whoever or whatever they be; since scarce any now-a days can pray extempore, sing hymns, go to church or meeting, and abound in other acts of devotion, but they must be immediately dubbed Methodists. I say, dubbed Methodists; for it is not a name given to them by themselves, but was imposed on them by some of their fellow students and contemporaries in the university.

I take it for granted, Reverend Sir, that you need not be apprized that I am one of these Methodists; and blessed be God I have had the honour of being one of them for about thirty-five years. If this is to be vile, may I be more vile! If this be my shame, upon the most mature and serious reflection I really glory in it. But then, lest any more innocent youths should hereafter suffer barely for the imputation of a nick-name, give me leave simply and honestly to inform you, Reverend Sir, and through you the whole university, what not barely a reputed, but a real Methodist is: “He is one of those

whom God hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour; wherefore they, who be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, are called according to God's purpose by his spirit working in due season: they, through grace, obey the calling; they be justified freely; and made the sons of God by adoption: they are conformed to the image of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works; and at length, by God's mercy, they attain everlasting felicity." This is the true portrait of a Methodist, drawn at full length, drawn to the very life, and that too not by an ignorant modern dauber, but by those good old skilful scriptural limners, *Cranmer*, *Latimer*, *Ridley*, in the xviith article of our church; an article that deserves to be written in letters of gold; and yet, for holding of this very article in its literal grammatical sense, agreeable to his subscription at the time of matriculation, one of these young students, as we have been informed, was expelled. If our information be wrong in this or any other respect, the nation may soon be set right by an authentic publication of the whole judicial proceedings.

If you should desire, Reverend Sir, a definition of *Methodism* itself, as well as of a Methodist, you may easily be gratified. It is no more nor less than "faith working by love. A holy method of living and dying, to the glory of God." It is an universal morality, founded upon the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost: or, to keep to the exact terms made use of in the last collect of our excellent liturgy, it is "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost;" which we cannot go to church or chapel on *Sundays*, holidays, or other common days, without praying, not that it may be driven from, but be with us all evermore.

If this be enthusiasm, the true Methodists confess themselves to be enthusiasts. But then, they humbly apprehend, that they cannot with any just propriety of speech be termed modern enthusiasts; for it is an enthusiasm which our blessed Lord earnestly insists upon, in that prayer which he put up when he was about to take his farewel of his disciples, and which is a pattern of that all-prevailing intercession which He is now making at the right hand of God, and demands that all his disciples may be possessed of; "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am; that they may be one with me, even as thou, O Father, and I are one: I in them, and they in me, that they all may be made perfect in one." An enthusiasm, with which *Peter* and *John* were fired, when *Annas* the high-priest, and *Caiaphas*, and *John*, and *Alexander*, and as many as were of the kindred of the high-priest, seeing their boldness, and perceiving that they were unlearned and ignorant men, marvelled, and took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. An enthusiasm, with which the proto-martyr *Stephen* was filled, when he cried, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." An enthusiasm, which *Ignatius* supposed by some to be one of those little children which the Lord Jesus took up in his arms, was absorbed in, when he stiles himself *a bearer of* God; and for witnessing of which good confession, in order to cure him of this enthusiasm, he was ordered by *Trajan*, the *Roman* emperor, to be thrown to the lions. An enthusiasm, for which *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, and *Latimer*, those glorious lights of the reformation, those excellent compilers of our liturgy, articles, and homilies, were burnt alive near *Baliol* college. And, to mention but one more, too too recent an example, an enthusiasm, for being only a little tinctured with

which, six students, on *March* 11th, in the year of our Lord 1768, were publicly expelled in *Edmund-Hall* chapel.

But think you, Reverend Sir, that this is the way to stop the progress of this enthusiasm? Or rather, may we not imagine that this very act of expulsion will be a means of furthering and promoting its progress far and near? To speak my own thoughts, I am fully persuaded, that if such unscriptural methods of stopping this enthusiasm be pursued further, it will be only like cutting off the *Lyrnean* head; instead of one, an hundred will spring up.

Indeed, if the picture of modern enthusiasts, drawn up and presented to the public by your Right Reverend Diocesan, be a just and proper one, supposing at the same time the Methodists are thereby referred to, no matter how soon they are banished out of the university, and out of the church also: for his Lordship is pleased to tell us "that they act in direct opposition to the perverse pharisees of old; these ascribed the works of the Holy Ghost to Beelzebub; and it is no uncommon thing for these modern enthusiasts, adds his Lordship, to ascribe the works of Beelzebub to the Holy Spirit." Surely his Lordship, by these modern enthusiasts, cannot mean those who apply for holy orders, and profess before men and angels, that "they are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon them the office and administration of the church;" when the searcher of hearts knows that they are moved only by secular views and worldly hopes of preferment. This is ascribing the works of Beelzebub to the Spirit of God with a witness: or, to use the words of a no less learned, though less censorious prelate; I mean the moderate Bishop *Burnet*, "it is a committing the horrid crime of *Ananias* and *Sapphira* over again; it is lying, not only unto man, but unto God."

This is a modern kind of enthusiasm, Reverend Sir, which the true old Methodists always did, and I trust always will abjure, detest and abhor. If worldly church preferments had been their aim, some of them at least might have had worldly ladders enough let down to them to climb up by: but having received a kind of apostolical commission at their ordination, when those who profess themselves *lineal successors* of the Apostles, said unto them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost now committed unto you by the imposition of our hands:" they would fain keep up and maintain something of the dignity of an apostolic character; and therefore, without ever so much as designing to enter into any political cabals, or civil or church factions whatsoever, without turning to the right hand or the left, or troubling the world with so much as one single sermon or pamphlet, on the bare externals of religion; they have endeavoured to have but one thing in view, namely, to determine to think of nothing, to know nothing, and to preach of nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified; to spend and be spent for the good of souls, and to glory in nothing save in the cross of Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto them and they unto the world.

It is true, by thinking and acting thus, the Methodists have been, and it is presumed always will be, charged and condemned by men of corrupt minds, as thinking and acting irregularly and disorderly: but as such a charge, in the very nature of the thing, supposes a deviation from some settled standing rule, they would humbly ask, wherein the irregularity and disorderliness of this way of acting and thinking doth specifically consist? Is it irregular and disorderly to be "instant in season and out of season?" Is it irregular and disorderly to do what every Bishop at the very time of our being ordained priests positively tells us pertaineth to their office, "to seek after the children of God, scattered abroad in this naughty world?" Is it

irregular and disorderly after we have established the truth of what we deliver in our sermons by scripture proofs, further to confirm and illustrate them by repeated and particular quotations, taken from the liturgy, articles, and homilies of our established church? Is it irregular and disorderly to fill her pews, to croud her communion tables, and to recommend a frequent and constant devout attendance upon her public offices and services? Or, supposing they should, merely by caprice or prejudice, be denied the privilege of preaching within the church, can it be justly termed irregular or disorderly, at least can it possibly be looked upon as criminal, to preach the same truths, to make use of the same kind of illustrations, to repeat the self-same recommendations without the church walls, in the fields, or any other place whatsoever?

The late candid Bishop of *Lincoln*, I am positive, did not think such a way of acting altogether so very criminal: for in a charge given to his clergy some years before his translation to the see of *Salisbury*, he told them to this effect, "that they were not to look upon themselves as ministers of a *Plato*, a *Pythagoras*, or any other heathen philosopher, consequently they were not to entertain their auditories with mere moral harangues; but that they were to consider themselves as ministers of Jesus Christ; and therefore if they would not preach the gospel in the church, they could not be justly angry if the poor people went out to hear it in a field." A charge this, truly worthy of a sober-minded, moderate, wise Bishop of the Church of *England*. For even in acting thus seemingly irregular and disorderly, these modern enthusiasts only copy after the greatest and brightest examples the world ever saw, and whose examples it is more than criminal not to follow or copy after. Our blessed Lord, when denied the use of the synagogues, on seeing the multitude, went up and chose a mountain for his pulpit, and the heavens for

his sounding board. At other times he sat by the sea-side, nay, went into a ship and preached, whilst the whole multitude stood on the shore. When *Peter* and *John*, that this kind of enthusiasm might spread no further among the people, were straitly threatened and commanded that they should thenceforth speak at all to no man in Christ's name, they calmly yet boldly replied unto their threatners and commanders, "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." A certain woman, named *Lydia*, a seller of purple, had her heart opened when the great apostle of the *Gentiles* was preaching and praying by a river-side; and *Dionysius* the *Areopagite*, a woman named *Damaris*, and others, believed, and clave unto the same Apostle, from the time they heard him preach in the midst of *Areopagus*, or *Mars-hill*. And we may suppose he was not less successful when he was obliged by the angry *Jews* to preach in the school of one *Tyrannus*.

I believe you will agree, Reverend Sir, that the venerable *Fox* and *Bradford* did not appear less venerable for preaching at *Pauls-cross*; neither did I ever hear that Bishop *Latimer* was looked upon as degrading his episcopal character, when he used to preach in *Cotton-Garden Westminster*, and King *Edward* the sixth, that *Josiah* of his age, with some of his court, looked out at the palace window to hear him. And I hereby appeal to the whole university, whether the Reverend Doctors of divinity, heads of houses, graduates or under-graduates, ever looked upon it as criminal, or beneath the dignity of their place and station, to sit out in the open air on St. *John* Baptist's day, to hear a master of arts preach from the stone pulpit in *Maudling-College* yard; though, for fear it may be they should give further

sanction to field-preaching, they have lately thought proper to adjourn into the chapel?

You know, Reverend Sir, who it was, that when those who were bidden in a regular way refused to come to the wedding-supper, without asking any one's leave for so doing, sent forth some irregulars into the lanes and streets of the city, into the highways and hedges, with that glorious encouraging commission, not by fines and imprisonments, not by threats and expulsions, not by killing the body for the good of the soul, but by filling their mouths with gospel arguments, backed with the all-powerful energy of the Holy Ghost, to compel poor, wandering, weary, heavy laden sinners to come in. Armed with this panoply divine, and, as they think, authorised by the same Lord, some few of us continue to this day, amongst small and great, high and low, rich and poor, in church or chapel, in commons, streets, fields, whensoever or wheresoever divine providence opens a door, "to testify repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;" and this not from contempt of, or in opposition to the godly admonitions of our ecclesiastical superiors, but because "the love of Christ constraineth us;" and we think that a wo, a dreadful wo, awaits us if we preach not the gospel. Not that we are enemies to a decent or even episcopal consecration, or setting apart churches and chapels for divine and holy worship: but we are more indifferent about the reputed outward sanctity of places, because our Lord, with great solemnity, said unto the woman of *Samaria*, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at *Jerusalem*, worship the Father: but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth." Hence we infer, that every place is then, and only then properly called holy, when like the ground around the burning bush, it is made holy by the divine

presence of Him who spake to *Moses* out of the bush; or like mount *Tabor*, which by the Apostle *Peter* is called, by way of emphasis, the holy mount, because himself and *James* and *John*, not only had upon that mount a visible outward manifestation, but also a blessed inward heart-felt sense of the Redeemer's excellent glory. It was undoubtedly this which made *Peter* to break out into that exclamation: "Master, it is good for us to be here." And it was this that warmed, and not only warmed, but constrained the enraptured Patriarch *Jacob*, when he had only the ground for his bed, the stones for his pillow, and the open firmament for his curtains and furniture, to break forth into that extatic language, "How dreadful is this place! this is no other than the house of God, this is the gate of heaven."

If then, Reverend Sir, for this and such like things we are accounted irregular and disorderly, we are truly sorry for it: sorry, but not upon our own accounts, having the testimony of a good conscience that we act with a single eye, and in direct conformity to the authority of the word of God: but we are sorry, barely on account of our impeachers and condemners, especially for those, who being set apart for the ministerial office, and loaded with ecclesiastical preferments, preach very seldom, or not at all; or, if they do preach now and then, preach only as though they were barely reading wall-lectures, and seldom or ever so much as mention or quote the homilies of our church, though they have subscribed to an article which says, that "they contain godly and wholesome doctrine, and which judges them to be read in churches by the ministers diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the people." It is to be feared, that it is owing to such irregularity and disorder as this, that when our people hear of our articles or homilies quoted by some few in the pulpit, that they are ready to cry out, "What new doctrine is this? Thou bringest certain strange things to

our ears:" At least if it is not so at home, I am sure it is abroad. Hence it was that about three years ago, after I had been preaching to a very large auditory in one of the most polite places on the continent of *America*, and in preaching, as is my usual custom, had strongly been recommending the book of homilies, numbers were stirred up to go to the stores to purchase them: but upon enquiring after the book of homilies, the storekeeper, surprized at the novelty of the word *homilies*, begged leave to know what muslins they meant, and whether they were not *hummims*.

What a pity therefore is it, Reverend Sir, that the book of homilies, which ought to be in every hand, and as common as our common prayer books, should never yet have found a place in the large catalogue of books given away by the truly laudable society for promoting Christian knowledge, though founded soon after the glorious revolution. If this be not remedied some way or another, we shall very soon become disorderly indeed: our pulpits will still continue to contradict our reading-desks, and we shall never have the honour of being stiled regular and orderly, till, regardless of subscriptions, oaths, rubrics, and ordination-offices themselves, our practices give the lie to our professions, and we seek the fleece not the flock, and "preach ourselves, and not Christ Jesus the Lord."

Dead formalists, and proud self-righteous bigots, may loudly exclaim and cry out, "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we!" They may not only cry out, but also cast out; and thinking they thereby do God service, though most notoriously deficient in their own moral conduct, may plead conscience, and say, "Let the Lord be glorified." But to such as these our Lord once said, "Ye are they that justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts." Like the chief priests, and the scribes and pharisees of old, they may plead their law; for the breach of

which, these irregulars, as they imagine, ought to be condemned and suffer; nay, a time may come when they may be permitted to enforce their clamorous accusations, by urging, as their godly predecessors once did against our Master, that "we found these fellows perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute unto *Cæsar*: but *Pilate* knew that for envy they delivered Him." And though they could plead their loyalty, and say, "If thou let this man go, thou art not *Cæsar*'s friend, we have no king but *Cæsar*;" yet both our Lord and his Apostles rendered themselves, and strictly taught all that heard them, to "render unto *Cæsar* the things that are *Cæsar*'s, and unto God the things that are God's." Fain would the Methodists copy after such gloriously divine examples: and blessed be God, after a trial of near forty years, upon the most severe scrutiny, their loyalty cannot be justly so much as once called in question: for, as they fear God, so they dearly love and honour their King, their rightful sovereign King *George*; and have been, and continue to be, steady, invariable friends to the protestant succession in the illustrious house of *Hanover*. And if so, supposing these Methodists should be convicted of acting somewhat irregular, since it is only the irregularity of preaching and recommending unfeigned love to God, and, for his great name sake, undissembled, disinterested loyalty to their King; is it not the interest as well as duty of civil government, if not to encourage, yet not to oppose them? For it is certainly a most incontestable truth, that every additional proselyte to true Methodism, is an additional loyal subject to King *George the Third*, whom, with his royal most amiable consort, our gracious Queen *Charlotte*, the Methodists with one united voice earnestly pray, God long to continue to be a nursing father and nursing mother to our church, and people of every denomination whatsoever.

Every body is loudly complaining of the badness of our times, and the degeneracy of our morals. Sinners now proclaim their sin like *Sodom*, and the nation hath suffered more than a *second deluge* by an innundation of every sin, and every kind of corruption that was ever committed or practised under heaven: “The whole head is sick, the whole heart faint; from the crown of the head to the sole of our feet, we are full of wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores.” Shall there no man be found then to stand in the gap? None dare to attempt at least to stem the impetuous torrent? None venture to go out with their lives in their hand, and cry to a profane, careless, busy world, “Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.” Can any considerate, much more can any real good man be so cruel, as even to wish that the gospel should be confined either to church or meeting, when there are so many thousands and tens of thousands, who as to spiritual things, know not their right hand from their left, and who never go either to church or meeting at all? If some are called to be settled ministers (and may the great Head of the church fill all our parish-churches and meeting-houses with true evangelical pastors!) may not others be called out to be itinerants? Have there not been presbyters at large, even from the earliest times of Christianity? And if some of a more inferior rank and order should be qualified, and thrust forth by the great Lord of the harvest, when the harvest is so great, and the labourers so few, who shall dare to say to Him, “What dost thou?” Shall our eye be evil because he is good? If *Isaiah* was a courtier, was not the Prophet *Amos* a herdsman? In the days of *Moses*, when the *Israelites* were under a more immediate divine theocracy, news was brought him, and that too even by a *Joshua*, that *Eldad* and *Medad* were prophesying in the camp, without his licence or his ordination; what doth this meek man of God say? “Enviest thou for my sake? Would to God

all the Lord's people were prophets." And in the days of our Lord himself, his beloved disciple *John*, before his heart was more enlarged by divine love, said unto him; "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not with us, and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us." But what said Jesus, that good Shepherd and Bishop of souls? "Forbid him not."

Such instances, such striking instances as these, methinks, should make good men careful not to give way to a narrow, selfish, bigotted spirit; and caution them against joining with the world in smiting their fellow-servants, by crying down or speaking slightingly and reproachfully of a method of preaching and acting, which, maugre all opposition, for these thirty years last past hath been blessed and owned of God to the converting of thousands; not to a bare name, sect, or party, or merely to head or notional knowledge; but "from darkness unto light, from the power of Satan unto God;" from holding the mere form, to the true abiding possession and practice of true scriptural godliness, in heart, lip, and life. But if good or bad men now dislike, and therefore oppose such an irregular way of acting, they may be told to their comfort, that their uneasiness on this account, in all probability, will not be of long continuance; for few will choose to bid, or offer themselves candidates for such *airy pluralities*: to go thus without the camp, bearing all manner of reproach; to become in this manner; "Spectacles to God, to angels, and to men;" to sacrifice not only our natural, but spiritual affections and connections, and to part from those who are as dear to them as their own souls, in order to pass the *Atlantic*, and bear the colds and heats of foreign climes; these are such uninviting things to corrupt nature, that if we will have but a little patience till a few old weary heads are laid in the silent grave, these uncommon gospel-meteors, these

field-phenomenas, that seldom appear in the latitude of *England*, scarce above once in a century, without the help of any coercive means, will of themselves soon disappear. They begin to be pretty well in disrepute already: yet a little while, and in all human probability they will quite vanish away. But though I am neither a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, I am greatly mistaken, if in the Redeemer's own good time and way, some spiritual phœnix will not hereafter arise, some blessed gospel-instrument be raised, that shall make the devil and his three-fold army, "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," to fly before the sound of the gospel trumpet.

I have dwelt the longer upon this particular, Reverend Sir, because the present learned Bishop of *Gloucester*, in his late volume, intitled, "The Doctrine of Grace," is pleased to observe more than once, that he finds fault not so much with the matter, as the manner of the Methodists preaching. But if by the *manner*, his Lordship would have us to understand, not their manner of preaching in the field, but the manner of their delivery, whether in the church or field, I would humbly ask his Lordship, if he ever heard any of them preach? If not, doth our law condemn any man, or any set of men, unheard? And I would humbly enquire further of his Lordship, and all others whom it may concern, how they would have them or any others to preach?

I remember the great Doctor *Delany*, when I had the honour of being with him, many years ago, at the Right Reverend Dr. *Boulter*'s, then Lord Primate of *Ireland*, among other hints proper for a young preacher, gave me to understand, that whenever he went up into a pulpit, he desired to look upon it as the last time he should ever preach, or the last time that the people should ever hear him. O that all preachers, whether within or

without doors, however dignified or distinguished, went always up into their respective pulpits thus impressed! They would then preach, as *Apelles* once said he painted, *for Eternity*. They would then act the part of true gospel Christian orators, and not only calmly and coolly inform the understanding, but by persuasive pathetic address, endeavour to move the affections, and warm the heart. To act otherwise, bespeaks a sad ignorance of human nature, and such an inexcuseable indolence and indifference in the preacher, as must constrain the hearers, whether they will or not, to suspect, that the preacher, let him be who he will, only deals in the false commerce of unfelt truths.

Were our lawyers, our counsellors, or our players to act thus, both the bar and the stage would soon be deserted; and therefore the answer of Mr. *Betterton*, to a worthy prelate, when he asked him, "How it came to pass that the clergy, who spoke of things real, affected the people so little, and the players, who spoke of things barely imaginary, affected them so much," is worthy of lasting regard. "My Lord, says Mr. *Betterton*, I can assign but one reason, which is, we players speak of things imaginary as though they were real, and too many of the clergy speak of things real as though they were imaginary." Thus it was in his, and all know it is too much the case in our time: hence it is, that even on our most important occasions, the worthy gentlemen concerned in our public charities, generally find themselves more obliged to the musicians than the preachers, for the largeness of their collections: and hence, no doubt it is, that upon our most solemn anniversaries, after long previous notice hath been given, when some even of our Lords Spiritual do preach, perhaps not two Lords temporal come to hear them.

Sorry am I, Reverend Sir, to find so true, what a celebrated orator, in one of his lectures delivered, (if I am not mistaken, in the University of *Oxford*) takes the liberty of saying, "That it is to be feared this is too much the state of the pulpit-elocution in general, in the Church of *England*: on which account, there never was perhaps a religious sect upon earth, whose hearts were so little engaged in the act of public worship, as the members of that church. To be pleased, we must feel, and we are pleased with feeling. The Presbyterians are moved; the Methodists are moved; they go to their meetings and tabernacles with delight; the very Quakers are moved; fantastical and extravagant as the language of their emotions is, yet still they are moved by it, and they love their form of worship for that reason: whilst much the greater part of the members of the Church of *England*, are either banished from it through disgust, or reluctantly attend the service as a disagreeable duty." Thus far Mr. *Sheridan*.

But why go I to the bar or stage to fetch vouchers in defence of earnestness in heart and action, when speaking for the most High God, and offering salvation to precious and immortal souls, for whom the ever-adorable Mediator shed his precious blood. You know, Reverend Sir, the character given of *Bucolspherus*, one of the Reformers, *Vividus vultus, vividi oculi, vividæ manus, denique omnia vivida*. You have also heard of a Prophet who was commanded by the Lord God himself, to smite with his hand, and stamp with his foot; and gospel-ministers in general are commanded to "cry aloud, and spare not, and to lift up their voices like trumpets." But why refer I even to Reformers or Prophets? Rather let me mention the God and Saviour of all, even our Lord Jesus Christ; on whose manner of preaching, the multitudes that followed him, when he came down from the mount, made this just observation, that "He spake as one having

authority, and not as the scribes." And after his resurrection, when beginning at *Moses* and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself, the two disciples at *Emmaus* said one to another, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" And I believe we may venture to affirm, that if preachers in general spake and opened the scriptures more under the influence and energy of his blessed Spirit, whether in consecrated or unconsecrated ground, within or without doors, they would find their hearers hearts in a degree would burn within them too.

But I have done.—You will be so good, Reverend Sir, as to pardon not only the freedom but prolixity of this. I have already mentioned my motives for writing; and therefore shall now close with the advice given upon a similar occasion to an ecclesiastical council by *Gamaliel*, a doctor of law, and had in reputation among all the people: "And now I say unto you, refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it: lest haply ye be found to fight against God." To this God, and the word of his grace, I most humbly recommend you and the whole University; and earnestly praying, that all at all times may have a right judgment given them in all things, I beg leave to subscribe myself, Reverend Sir,

Your willing servant for Christ's sake,

George Whitefield.

OBSERVATIONS ON SELECT PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE. TURNED INTO CATECHETICAL QUESTIONS.

Begun, *March 12, 1738* .

OBSERVATIONS ON SELECT PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

LUKE, Chapter XXIII.

Ver. 8. Q. *WHY would not Jesus Christ shew Herod a miracle?*

A. Because in all probability, it was only to satisfy his curiosity that he desired to see one.

Q. *What may we learn from Herod's never having seen Christ before?*

A. That Christ was no friend to courts; that pomp and greatness keep thousands from Jesus Christ; and that we ought therefore rather to thank God for our being in a lower estate.

12.Q. *What may we learn from the friendship made between Pilate and Herod, by the death of Christ?*

A. That Jew and Gentile, by Christ's death, were to be united together in one body: *Herod* being a Jew, and *Pontius Pilate* a Gentile.

18.Q. *When do we as these Jews did?*

A. When we prefer our sins, (which are robbers, because they rob us of God's favour) to our Saviour's service.

26.Q. *What may we learn from Simon the Cyrenian's bearing the cross?*

A. That they who would follow Christ, must follow him by the way of the cross.

31.Q. *What is the meaning of this verse?*

A. A good man in scripture is compared to a green fruitful tree, (See *Psalm* 1st.) and wicked men to chaff, and are represented also by a barren fig-tree: the meaning of the verse therefore seems to be this: If they do this to me, who am a good man, how will God deal with that wicked people the Jews?

32.Q. *Why was Christ crucified with the thieves?*

A. To fulfill this saying, "And he was numbered with the transgressors." *Isaiah* liii. 12.

Q. *Why between them?*

A. As though he was the unworthiest and basest of the three.

34.Q. *What may we learn from hence?*

A. To pray for our most bitter enemies.

38.Q. *Why was the superscription written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin?*

A. To shew that Jesus Christ was to be the Saviour of all nations, tribes, and languages.

39.Q. *What may we learn from the behaviour of the impenitent thief?*

A. That for the generality, those who live all their lives in sin, die hardened.

40.Q. *What may we learn from the behaviour of the penitent thief, and Christ's behaviour towards him?*

A. That there is mercy for the worst of sinners, through Christ the Saviour.

Q. *May wicked men draw any reasons from hence, to defer their repentance till a death-bed?*

A. No, by no means.

Q. *Why?*

A. Because probably this thief had never heard of Christ before. 2dly, He might not have been so notorious a sinner as is imagined, though drawn in by surprize or temptation to commit the crime for which he suffered. 3dly, God converted him, to honour his Son's death, that he might in the very agonies thereof triumph over the devil. 4thly, Because he gave uncommon instances of his faith: he calls Christ, "Lord," when his own disciples had forsook him, when the High-priest, scribes, and rulers were deriding him, and his own divinity under an eclipse: none of which circumstances are applicable to a wilfully wicked man, that defers repentance till he comes to die.

44.Q. *What is the sixth hour?*

A. Twelve at noon.

Q. *What the 9th?*

A. Three in the afternoon.

45.Q. *What was the vail of the temple?*

A. A curtain that parted the two places, where the Jews and Gentiles worshipped.

Q. *Why was it rent in twain?*

A. Because by the death of Christ, the partition wall between Jew and Gentile was to be broken down.

46.Q. *Why did Christ cry with a loud voice?*

A. To shew that he died full of vigour.

Q. *What may we learn from his calling God, Father?*

A. That we are to acknowledge God to be our father, though under the severest dispensations of his providence.

51.Q. *What learn you from hence?*

A. That we must not follow a multitude to do evil.

53.Q. *Why was it remarked, that Christ's grave was hewn out of a rock?*

A. Because then it could not be said, that his disciples digged under, and stole it away.

Q. *Why that he was laid in a grave, where never man before was laid?*

A. Because then if any one's body did rise, it must be that of the Lord Jesus.

56.Q. *What may we learn from the last part of this verse?*

A. That even the most civil offices due to our nearest friends, ought not to hinder us, if possible, from keeping the sabbath-day holy.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1.Q. *What may we learn from this first verse?*

A. That we should rise early in the morning on the Lord's-day, and offer him the spices and odours of praise and thanksgiving.

4.Q. *What is meant by the two men?*

A. Two angels in the shape of men.

7.Q. *Why must the Son of Man be crucified?*

A. Because we had deserved to be accursed by God; and crucifixion being an accursed death, (for it is written, "cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree") he became a curse for us.

11.Q. *What may we learn from the disciples not believing the women's report?*

A. That we ought more firmly to believe the truth of our blessed Lord's resurrection, since his own disciples were the last who gave credit to it.

14.Q. *What may we learn from hence?*

A. That Christians ought to talk of good things as they walk together.

17.Q. *What from hence?*

A. That Jesus Christ takes notice of the conversation, and more especially of the griefs of his people.

26.Q. *Why must Christ rise again and enter into glory?*

A. To assure us God was satisfied for our sins; that he was no impostor or cheat; and to assure us of the resurrection of our bodies after death.

Q. *Why must he rise the third day?*

A. Because if he had continued longer, the body must have seen corruption; and then the prophecy would not have been fulfilled, which says, that "God's Holy One was not to see corruption." Nor would he have fulfilled the type of *Jonah*.

28.Q. *What may we learn from Christ's first refusing to go in?*

A. That in small matters, though we may at first refuse a thing, yet we may afterwards, without forfeiting our words, comply therewith; it being supposed, that we promised on the supposition we had no better reason to the contrary.

29.Q. *What may we learn from hence?*

A. That we should, when evening comes on, constrain Christ by our prayers, to tarry with and watch over us all night.

30.Q. *What may we learn from hence?*

A. That we should never presume to eat, without first asking a blessing.

31.Q. *What may we learn from Christ's vanishing so soon out of their sight?*

A. That the spiritual visits of Jesus Christ in this life, are but of a short continuance; which should set us upon preparing for that place, where we

shall see and be with Him to all eternity, without interruption.

36.Q. *What may we learn from Christ's saying to his disciples, "Peace be to you," though they had all so lately forsook him?*

A. That we ought never to upbraid those who have offended us, when they give marks of repentance; and also, this should encourage sinners to hope for blessings from Jesus Christ, though they have sinned against him.

45.Q. *What may we learn from hence?*

A. That it is impossible to understand the scriptures, without the illumination of the Spirit of Jesus Christ: "For the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit."

Q. *Ought we therefore to pray before we read the scriptures?*

A. Yes, by all means.

49.Q. *What is meant by the promise of the Father?*

A. The Holy Ghost, which was to come upon the Apostles at the feast of Pentecost.

53.Q. *What is meant by their being continually in the temple?*

A. That they were there at all hours of public prayer.

Q. *What should we learn from thence?*

A. That we ought to go and do likewise.

JOHN, Chapter I.

Q. *Who was the author of this gospel?*

A. *John*, the disciple whom Jesus loved.

Q. *Why did he write it?*

A. To confound the heresy of *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*, who denied the divinity of our blessed Lord: and therefore, through the whole gospel we find he takes all opportunities of proving, that Jesus Christ was very God of very God; another thing he had in view when he wrote it, was to supply

what was wanting in the other Evangelists; therefore he chiefly relates to us those particulars which the other Evangelists had omitted.

Q. *What may we learn from God's permitting some of the Evangelists to leave out what the others put in, and again some inserting what others have left out?*

A. That God would hereby oblige us to read all; and also to exercise our understanding, that by comparing spiritual things with spiritual, we might find out the truth.

1.Q. *Who is meant by the Word?*

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. *Is there any proof in this verse, that Jesus Christ is God?*

A. Yes: "And the Word was God."

Q. *Why was it necessary that Jesus our Saviour should be God?*

A. Because it was impossible for any creature to satisfy for our sins.

3.Q. *Is here any proof of the Divinity of Christ?*

A. Yes: because the work of creation is ascribed to him.

4.Q. *Is there any proof of it in this verse?*

A. Yes: "In him was life." For whosoever has life in or of himself, must be God.

5.Q. *Who is meant by the word "light."*

A. Jesus Christ, who came to enlighten us, by revealing God's will to us.

Q. *What mean you by the word "darkness?"*

A. The dark minds of men.

11.Q. *What is meant by the word "own?"*

A. The Jews, who were God's peculiar people.

13.Q. *Can you paraphrase this verse?*

A. Which were born not of blood, *i. e.* not by any natural generation; nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, *i. e.* not by human adoption, but of God, or by the free grace and power of God only.

14.Q. *What does the Evangelist allude to here?*

A. The tabernacle, with the shekinah, or glorious appearance that used to be in it; which were types of Jesus Christ: the former representing his humanity, the latter his divinity residing or abiding in it. It is therefore said in the margin of some bibles, "Tabernacled amongst us," plainly alluding to the Jewish tabernacle in the wilderness.

16.Q. *What mean you by these words, "Grace for grace?"*

A. That Christ came to give us grace, that we might get more of it: or rather it should be rendered, "Grace *upon* grace." For Jesus Christ came to purchase for us not only a sufficiency, but an abundance of grace.

41.Q. *What may we learn from hence?*

A. That when we are converted ourselves, we should endeavour to bring others, especially our own relations, to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Q. *What may we learn from these words, "We have found the Messiah?"*

A. That young converts are very apt to think they have apprehended Christ, whereas they are rather apprehended by him.

49.Q. *What may we learn from Nathaniel's behaviour, and Christ's answer?*

A. That a child-like simplicity, is the best preparative for the reception of divine truth.

51.Q. *When was this fulfilled?*

A. Acts i. when his disciples saw him carried up into heaven; and it will be more fully accomplished, when Jesus Christ shall come to judgment in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels, to be admired by his saints.

CHAPTER II.

2.Q. *What may we learn from Christ's being at the marriage in Cana?*

A. That it is an honourable state, otherwise he would not have been present at it.

Q. *What may we learn from these people's calling Christ to the marriage?*

A. That those who are about to enter on a marriage state, ought above all things, by prayer to invite Jesus Christ, it being for want of that we have so few happy matches.

3.Q. *What may we learn from the blessed Virgin's acquainting Christ that they wanted wine?*

A. That it is good, when we go to poor people's houses, to see what they want; and if we cannot relieve them ourselves, to apply to others, especially to Jesus Christ, to grant them what they want.

4.Q. *What may we learn from Christ's answer to his mother?*

A. That in some measure she was to be blamed, for making so free with our Saviour; that our relations, even our parents, ought not to be regarded, when they would hinder us in religion; and that it can never be presumed, that the Virgin has such power over our Lord, as the Church of *Rome* supposes, now he is in heaven, since he said to her upon this occasion, "Woman, what have I to do with thee," when he was on earth.

Q. *May it not be supposed that Christ had shewn some miracle before he entered on his public ministry?*

A. There is great reason to think he had, or otherwise it is hardly to be imagined, she should so readily apply to him to work a miracle on this occasion, or bid the servants to take such notice of his orders.

Q. *What is meant by Christ's saying, "Mine hour is not yet come?"*

A. Mine hour for working this miracle is not yet come; the wine being not quite, though very near out, as the original word signifies: our extremity is Christ's opportunity.

5.Q. *What may we learn from this verse?*

A. That what the Virgin said to these servants, we should think said to ourselves; and whatsoever Christ saith unto us, we must do.

6.Q. *May there any thing be gathered from this verse, to confirm the truth of our Saviour's miracle?*

A. Yes: the watering-pots being made use of by the Jews, to purify or wash themselves, as they came in and out, as the Papists now make use of their ridiculous holy-water; it was plain nothing but water used to be put in them, and being made of stone, supposing wine had formerly been put in them, no tincture of it could remain to colour the water that Jesus Christ commanded to be put in; which could not be said, had they been made of wood.

7.Q. *Who were they that Jesus bid to fill the water pots?*

A. The servants of the house.

Q. *What may we learn from that?*

A. It confirms the miracle; since he did not employ his own disciples, but the servants of the house, who were entire strangers, therefore could not be supposed to join in a cheat.

Q. *What may we learn from the servants filling the vessels up to the brim?*

A. That therefore no wine could possibly be put in to colour the water, or mix with it.

8.Q. *What is meant by the governor of the feast?*

A. It alludes to a custom among the Jews, who at their entertainments used to chuse one particular person in the company, to preside over the rest for

that time, in order to prevent disorder and excess.

9.Q. *Why is it remarked, that the Governor knew not from whence it was?*

A. Because then he could have no hand in it, therefore his testimony could be the more relied on.

Q. *What spiritual meaning is under this miracle?*

A. The wine represents the Spirit, which Jesus Christ pours into the hearts of true believers; but though the comforts of the Holy Ghost, with which they are filled, are exceeding rich here, yet those in heaven will so far surpass them, that when we come there, we shall have reason to say with the Governor of the feast, “Jesus Christ has kept his good wine until now.”

13.Q. *Why is it so often remarked, that Jesus went up to Jerusalem to the passover?*

A. To teach us how careful he was to submit to every ordinance of God, and to set us an example to follow his steps. Never, therefore, if possible, be absent from the gospel passover, the sacrament or memorial of his own blessed body and blood.

14.Q. *How came there tradesmen to be in the temple?*

A. There was a command from God, that all the males should appear before him at *Jerusalem* three times in a year, (of which the feast of the passover was one) and that none was to appear before him empty. Now it being inconvenient to bring cattle, &c. so many miles as some of them were distant from the temple, these persons sat here with oxen, &c. to sell to those who came up to *Jerusalem* to worship and offer sacrifice.

Q. *Was not this a plausible pretence?*

A. Yes; but our blessed Lord’s resenting it in this manner, shews us how jealous he is of the honour of his house, and how he resents the least misbehaviour in the public service of the church.

Q. *Was it not a bold thing of Jesus Christ to venture himself among such a company of persons?*

A. No doubt of it; and therefore some have thought, that this was the greatest miracle Christ performed; and by this our Lord would shew those in power, that if they will be zealous in reforming abuses, and go out in the name and strength of God, they know not what great success they may meet with.

16.Q. *What may we learn from Christ's saying to them that sold doves, "take these things hence?"*

A. That our zeal ought to be according to knowledge; that we should pray for that wisdom which dwells with prudence; and, more especially, be very cautious how we act in works of reformation; as Christ here did not loose the doves and let them fly about the temple (which would have occasioned a confusion) but ordered those that sold them, to take them thence.

Q. *When do we make the house of God a house of Merchandise?*

A. When we go on purpose to seem religious, in order to get business; and when we talk with others, or let our own thoughts run on worldly things at public worship.

25.Q. *What may we learn from the Evangelists saying, that Jesus knew what was in man?*

A. That Jesus Christ therefore was God, it being impossible for any one but God to know what is in man.

CHAPTER III.

1.Q. *What may we remark from Nicodemus's coming to Christ?*

A. That it is a good thing to see rulers come to Jesus Christ; and though not many mighty, not many noble are called, yet some are.

2.Q. *Why did Nicodemus come by night?*

A. For fear of man.

Q. *What may we learn hence?*

A. That when religion is out of fashion, there will be many *Nicodemites*.

Q. *Is not the fear of man common to all converts?*

A. Yes; but where the heart is upright towards God, it wears off daily.

3.Q. *What do you learn from Christ's answer?*

A. That it is not sufficient to have an historical faith of Christ, without being born again from above.

Q. *What is it to be born again from above?*

A. It is to have a principle of new life implanted in our hearts by the holy Spirit, which life must be evidenced by a man's bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit.

Q. *Why cannot a man see the kingdom of God unless he be born again?*

A. If by the kingdom of God, be understood to mean the kingdom of grace, then it is plain an unregenerate man cannot see it; or cannot understand its doctrines, because they are spiritually discerned. But if by the kingdom of God, be meant the kingdom of glory; then, unless a man be born again he cannot see it, because we being impure by nature, except we are renewed, we cannot dwell with a pure and holy God.

5.Q. *Does not this verse urge the absolute necessity of water baptism?*

A. Yes, where it may be had; but how God will deal with persons unbaptized we cannot tell. What have we to do to judge those that are without?

10.Q. *What learn you from this verse?*

A. That it is a shame for ministers to pretend to teach others, who are not taught of God themselves.

13.Q. *What learn you from these words, "The Son of man which is in heaven?"*

A. That Jesus Christ is God, since he declares he was then in heaven, though discoursing at that time with *Nicodemus*, which could not be, unless he was God.

CHAPTER IV.

4.Q. *Why must Christ needs go through Samaria?*

A. Because there was a woman to be converted there.

Q. *What learn you from thence?*

A. That where God has got people to be called, he will find means to bring them to himself.

6.Q. *What may you observe from Christ's being weary?*

A. That he was truly man.

7.Q. *What learn you from Christ's saying "Give me to drink?"*

A. That our blessed Lord underwent much fatigue in going about to preach to sinners. And that we ought not to be ashamed to beg, when providence reduces us to an indigent life, or to pressing circumstances.

9.Q. *How can it be said that the Jews had no dealing with the Samaritans, when in the foregoing verse we are told, the disciples were gone to buy food?*

A. They might do some few good offices to, but had no general commerce with each other.

10.Q. *What may we learn from Christ's introducing religious talk by asking for a little water?*

A. That we ought to spiritualize every thing we meet with, and take all proper opportunities to introduce religious conversation wherever we are.

14.Q. *What does Christ mean by "the water he should give?"*

A. The holy Spirit.

Q. *Why is the holy Spirit represented by water?*

A. Because, as water washes away the filth of the body, so the holy Spirit cleanses the pollution of the soul; and as water refreshes the thirsty, so do the comforts of the Holy Ghost refresh the spiritual man.

Q. *What may we learn from these words, "shall be in him a well, &c.?"*

A. That where God has begun a good work, he will carry it on to the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

15.Q. *What may you learn from this verse?*

A. That we should pray to Christ, as this woman did, and beg him to give us his holy Spirit, that we may not apply to outward things for comfort.

20.Q. *Why did the woman mention this to Christ?*

A. Because, there was a dispute between the *Samaritans* and *Jews*, which was the proper place of worship, *Jerusalem* or mount *Gerizim*. And from hence arose such an enmity between them, that they would have no dealings with one another.

23.Q. *What is the meaning of this verse?*

A. That now Jesus Christ was come, God's worship could not be confined to any particular place, but persons might every where lift up holy hands to God.

24.Q. *When may we be said to worship God in spirit and in truth?*

A. When we are inward with him in our worship, and not only honour him with our lips, but with our affections and lives.

26.Q. *What may we learn from Christ's revealing himself so freely to the woman?*

A. That he will as freely and spiritually reveal himself to every believing heart.

27.Q. *What may we learn, from the disciples wondering that he talked with a woman?*

A. That men, especially ministers, ought not too freely to converse with persons of that sex.

28.Q. *What learn you from the woman leaving her water-pot to go into the city?*

A. That we should leave our worldly business, rather than neglect at proper times to attend on the means of grace.

29.Q. *Did not the woman tell an untruth here?*

A. No, for Christ might have told her all. However, as Christ had revealed to her the greatest secret of her life, she might easily infer that he could tell her every thing else.

32.Q. *What may we learn from this answer?*

A. That we ought, after the example of our master, to forego our ordinary meals sometimes for the sake of doing good. And we may also learn, that a true Christian has meat to eat, spiritual comforts, which the world knows not of: a stranger intermeddleth not with his joys.

34.Q. *What learn we hence?*

A. That it ought to be our meat and drink, or as much pleasure and our constant business to do the will of God, as to supply our bodies with proper food.

35.Q. *What does Christ mean when he bids his disciples "to lift up their eyes?"*

A. In all probability, he pointed to the *Samaritans* whom he saw crowding over the fields, coming to hear his doctrine.

38.Q. *What does Christ mean by this?*

A. That the prophets had prepared the way for his coming, by their prophecies, which made the disciples work far more easy.

41.Q. *What learn you from hence?*

A. That though there are many external proofs of the divinity of Christ's doctrine, yet his own words or his doctrine best explains itself: the divine image and superscription being written on every precept and line of it.

47.Q. *What learn we from the Nobleman's coming to Christ about his sick son?*

A. That parents should apply to Christ for their sick children, and that afflictions should drive us to God.

48.Q. *Wherein was this Nobleman to be blamed?*

A. In that he confined Christ's power to his bodily presence. Therefore to convince him of his frailty, and to strengthen his faith, Christ cured his son at a distance.

52.Q. *What is meant by the seventh hour?*

A. One in the afternoon.

53.Q. *What learn we from this verse?*

A. That bodily distempers are all cured by the power of Christ, and that those who are now recovered from sickness, are raised up as certainly though not so visibly by him, as was the Nobleman's son.

CHAPTER V.

6.Q. *What learn you from Christ's asking this question? "Wilt thou be made whole?"*

A. That he will know our wants from ourselves.

8.Q. *What learn you from Christ's bidding him to take up his bed and walk?*

A. That though Christ is the first mover in recovering us from our natural and spiritual impotency, yet we must concur in the use of means.

9.Q. *What learn you from Christ's doing so many works on the Sabbath?*

A. That doing good, is a proper way of sanctifying the Sabbath.

13.Q. *What learn you by Christ's conveying himself from the multitude?*

A. That we should do good, but endeavour at the same time to avoid the praise of man.

14.Q. *What learn you from Christ's finding the man that was healed, in the temple?*

A. That it is good to see people, after they are recovered from their sickness, going to the temple to return thanks unto God.

Q. *What learn you from the latter part of this verse?*

A. That sickness is often sent as a punishment for sin. That if we do not mend when God chastises us with whips, or light afflictions, we must expect to be chastised with scorpions, or greater trials.

18.Q. *What learn you from the latter part of this verse?*

A. That the *Jews* thought, though the Arians deny it, that Jesus Christ believed and made himself to be very God.

35.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That people generally like a good minister for a little while, but afterwards familiarity breeds contempt.

41.Q. *What learn you hence, and in the 44th verse?*

A. That we should seek that honour only which cometh from God, as also that it is impossible to be a Christian, if we seek to please the world.

CHAPTER VI.

2.Q. *What do you learn from hence?*

A. That it is too common, for people to follow a minister through curiosity, more than to be edified by his doctrine.

5.Q. *What learn you from Christ being solicitous for the feeding of his hearers bodies?*

A. That the body is to be taken care of, and that Christ is as careful for us now he is in heaven, as he was for the multitude when on earth. That ministers after his example, should do all the good they can to the bodies of men, to convince them they have a love for, and to open a way for giving good advice to, their souls.

6.Q. *What learn you from this verse?*

A. That the reason why Christ brings us into straits, is to prove us, whether we will trust in him or not.

9.Q. *What gather you from the words of Philip, "What are these among so many?"*

A. That when we look only upon outward means, no wonder that our faith fail us.

12.Q. *What learn you from Christ bidding them "Gather up the fragments that remained?"*

A. That we ought to be frugal, though not coveteous; and that they will certainly have much to answer for, who waste their whole estates in gaming.

14.Q. *What learn you from the latter part of this verse?*

A. That the certainty and greatness of our Saviour's miracles, is an undoubted proof that he was the true Messiah, since God would never so visibly set his seal to an impostor.

15.Q. *Why did Christ depart to a mountain?*

A. To teach Christians, and particularly ministers, to fly worldly honours; and also to set us an example, that when we are beset with temptations of that kind, it is best to retire alone, to pray to God to be delivered from the evil of it.

26.Q. *What learn you from what Christ here said to the people?*

A. That he knows from what principles and motives we come to hear the word of God; therefore we ought to take heed how we hear.

53.Q. *Have the papists any grounds from hence for their doctrine of transubstantiation?*

A. No; for Christ tells us in the 63d verse, that the flesh profiteth nothing, and that his words are spirit and life; *i. e.* they are not to be understood in a carnal but spiritual sense; and frequently by interpreting them literally, men do greatly err.

CHAPTER VII.

1.Q. *What learn you from Christ's walking no more in Judea when the Jews sought to kill him?*

A. That it is our duty, not to expose ourselves to needless dangers; and when we are persecuted at one place, to flee to another, when the glory of God and the good of the church do not require our staying.

7.Q. *What learn you from hence?*

A. That ministers must expect to be accounted the enemies of mankind, if they are faithful to reprove them, and tell them the truth.

12.Q. *What learn you from the different opinions men had of Christ?*

A. That every Christian, especially every minister, must expect to be variously thought of, and sometimes to be accounted deceivers of the people.

37.Q. *Why did Christ cry out thus on the last day of the feast?*

A. Because on that day, they used to go and draw water and bring it up to the temple, saying these words of *Isaiah*. "And they shall draw water out of the wells of salvation." Jesus Christ seeing them therefore do this, took occasion to discourse of the holy Spirit under the similitude of water.

39.Q. *Why was not the Holy Ghost given, till Jesus Christ was glorified?*

A. Because till then he was himself on earth, and had not taken on him the kingly office, nor pleaded the merits of his death before his heavenly Father, by which he purchased that invaluable blessing for us.

50.Q. *What learn you from the boldness of Nicodemus, in owning Christ before the Jewish Sanhedrim, though at first he came to him by night?*

A. That where there is true grace, the fear of man will wear off daily.

CHAPTER VIII.

11.Q. *Why would not Christ condemn the woman caught in adultery?*

A. Not because he approved of her sin, but because it did not belong to him as a prophet, to be the judge of such matters.

9.Q. *What learn you from the persons being convicted from their own consciences, and going out one by one?*

A. That wicked men need no other accuser but their own consciences; and that it is absurd to condemn and be inveterate against another, for a crime we have been, or are guilty of ourselves.

Q. *Is it to be supposed that all this woman's accusers had been guilty of adultery?*

A. Perhaps not in the very act, but guilty of heart-adultery, as our Saviour explained it in the 5th of *Matthew*.

6.Q. *How did the Jews intend to ensnare our blessed Lord, by bringing this woman before him?*

A. They wanted to impeach him, either as severe if he ordered her to be stoned, or as one that gave license to sin, if he forgave her.

Q. *What may we suppose Christ wrote when he stooped down?*

A. It is presumption to give the least guess, since God has not thought proper to reveal it to us.

Q. *What may we learn from Christ's stooping down, as though he heard them not?*

A. That we ought to be unwilling to hear, and not take pleasure in hearing of our neighbour's faults.

12.Q. *How can it be said, that Jesus then spake again unto them, when it is said before, that they went out one by one?*

A. Some have supposed, that the discourse which follows at this verse, was at another time; but if the word *then* should confine it to the present time, it may be reconciled thus. We may suppose where Christ was sitting, there was a vacant place to which the scribes and pharisees brought the woman, and in which Christ might stand alone with her. Now these being convicted one by one, (for it seems plain that Christ spoke only to *them* verse 7th) they might go out; while such as were there before the scribes and pharisees came might remain; and to them Christ proceeded with his discourse, and spake again on the point which he did, before he was interrupted.

31.Q. *What learn you from our Saviour's discourse with the Jews who believed on him?*

A. That young converts ought to be exhorted to continue in well doing; and that perseverance only can denominate us true disciples.

39.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That this is the language of all mere professors: they say, we have Christ for our Saviour; but if they were Christ's disciples they would do the works of Christ; for in vain we call him "Lord, Lord," if we do not the things that he says.

48.Q. *What learn you from hence?*

A. That if Christ who was innocence itself was called a devil, much more will the members of his houshold.

56.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That if *Abraham* rejoiced at a distance to see Christ's day, much more ought we to rejoice and give thanks, who enjoy it as present.

57.Q. *Does it appear from hence that Christ was fifty years old?*

A. No, for it is plain he was not above thirty-four when he was crucified; but we must consider that people in such cases generally speak within compass; and besides, our Lord being a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, he might look older by far than he really was.

58.Q. *What learn you from hence?*

A. That Jesus Christ is God, since he takes that title to himself, which God himself made use of when He sent *Moses* to *Pharaoh*, *Exodus* iii.

CHAPTER IX.

2.Q. *What learn you from this question, put by our blessed Lord's Disciples to him?*

A. That they believed either the transmigration, or pre-existence of souls; for otherwise how could a man sin before he was born?

3.Q. *What learn you from Christ's answer?*

A. That all our infirmities and bodily afflictions, though we may not think so, are ordained by God for our good, and his glory.

5.Q. *Should every Christian be able to say thus for himself?*

A. Yes, for we are commanded to let our light shine before men.

6.Q. *Why did Christ put clay on the man's eyes?*

A. To shew the vanity of a tradition of the *Jewish* church, that it was unlawful to make clay on the Sabbath-day; as also to shew, that God sometimes works by the most unlikely means; and to represent the case of young converts, who before they come to feel the comforts of the Holy Ghost, by spiritual desertion and temptations have as it were their eyes put out.

7.Q. *Why did Christ send the man to wash himself?*

A. To make trial of his obedience; and farther to teach us, that if we will recover our spiritual sight, we must be workers together with God, in the appointed means.

9.Q. *What learn we from the man's saying, "I am he?"*

A. That we should not be ashamed to confess that we have been healed by Jesus Christ.

Q. *What may we learn from Christ's being kind to beggars?*

A. That we also ought to be kind to them.

16.Q. *What learn you from this first answer of the Pharisees?*

A. That ill-will speaks well of no man.

17.Q. *What learn you from the beggar's answer?*

A. That we should not fear man, when called to testify of Jesus Christ.

18.Q. *What learn you from the Pharisees being willing to have so many evidences of this fact?*

A. That they were unwilling it should be true; but there being so many evidences of it, was a great proof of the truth of the miracle.

22.Q. *What learn you from this verse?*

A. That too many men dare not speak and practice what they know of Jesus Christ and his ways, for fear of losing their reputation, or some other temporal advantage.

24.Q. *What learn you from these words, "give God the praise?"*

A. That God should have all the glory of any mercies we receive; but here it was spoken hypocritically.

31.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. A good lesson, and that we cannot expect to have our prayer answered whilst we continue in sin; but if we serve God to the best of our power, we may be sure we shall be regarded by him: for the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

34.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That proud men cannot bear to be taught by any of their inferiors.

35.Q. *What learn you from Christ's seeking and finding this beggar when he was cast out?*

A. That when our father, mother, and the world forsaketh us, the Lord will take us up. And that the chief time for Christ to reveal himself to us, is, when we are cast out by men.

37.Q. *What learn we from Christ's making this open discovery of himself?*

A. That he will most freely communicate himself to all those who are willing to receive him.

38.Q. *What learn you from hence?*

A. That Jesus Christ is God; for otherwise it is not to be imagined he would have suffered the man to worship him.

41.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That wilful ignorance is a damning sin.

CHAPTER X.

20.Q. *What learn you from this verse?*

A. That if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, much more will they those of his houshold. Christ's children were always the world's fools.

22.Q. *What learn you from hence?*

A. That as Jesus was present at the feast of dedication, which was purely of human institution, *1 Maccabees*, 4th and 9th, therefore we may conform to things indifferent in themselves, though only of human appointment.

30.Q. *Does not this verse prove Christ to be God?*

A. The *Jews* thought so, by their immediately taking up stones to stone him.

34.Q. *How does our Saviour argue in this and the following verses?*

A. It is what logicians call an argument *ad hominem*, when you confute or confound a person from something which he himself says or grants. It is also an argument a *minori ad majus*, when you prove a greater thing from the less. The process of the argument runs thus: If you call magistrates, gods, to whom the word of God only came, how much more ought you to own me to be God, and not to be angry with me for calling myself so, or the Son of God, who shew by my works, that I dwell in my Father and my Father in me?

CHAPTER XI.

3.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That it is not our piety will exempt us from sickness and other calamities of life, since he whom Christ loved, was sick: That when any of our relations are sick, we should apply, as these sisters did, to Jesus Christ to heal them: That it is a peculiar encouragement to pray, when we know those for whom we pray, are beloved of Christ: And that in all our addresses to God, both for ourselves and others, we ought to mention rather his love

to us, than ours to him, for we love God because he first loved us; and our love is so little, that it is not worth speaking of.

6.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That God's continuing his rod upon us, is no certain sign of his displeasure; nay that it is rather a token of his love, since Christ knew that *Lazarus* was sick, and yet abode two days before he went to his deliverance.

7.Q. *What may we learn from Christ's going to Judea again?*

A. That though we have met with persecution in a place, yet when God calls us thither again, we must answer, "Lo, we come;" for the way of duty is the way of safety.

8.Q. *Did not this argue a fear in the Disciples?*

A. Yes; and from hence we may learn that we ought to beware of our carnal relations, who will dissuade us from doing our duty, if difficulties attend it, as these Disciples did Christ.

9, 10.Q. *What is the meaning of these verses?*

A. The meaning of them seems to be this: There is a certain time appointed by my Father for me to do my work in, and in that time I shall be as safe from danger, as a man that walketh by day is from falling; but when that time is over, I shall be taken by them, as a man falls when he walks in the dark.

11.Q. *Was not Lazarus actually dead? why then does Christ say, "he sleepeth?"*

A. Because death is but as a sleep to a good man; for, as sleep frees us from the labour of the day, so does death free good men from the troubles of life.

Q. *What learn you from Christ's calling Lazarus his friend?*

A. That he loves us as dear as himself; for a friend is said to be as dear to a man as his own soul: “And thy friend which is as thy own soul.”

16.Q. *What learn you from this saying of Thomas?*

A. That in times of difficulty, it is the Christians duty to encourage, exhort, and provoke one another to keep close to Christ.

18.Q. *How much are 15 furlongs?*

A. Two miles.

19.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That it is the duty of Christians to visit their friends; particularly at the death of their relations, and to comfort them with the hopes of seeing them again raised in glory.

20.Q. *Why did Mary sit still?*

A. Probably out of humility, thinking herself unworthy to go, till Christ called her.

21.Q. *Did Martha shew faith in saying thus?*

A. Yes; but she expressed a weakness in it, since she confined Christ’s power to his bodily presence.

22.Q. *Does not this verse likewise prove the weakness of her faith?*

A. Yes; for she seems to look upon Christ not as God, but as a Prophet only acting under him.

24.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That the *Jews* believed the doctrine of the resurrection, though that as well as other doctrines is brought to a fuller light by the gospel.

25, 26.Q. *What is the meaning of these two verses?*

A. They may be understood two ways: that though a person be dead in sin, yet he shall live a spiritual life, if he believes in Christ; and 2dly, that a true believer, though worms destroy his body, shall yet in his flesh see God.

Q. *What may we learn from Christ's asking Martha the question at the latter end of the 26th verse?*

A. That it is good when we are reading the scripture doctrines, particularly the doctrines of the resurrection, and the new birth, to ask ourselves, whether we believe them or not.

28.Q. *Did Christ call Mary?*

A. Not as we hear of, though he might and did probably; charity will incline us to think, she did not tell an untruth.

29.Q. *What learn you from hence?*

A. That this shews *Mary* sat still, only because Christ did not call her; and also, that we should imitate her behaviour; when Christ calls us to repentance, we should arise quickly, and come unto him.

32.Q. *Was not here the like weakness in Mary's faith as in her sister's?*

A. Yes, they both confined his power to his bodily presence.

34.Q. *Was it consistent with Christ's innocent resignation to be troubled?*

A. Yes, as he was troubled; for it was a trouble that did not discompose him: some therefore have represented it by a glass of pure crystal water, which, though shaken, is not muddy. And in the margin it is said, "Christ troubled himself."

35.Q. *Why did Jesus weep?*

A. Probably, on seeing and considering what havoc sin had made, to show sympathy for the afflicted relations; but more particularly for the hardness of the people's hearts, who he knew would not be converted, though he was about to shew them so great a miracle.

36.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That if the *Jews* said, "Behold how he loved him," when he shed only a few tears, well may we say, "Behold how he loved us," when he shed his

precious blood for us.

37.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That ill-will speaks well of nothing.

39.Q. *What learn you from Martha's saying, "Lord, by this time he stinketh?"*

A. That looking upon human improbabilities, is a great weakener of our faith; when *Peter* began to fear, he began to sink.

41.Q. *Do we hear that Christ prayed audibly at this time?*

A. No; but he did it secretly, to teach us, that it is possible to pray though we do not speak. For the Spirit maketh intercession for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.

46.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. The folly of our modern unbelievers, who would desire a repetition of miracles, to convince them of the truth of the Christian religion; whereas it is to be doubted, whether they would be convinced by them or not, since here were some who saw this great miracle of the resurrection of *Lazarus*, and would not believe. "If ye believe not *Moses* and the Prophets, neither will ye believe though one rose from the dead."

55.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That before the Christian passover, the Lord's supper, Christians ought to study to prepare themselves by prayer and examination.

CHAPTER XII.

2.Q. *What learn you from Martha's serving, though Christ before this had condemned her too great solicitude?*

A. That religion does not call us from our common business, but teaches us to follow it, with a proper principle, obedience to God; and that too not at the expence of the one thing needful.

5.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That all who speak well, are not saints, though it is best to judge charitably of all.

8.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That if Christ was not to be with us always, then he is not bodily present at the mass, as the *Romish* church supposes.

39.Q. *Did the Prophets foretelling their hardness of heart, lay the Jews under a necessity of not believing?*

A. No more than our knowing the sun will rise to-morrow, obliges the sun to rise. The Prophet foreknew by the Spirit of God that it would be so, therefore foretold it.

40.Q. *Does God harden any one's heart?*

A. Not till they have hardened their own hearts: thus *Pharaoh* first hardened his own heart, and then it is said God hardened it.

42, 43.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That a fear of contempt, &c. &c. keeps many well-disposed people from confessing Christ before men; and that we can never be Christians, till we are content only with that honour and praise which cometh from God.

CHAPTER XIII.

10.Q. *What is the meaning of this verse?*

A. It seems to be this. He that is once really converted, needs not that justification and sanctification, which other sinners want; but yet should mourn over his daily sins, and daily seek to have them washed away by the blood of Christ.

14.Q. *Ought we to make a rite of, and really wash one another's feet?*

A. Some have thought so; but if we do what is meant by this condescension of our blessed Lord, submit to the lowest offices for the

benefit of one another, it seems to be sufficient.

26.Q. *What learn you from Christ's giving Judas a sop?*

A. That those are not always the greatest favourites of heaven, to whom God gives outward blessings. And also, that after our Saviour's sop, if we are not better we shall be the worse; if we do not improve our advantages and serve our Master, we shall betray him.

27.Q. *Did Christ's saying unto Judas, "What thou doest do quickly," lay him under an obligation to do it?*

A. By no means; the meaning of it is this, If thou art resolved to betray me, the sooner the better.

34.Q. *Why is the loving one another, a new commandment?*

A. Because it is to proceed from a new motive, and measure; even Christ's love towards us.

38.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That when we make any resolutions, they ought to be made in the name and strength of God; otherwise he must in pity let us fall, to convince us of our weakness.

CHAPTER XIV.

26.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That it is one of the peculiar offices of the Holy Ghost, to bring to our remembrance what Christ has told us. And this every sincere Christian knows by experience.

30.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That the less corruption we have in our hearts, the less power will the devil have over us.

CHAPTER XV.

2.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That every unprofitable servant, and all mere professing Christians, will perish; and that those who are true Christians must expect afflictions and trials to prepare them for greater services.

9.Q. *What learn you hence?*

A. That the world hates Christians on account of their conformity to Christ; therefore if Christians will be conformed to Christ, it is impossible for them to avoid contempt.

22.Q. *What is meant by that expression, "they had not had sin"?*

A. They would not have had so great sin; or no sin at all in comparison of what they will have now.

LAW GOSPELIZED; OR, AN ADDRESS TO ALL CHRISTIANS CONCERNING HOLINESS OF HEART AND LIFE.

Monergism Books

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He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

Ephesians i.4.

CHAPTER I.

The Nature and Extent of Christian Devotion. [1]

CHRISTIAN devotion, signifies a life given or devoted to God; he consequently, and he alone, is the *devout man*, who lives no longer to his own will, or after the way and spirit of the world, but to the sole will of God; who considers God in every thing; who makes all the parts of his common life, as well as his more immediate religious exercises, parts of piety, by doing every thing in the name of Jesus Christ, and under such rules as are conducive to promote God's glory.

Reason and scripture plainly evince the truth of this. For as there is but "one God and Father of us all," whose glory gives light and life to every thing that lives; whose presence fills all places, whose power supports all beings, whose providence ruleth all events; so every thing that lives, whether in *heaven* or *earth*, whether they be thrones or principalities, men or angels, they are all bound, by the laws of their creation, to live wholly to the praise and glory of this one God and Father of them all.

We readily acknowledge, that God alone is to be the rule and measure of our prayers; that in them we are to look wholly unto him, and act wholly for him; that we are only to pray in such a manner, and for such things, and with such ends as are suitable to his glory.

Now let any one but find out the reason why he is to be thus strictly pious in his prayers, and he will find the same, as strong a reason, why he is to be as strictly pious in all the other parts of his life: for were it not our strict duty to live by reason, and to devote all the actions of our lives to God; were it not absolutely necessary, and our highest privilege to walk before him in wisdom and holiness, and all heavenly conversation, doing every thing in his name, and for his glory, there would be no excellency and wisdom in the most heavenly prayers. Nay, such prayers would be absurdities, they would be like praying for wings, when it was no part of our duty to fly.

Again, we readily acknowledge, that *Clergymen* must live wholly unto God in one particular way, in the exercise of *holy offices*; in the ministration of prayers and sacraments, and a zealous distribution of spiritual things: but men of other employments, are in their particular ways as much obliged to act as the servants of God, and to live wholly unto him in their several callings. For as all Christians are by their baptism devoted to God, and made professors of holiness; so are they all in their several callings, to live as holy and heavenly persons; doing every thing in *common life*, only in such a manner as it may be received by God, as a service done to him.

Further, it will be readily acknowledged on all sides, that angels, whether they are principalities or powers, must all with one spirit, live wholly to the praise and glory of the one God and Father of them all; and that it is not allowable for, or becoming them, to act below the dignity of their proper

state. And is not a devout life, and a wise use of our proper condition, as much the duty of all Christian*s*, as it is the duty of *angels* and celestial beings? Our blessed Saviour has cleared up this point, by making this petition a constant part of all our prayers, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." A plain proof, that the obedience of Christian*s*, is to imitate at least the obedience of *angels*; and that rational beings on earth, are to be wholly devoted unto God, in like manner as rational beings in heaven are devoted to him.

These are not speculative flights, or imaginary notions, but are plain and undeniable truths, founded in the very nature of rational beings, and upon the infallible testimony of the lively oracles of God.

It is but barely complying with that apostolical precept, "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." For no one can come near the doctrine of this passage, but he that proposes to himself to do every thing in this life, as a servant of God; to live by reason in every thing that he does; and to make the wisdom and holiness of the gospel, and the glory of God, the rule and measure of his desiring and using every gift of God.

Eating is one of the lowest actions of our lives; it is common to us with mere animals: yet we see, that this text, as well as by the practice of Christians in all ages, has turned this ordinary action of an animal life, into an act of piety to God, by making every meal to begin and end with devotion.

Some remains of this custom are yet to be seen in most Christian families; but indeed it is now generally so performed, as to look more like a mockery upon devotion, than any solemn application of the mind unto God. However, these very remains, such as they are, are proofs, that religion has

formerly belonged to this, and consequently to every other part of common life.

But to return. The same Apostle, in his epistle to the *Ephesians*, commands servants "to be obedient to their masters in singleness of heart, as unto Christ; not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart: with good-will doing service as unto the Lord, and not unto men." This passage sufficiently shews, that all Christians are to live wholly unto God, in every state and condition of life, doing the work of their common calling in such a manner, and for such ends, as to make it a part of their devotion or service to God. For if *poor slaves* are not to comply with their business as men-pleasers; if they are to look wholly unto God in all their actions, and serve in singleness of heart, as unto the Lord; surely men of other employments and conditions, must be as much obliged to go through their business with the same singleness of heart, not as pleasing the vanity of their own minds, nor as gratifying their own selfish, worldly passions, but as the servants of God in all that they have to do. To deny this, would be as absurd, as to make it necessary for one man to be more just or faithful than another.

To close these arguments founded on reason and scripture. Our being indispensably obliged to devote our lives to God, is very evident from that glorious passage of the Apostle, wherein he declares that "Christ died and rose again, that we should henceforth not live unto ourselves, but unto him that died for us; that we are not our own, but bought with a price," emphatically so called, and that we should "therefore glorify God in our souls and bodies which are his."

If then we desire to live as rational creatures, if we would not add *heathen lives* to Christian prayers, if we would perform our baptismal vow, and do

God's will on earth as it is done in heaven; if we would comply with the whole will of God, and answer the end of our blessed Lord's birth, death, resurrection, and ascension, we must live wholly to God, and make his glory the sole rule and measure of our acting in every employment of life.

For want of knowing, or at least of considering this, we see such a mixture of ridicule in the lives of many people. You see them strict as to some times and places of devotion; but when the service of the church is over, they are like those who seldom or never come there. In their way of life, their manner of spending both time and money, in their cares and fears, in their pleasures and indulgences, in their labours and diversions, they are like the rest of the world. This makes the loose part of the world generally make a jest of those that are thus seemingly devout; not altogether it may be because they are really devoted to God, but because they appear to have no other devotion, but that of occasional prayers.

Julius is very fearful of missing prayers; all the parish suppose *Julius* to be sick, if he is not at church. But if you ask him, why he spends the rest of his time by humour or *chance*? Why he is busy at all balls and assemblies? Why he gives himself up to an idle gossipping conversation? If you ask him, why he never puts his conversation, his time, and fortune, under the rules of religion? *Julius* has no more to say for himself, than the most disorderly person. For he that lives in such a course of idleness and folly, lives no more according to the religion of Jesus Christ, than he who lives in gluttony and intemperance.

Our blessed Saviour and his Apostles did not spend their whole ministry in recommending the duties of public and private prayers; though by their example and precepts they recommended and enforced both; but it is worthy our observation, that after they had laid down a lively faith in God's

mercy through Jesus Christ, as the foundation, they were chiefly taken up in delivering doctrines which relate to common life. For they call upon us "to renounce the world, so as not to be conformed to it: To fear none of its evils, to reject its joys, and have no value for its happiness: To be as *new-born babes*, that are born into a new state of things; to live as *pilgrims*, in spiritual watching, in holy fear, and heavenly aspirations after another life: To take up our daily cross, to deny ourselves, to profess the blessedness of holy mourning, and poverty of spirit: To reject the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, so as not to follow or be led by them: To take no anxious thought for the morrow; to live in the profoundest state of humility; to rejoice in worldly sufferings and injuries, when it pleases God to bring them upon us; to forgive and bless our enemies, and to love mankind in the same manner, though not degree, as God loves them. In short, to give up our whole hearts and affections to God, even a God in Christ, and to strive to enter through the strait gate of a sound conversion into a life of eternal glory."

This is the *common devotion*, which our blessed Saviour and his Apostles taught, in order to make it the common life of all Christians. But yet, though it is thus plain, that this, and this alone, is true Christianity, yet it is as plain, that there is little or nothing of this to be found, not only among professed rakes, but even among the better and more sober sort of people. You may see them often at public worship, and the Lord's table, and hear them talking of grace and religion, and find them pleased with orthodox preachers; but look into their lives, and you see them just the same sort of people as others are, who make no pretences to devotion at all. So that the difference that you find between them, seems to be only the difference of natural tempers, or the effect of a polite and civilized education.

Leo has a great deal of good nature, has kept what they call good company, hates every thing that is false and base, is very generous and brave to his friends, but has concerned himself so little with religion, that he hardly knows the difference between a *Jew* and a Christian.

Eusebius, on the other hand, has had early impressions of religion, sometimes prays extempore, and buys books of devotion, and receives the blessed sacrament once a month. He can talk of all the doctrines of grace, is acquainted with the true state of the controversy between the *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, knows all the feasts and fasts of the church, and the names of most men that have been eminent for piety. You never hear him swear, or make a loose jest, and when he talks of religion, he talks of it, as a matter of the last concern.

Here you see, that one person has religion enough, according to the way of the world, to be reckoned a *pious Christian*; and the other is so far from all appearance of religion, that he may fairly be reckoned an *heathen*; and yet if you look into their common life, you will find *Eusebius* and *Leo* exactly alike; seeking, using, and enjoying, all that can be gotten in this world, in the same manner, and for the same ends, even to please themselves, without any prevailing habitual regard to the glory of God. You will find that riches, prosperity, pleasures, indulgences, state, equipage, and honour, are just as much the happiness of *Eusebius*, as they are of *Leo*.

And must not all who are capable of any reflection, readily acknowledge, that this is generally the state even of what we commonly term *devout people*, whether men or women? You may see them different from some others, as to times and places of worship, receiving the sacrament, and with a doctrinal knowledge of the form of sound words; but usually like the rest of the world in all the other parts of their lives. Is it not notorious, that

Christians are now not only like other men in their frailties and infirmities, (this might be in some degree excusable, since the scriptures inform us, that *Elijah* was a man of like passions with others) but are they not like heathens, in all the main and chief articles of their lives? Do they not enjoy the world, and live every day with the same indulgence as they did who knew not God, nor of any happiness in another life?

And yet, if Christianity has not changed a man's mind and temper, with relation to these things, what can we say that it has done for him? For if the doctrines of Christianity were universally practised, they would make a man as different from other people, as to all worldly tempers, sensual pleasures, and the pride of life, as a wise man is different from an ideot; and it would be almost as easy a thing to know a true professor of Christianity, by his outward course of life, as it is now difficult to find any body that lives it.

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1. By Letter 640, Volume II. page 144. it appears that this tract was written about June 1748.

CHAPTER II.

Persons free from the necessities of labour and employments, are to consider themselves as devoted to God in a higher degree.

AS it has been proved in the foregoing chapter, that all professors of Christianity, do lie under manifold obligations to live a life wholly devoted unto God; so those who have no *particular employment*, but have their time and fortune at their own disposal, are under still greater obligations of living wholly unto God in all their actions.

They are those, of whom "much will be required, because much is given unto them."

A *slave* can only live unto God in one particular way; that is, by religious patience and submission in his state of slavery; but all ways of holy living, all instances, and all kinds of virtue lie open to those, who are masters of themselves, of their time, and their fortune.

You are no *labourer* or *tradesman*; you are neither *merchant* nor *soldier*; should you not therefore consider yourself, as placed in a state, in some degree like that of good angels, who are sent into the world as ministring

spirits, for the general good of mankind, to assist, protect, and minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Had you, *Serena*, been obliged by the necessities of life, to wash cloaths for your maintenance, or to wait upon some mistress, that demanded all your labour, it would then be your duty to serve and glorify God, by such humility, obedience, and faithfulness, as might adorn that state, and improve that one talent to its greatest height: but as God hath given you five talents; as he hath placed you above the necessities of life; as he hath left you in the hands of yourself, in the happy liberty of chusing the most exalted ways of religion; so it is now your duty and privilege to turn your five talents into five more; to set no bounds to your love and gratitude to the bountiful Author of so many blessings; and to consider how your time, leisure, health, and fortune, may be made so many happy means of improving your fellow-creatures in the ways of God, and of advancing yourself, through grace, at last to the greatest heights of eternal glory.

This, *Serena*, is indeed your profession: and the reason of this will appear very plain, if you would only consider, that your estate is as much the gift of God, as your eyes or hands; and is therefore no more to be buried or thrown away at pleasure, than you are to put out your eyes, or throw away your limbs as you please.

But besides these considerations, there are several other great and important reasons, why all Christians in general, and such as I am now speaking of in particular, should be religiously exact in the use of their fortunes for the glory of God.

For the manner of using our money, and spending our estate, enters so far into the business of every day, that our common life must necessarily be much of the same nature as our common way of spending our estate. If we

waste it, we do not waste a trifle, that signifies little; but we waste that which might be made as eyes to the blind, as a husband to the widow, as a father to the orphan; and which, if given in faith, and out of love to Jesus Christ, would greatly increase our reward in a future state. “Make to yourselves friends (says our Saviour) of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.” What still adds weight to these arguments, is this, if we waste our money, and do not improve our fortunes for the glory of God, and the good of our fellow-creatures, we are not only guilty of wasting a talent which God has given us, and making that useless which might be so powerful a means of doing good, but we turn this useful talent into a powerful means of corrupting ourselves. For so far as it is spent wrong, so far it is spent in the support of some wrong temper, in gratifying some vain and unreasonable desires, in conforming to those fashions, and that pride of the world, which as reasonable men and Christians we are obliged to renounce. If therefore, you do not spend your money in doing good to others, you must spend it to the hurt of yourself. And you will act like a man that refuses to give that as a cordial to a sick friend, though he could not drink it himself, without not only inflaming, but corrupting his whole mass of blood.

It may be worth our while to pursue this thought a little further. For as we are now discoursing about people in the polite world, and of good fortunes, who we may suppose do not live in gross sins, but only in the indiscreet and dangerous use of things innocent and lawful in themselves, so it is more difficult to make such people at all sensible of the danger of such a life.

A gentleman that spends great part of his estate in sports, and a woman that lays out all her fortune upon herself, can hardly be persuaded, that the spirit of religion cannot subsist in such a way of life. Much less will they be

easily convinced, that such a turn of mind, however they may live free from debaucheries, and be friends of religion, so far as to praise, speak well of, and admire it in their imaginations, will give a bad turn to their whole way of life. But it is certainly so.

A woman, for instance, that loves dress, who thinks no expence too great to bestow upon the adorning of her person, cannot stop there. For that single temper draws a thousand other follies along with it; and will render the whole course of her life, her business, her conversation, her hopes, her fears, her taste, her pleasures, and diversions, all suitable to it. On the contrary, a lady who is habitually dead to the things of the world, and has devoted her time and fortune to God; such a one will let her whole life be a continued series of good actions, as may benefit her own and others souls, and consequently adorn the gospel of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Flavia, and *Miranda*, are two maiden sisters, that have each of them two hundred pounds a year. They buried their father twenty years ago, and have since that time spent their estate as they pleased.

Flavia has been the wonder of all her friends, for her excellent management, in making so surprizing a figure with so moderate a fortune. Several ladies that have twice her fortune, are not able to be always so genteel, and so constant at all places of what she calls innocent pleasure and expence. She has every thing in the fashion, and is in every place where there is any diversion. *Flavia* is very *orthodox*; she talks warmly against *heretics* and *schismatics*, is generally at church, and often at the sacrament. She once commended a sermon that was against the pride and vanity of dress, and thought it was very just against *Lucinda*, whom she takes to be a great deal finer than she need to be. Should any one ask *Flavia* to do something in charity; if she likes the person who makes the proposal, or

happens to be in a right temper, she will toss him half a crown or a crown, and tell him, that if he knew what a *long millener's bill* she had just received, he would think it a great deal for her to give. A quarter of a year after this, she hears a sermon upon the necessity of charity; she thinks the man preaches well, that it is a very proper subject, and that people want much to be put in mind of it; but she applies nothing to herself, because she remembers that she gave a crown some time ago, when she could so ill spare it.

As for poor people, she will admit of no complaints from them; she is very positive they are all cheats and liars, and will say any thing to get relief, and therefore it must be a sin to encourage them in their evil ways.

You would think that *Flavia* had the tenderest conscience in the world, if you was to see how scrupulous and apprehensive she is of the guilt and danger of giving amiss.

She buys all books of wit and humour, and has made an expensive collection of all our *English Poets*; for she says, one cannot have a true taste of any of them, without being very conversant with all.

She will sometimes read a book of piety, if it is a short one, and if it is much commended for stile and language, and she can tell where to borrow it.

Flavia is very idle, and yet very fond of fine work: this makes her very often sit working in bed until noon, and will be told many a long story before she is up; so that I need not tell you, that her morning devotions are not always rightly performed.

Flavia would be a miracle of piety, if she was but half so careful of her soul, as she is of her body. The rising of a pimple in her face, or the sting of a gnat, will make her keep her room two or three days; and she thinks they

are very rash people, that do not take care of things in time. This makes her so over careful of her health, that she never thinks she is well enough; and so over indulgent, that she never can be really well. So that it costs her a great deal in sleeping draughts, and waking draughts, in spirits for the head, in drops for the nerves, in cordials for the stomach, and in saffron for her tea.

If you visit *Flavia* on the Lord's day, you will always meet good company; you will know what is doing in the world, and who is meant by every name that is in it. You will hear what plays were acted that week, and which is the finest song in the opera; who was intolerable at the last assembly, and what games are most in fashion. *Flavia* thinks they are *Atheists* who play at cards on the *Sunday*; but she will tell you the nicety of all the games, what cards she held, how she played them, and the history of all that happened at play, as soon as she comes from church. If you would know who is rude and ill-natured, who is vain and foppish, who lives too high, and who is in debt; if you would know what is the quarrel at a certain house, or who and who are in love; if you would know how late *Belinda* comes home at night, what cloaths she has bought, how she loves compliments, and what a long story she told at such a place; if you would know how cross *Lucius* is to his wife, and what ill-natured things he says to her, when no body hears him; if you would know how they hate one another in their hearts, though they appear so kind in public; you must visit *Flavia* on the *Sunday*. But still, she has so great a regard for the holiness of the *Sunday*, that she has turned a poor old widow out of her house, as a prophane wretch, for having been found once mending her cloaths on the *Sunday* night.

Thus lives *Flavia*; and if she lives ten years longer, she will have spent about fifteen hundred and sixty *Sundays* after this manner; and she will have worn about two hundred different suits of cloaths. Out of these *thirty years* of her life, *fifteen* of them will have been disposed of in bed; and of the remaining *fifteen*, about *fourteen* of them will have been consumed in eating, drinking, dressing, visiting, conversation, reading and hearing plays and romances, and attending at operas, assemblies, balls and diversions. For you may reckon all the time she is up, to be thus spent, except about an hour and a half, that is disposed of at church, most *Sundays* in the year. With great management, and under mighty rules of œconomy, she will have spent *six* thousand pounds upon herself, except some few shillings, crowns or half crowns, that have gone from her in accidental charities.

I shall not take upon me to say, that it is impossible for Flavia *ever* to be saved; but thus much must be said, that she has no grounds from scripture to think she is at present in the way of salvation. For her whole life is in direct opposition to all those tempers and practices, which the gospel has made necessary to salvation.

If you was to hear her say, that she had lived all her life like *Anna* the prophetess, "who departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day," you would look upon her as very extravagant; and yet this would be no greater an extravagance, than for her to say, that she had been "striving to enter in at the strait gate," or making any one doctrine or precept of the gospel, a rule of her life.

She may as well say, that she lived with our Saviour when he was upon earth, as that she has lived in imitation of him, or made it any part of her care to live in such tempers, as he required of all those that would be his disciples. She may as truly say, that she has every day *washed the Saints*

feet, as that she has lived in Christian humility and *poverty of spirit*; and as reasonably think, that she has taught a *charity school*, as that she has lived in works of charity. She hath as much reason to think, that she has been a *centinel* in an army, as that she has lived in watching and self-denial. And it may as fairly be said, that she had lived by the labour of her hands, as that she had given all diligence to make her calling and election sure.

Now though the irregular trifling spirit of this character, belongs I hope but to few people, yet many may here learn some instruction from it, and perhaps see something of their own spirit in it.

But not so *Miranda* (the sister of *Flavia*); she is a sober reasonable Christian. As soon as she was mistress of her time and fortune, it was her first thought, how she might best fulfil every thing that God required of her in the use of them, and how she might make the best and happiest use of this short life. She depends upon the truth of what our blessed Lord hath said, "that there is but one thing needful," and therefore makes her whole life but one continual labour after it. She has but one reason for doing or not doing, for liking or not liking any thing, and that is the will of God. She is not so weak, as to pretend to add, what is frequently falsely called the *fine lady*, to the *true Christian*; *Miranda* thinks too well, to be taken with the sound of such silly words; she has renounced the world, to follow Christ in the exercise of humility, charity, devotion, abstinence, and heavenly affections; and that is *Miranda*'s fine breeding.

Whilst she was under her mother, she was forced to live in ceremony, to sit up late at night, to be in the folly of every fashion, and always visiting on *Sundays*; to go patched, and loaded with a burden of *finery*, to the holy sacrament; to be in every polite conversation; to hear prophaneness at the play-house, and wanton songs and love intrigues at the opera; to dance at

public places, that fops and rakes might admire the fineness of her shape, and the beauty of her motions. The remembrance of this way of life is very grievous to her, and makes her exceeding careful to give evidences of her unfeigned repentance, by a contrary behaviour.

Miranda does not divide her duty between God, her neighbour, and herself; but she considers all as due to God, and so does every thing in his name and for his sake. This makes her consider her fortune as the gift of God, that is to be used as is every thing that belongs to God, for the wise and reasonable ends of a Christian and holy life: her fortune therefore is divided between herself and the poor, and she has only her reasonable part of relief from it. For she thinks it the same folly to indulge herself in needless, vain expences, as to give to other people to spend in the same way.

This is the spirit of *Miranda*, and thus she uses the gifts of God. If you was to see her, you would wonder who it was that was so surprizing and unaffectedly neat and clean; for every thing about her resembles the purity of her soul, and she is always clean without, because she always studies to be pure within.

Every morning sees her early at her prayers; she rejoices in the beginning of every day, because it begins all her pious rules of holy living, and brings the fresh pleasure of repeating them. She seems to be as a guardian angel to those that dwell about her, with her watchings and prayers blessing the place where she dwells, and making intercession with God for those that are asleep.

Her devotions have had some intervals, and she has had reason to think that God hath answered several of her private prayers, before the light hath entered into her sister’s room. *Miranda* does not know what it is to have a

dull half-day; the returns of her hours of prayer, and her religious exercises, come too often to let any considerable part of time lie heavy upon her hands.

When you see her at work, you see the same wisdom that governs all her other actions; she is either doing something that is necessary for herself, or necessary for others, who want to be assisted. Her wise and pious mind neither wants the amusement, nor can bear with the folly of idle and impertinent work; she can admit of no such folly as this in the day, because she is to call herself to an account for all her actions in her secret retirement at night.

At her *table* she lives strictly by this rule of holy scripture, "whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." This makes her begin and end every meal, as she begins and ends every day, with acts of devotion: she does not indeed weigh her meat in a pair of scales, but she weighs it in a much better balance; so much as gives a proper strength to her body, and renders it able and willing to obey the soul, is *Miranda's meal.*

The holy scriptures, especially of the New Testament, are her daily study. When she has this in her hand, she supposes herself at the feet of our Saviour and his apostles, and receives their sacred words with as much attention and reverence, as if she saw their persons, and knew that they were just come from heaven, on purpose to teach her the way that leads to it. Nor does she content herself barely with reading the scriptures; but in reading, constantly casts her eye upon herself, and tries herself by every doctrine that is there, because she thinks this is the only possible way to be ready for her trial at the last day.

Books also of devotion, and especially such as enter into the heart of religion, and describe the *inward holiness* of the Christian life, have such a large place in her closet, that she is sometimes afraid that she lays out too much money in them, because she cannot forbear buying all the practical books of any note. But of all human writings, the *lives of pious persons*, and eminent saints, are her greatest delight. In these she searches as for hidden treasure, hoping to find some secret of holy living, some uncommon degree of piety, which she may make her own. By this means, *Miranda* has her head and heart stored with all the principles of wisdom and holiness, and if you are in her company, when she thinks proper to talk, you must be made wiser and better, whether you will or not.

To relate her charity, would be to relate the history of every day for twenty years past. She has set up near twenty poor tradesmen who had failed in their business, and saved as many from failing. She has educated several poor children, that were picked up in the streets, and put them in a way of honest employment. As soon as any labourer is confined at home with sickness, she sends to him, till he recovers, twice the value of his wages, that he may have one part to give to his family as usual, and the other to provide things convenient for his sickness.

If a family seems too large to be supported by the labour of those in it that can work, she pays their rent, and gives them something yearly towards their cloathing. By this means there are many poor families which live in a comfortable manner, and are from year to year blessing her in their prayers.

If there is any poor man or woman, that is more than ordinarily wicked and reprobate, *Miranda* has her eye upon them, and if she can discover that they are in any great streights or affliction, she gives them speedy relief. She has this care for this sort of people, not only because she once saved a

very profligate person from being carried to prison, who immediately became a true penitent, but because she believes that a tenderness of affection towards the most abandoned sinners, is every where represented in the gospel as the highest instance of a divine and godlike soul.

Miranda once passed by a house, where the man and his wife were cursing and swearing at one another in a most dreadful manner, and three children crying about them; this sight so much affected her compassionate mind, that she went the next day, and even bought the three children, that they might not be ruined by living with such wicked parents. They now live with *Miranda*, are blessed with her care and prayers, and all the good works that she can do for them. They hear her talk, they see her live, and join with her in psalms and prayers. The eldest of them has already been an instrument of converting his parents from their wicked life, and shews a turn of mind so remarkably pious, that *Miranda* intends him for holy orders; that being thus saved himself, he may be zealous in the salvation of souls, and do to other miserable objects, as she has done to him.

Miranda is a constant relief to poor people in their misfortunes and accidents; for there are sometimes little misfortunes that happen to them, which of themselves they could never be able to overcome: the death of a cow, or a horse, or some little robbery, would keep them in distress all their lives. She does not suffer them to lie grieving under such accidents as these. She immediately gives them the full value of their loss, and makes use of it as a means of raising their minds towards God.

She has a great tenderness for *old people* that are grown past their labour. The parish allowance (*Miranda* says) to such people, is very seldom a comfortable maintenance. For this reason, they are the constant objects of her care; she adds so much to their allowance, as somewhat exceeds the

wages they got when they were young. This she does to comfort them under the infirmities of their age, that being free from trouble and distress they may serve God in peace and tranquillity of mind. She has generally a large number of this kind, who by her charities, and exhortations to holiness, spend their last days in great piety and devotion.

Miranda never wants compassion even to *common beggars*; especially those that are old or sick, or full of sores, and that want eyes or limbs. *Miranda* considers that *Lazarus* was a common beggar, that notwithstanding he was the care of angels, and carried into *Abraham*'s bosom. She considers that our blessed Saviour and his apostles, were kind to beggars; that they spoke comfortably to them, healed their diseases, and restored eyes and limbs to the lame and blind. She therefore hears their complaints with tenderness, and never bids them go to the place from whence they came, or tells them that she cannot relieve them because they may be cheats, or that they are strangers; but she relieves them for that very reason because they are strangers; and though she cannot, like our Saviour and his Apostles, work miracles for their relief, yet she remembers the words of our Lord, "I was a stranger and ye took me in," and can say with St. *Peter*, "such as I have, give I unto you, in the name of Jesus of *Nazareth*."

It may be, says *Miranda*, that I may sometimes give to those who do not deserve it. But where, says she, has the scripture made merit to be the rule or measure of my charity? On the contrary, does not the scripture speak on this wise, "if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." And if I am to love and do good to my worst enemies, surely I am not to deny alms to poor beggars, whom I neither know to be bad people, nor any way my enemies? Does not God make his sun to rise on the evil and on the

good? Is not this the very goodness that is recommended to us in scripture? that by imitating it, “we may be children of our father who is in heaven, who sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.”

Perhaps you will reply, “By this means I encourage people to be beggars.” But may not the same objection be made against all kinds of charities, for they may encourage people to depend upon them? May not the same be said against forgiving our enemies, cloathing the naked, or giving medicines to the sick? for in so doing we may encourage people to do us hurt or neglect themselves, and be careless of their health. Such thoughtless objections, says *Miranda*, I once urged myself, when in a state of unregeneracy: but since the love of God has dwelt in me, and enlarged my heart, I have been filled with bowels of compassion; and as I daily pray for all, so far as I can, I give to all. And I cannot refuse an alms to those, whom I pray God to bless, and whom I wish to be partakers of eternal glory. I look on those who come to ask my alms, as so many friends and benefactors, that come to do me a greater good than they can receive from me; that come to *exalt* my graces, and be witnesses of my charity; to be monuments of my love, and put it in my power of proving the truth of that glorious declaration “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

This is the spirit, and this is the life of the devout *Miranda*; and if she lives ten years longer, she will have spent six-thousand pounds in charity; for that which she allows herself, may fairly be reckoned amongst her alms.

When she dies, she must shine amongst Apostles, saints and martyrs, she must stand amongst the first servants of God, and be glorious amongst those that have fought the good fight, and finished their course with joy.

“He that hath ears to hear let him hear.”

CHAPTER III.

An enquiry into the first and chief reason, why the generality of Christians fall so far short of the holiness and devotion of Christianity.

SINCE Christian devotion is nothing less than a life wholly devoted unto God, and persons who are free from the necessities of labour and employments, are to consider themselves as devoted to God in a higher degree; it may now reasonably be enquired, how it comes to pass, that the lives even of the moral and better sort of people, are in general so directly contrary to the principles of Christianity? I answer, because the generality of those that call themselves Christians, are destitute of a true living faith in Jesus Christ; for want of which they never effectually intended to please God in all the actions of life, as the happiest and best thing in the world.

To be partaker of such a faith, is every where represented in scripture, as a fundamental and necessary part of true piety. For without a living faith in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, our persons cannot be justified, and consequently none of our performances acceptable in the sight of God. It is

this faith that enables us to overcome the world, and to devote ourselves without reserve to promote the glory of Him, who has loved and given himself for us. And therefore it is purely for want of such a faith, that you see such a mixture of sin and folly in the lives even of the better sort of people: It is for want of this faith, that you see *clergymen* given to pride, and covetousness, and worldly enjoyments: It is for want of such a faith that you see *women* who profess devotion, yet living in all the folly and vanity of dress, wasting their time in idleness and pleasures, and in all such instances of state and equipage as their estate will reach. Let but a woman feel her heart full of *this faith*, and she will no more desire to shine at balls and assemblies, or to make a figure among those that are most finely dressed, than she will desire to dance upon a rope to please spectators. For she will then know that the one is as far from the true nature, wisdom, and excellency of the Christian spirit, as is the other.

Let a *clergyman* be but thus pious, and he will converse as if he had been brought up by an Apostle; he will no more think and talk of *noble preferment*, than of *noble eating*, or a *glorious chariot*. He will no more complain of the frowns of the world, or a small cure, or the want of a patron, than he will complain of the want of a laced coat, or of a running horse. Let him but have such a faith in love for God, as will constrain him to make it his business to study to please God in all his actions, as the happiest and best thing in the world, and then he will know, that there is nothing noble in a clergyman, but *burning zeal* for the salvation of souls; nor any thing poor in his profession but *idleness* and a worldly spirit.

Further, let a *tradesman* but have such a faith, and it will make him a *saint* in his shop; his every day business will be a course of wise and reasonable actions, made holy to God, by flowing from faith, proceeding from love,

and by being done in obedience to his will and pleasure. He will therefore not chiefly consider, what arts or methods or application will soonest make him greater and richer than his brethren, that he may remove from a shop, to a life of state and pleasure; but he will chiefly consider, what arts, what methods, and what application can make worldly business most conducive to God's glory, and his neighbour's good; and consequently make a life of trade, to be a life of holiness, devotion, and undissembled piety.

It was this faith that made the *primitive Christians* such eminent instances of religion; and that made the goodly fellowship of the saints in all ages, and all the glorious army of confessors and martyrs. And if we will stop and ask ourselves, why we are not as pious as the primitive Christians, and saints of old were? our own hearts must tell us, that it is because we never yet perhaps earnestly sought after, and consequently were never really made partakers of, that *precious faith*, whereby they were constrained to intend to please God in all their actions, as the best and happiest thing in the world.

Here then let us judge ourselves sincerely; let us not vainly content ourselves with the common disorders of our lives, the vanity of our expences, the folly of our diversions, the pride of our habits, the idleness of our lives, and the wasting of our time; fancying that these are only such imperfections as we necessarily fall into, through the unavoidable weakness and frailty of our nature; but let us be assured that these habitual disorders of our common life, are so many demonstrable proofs, that we never yet truly accepted of the Lord Jesus and his righteousness by a living faith, and never really intended, as a proof and evidence of such a faith, to please God in all the actions of our life, as the best thing in the world.

Though this be a matter that we can easily pass over at present, whilst the health of our bodies, the passions of our minds, the noise, and hurry, and

pleasures, and business of the world, lead us on with “eyes that see not, and ears that hear not:” yet at death, it will set itself before us in a dreadful magnitude; it will haunt us like a dismal ghost, and our consciences will never let us take our eyes from it, unless they are seared as with a red hot iron, and God shall have given us over to a reprobate mind.

Penitens was a busy notable tradesman, and very prosperous in his dealings; but died in the thirty-fifth year of his age.

A little before his death, when the doctors had given him over, some of his neighbours came one evening to see him; at which time he spake thus to them.

I see, (says he) my friends, the tender concern you have for me, by the grief that appears in your countenances, and I know the thoughts that you now have of me. You think how melancholy a case it is, to see so young a man, and in such flourishing business, delivered up to death. And perhaps, had I visited any of you in my condition, I should have had the same thoughts of you. But now, my friends, my thoughts are no more like your thoughts, than my condition is like yours. It is no trouble to me now to think that I am to die young, or before I have raised an estate. These things are sunk into such *mere nothings*, that I have no name little enough to call them by. For if in a few days, or hours, I am to leave this carcase to be buried in the earth, and to find myself either for ever happy in the favour of God, or eternally separated from all light and peace; can any words sufficiently express the littleness of every thing else?

Is there any dream, like the dream of life, which amuses us with the neglect and disregard of these things? Is there any folly like the folly of our manly state, which is too wise and busy to be at leisure for these reflections?

When we consider death as a misery, we generally think of it as a miserable separation from the enjoyments of this life. We seldom mourn over an old man that dies rich, but we lament the young, that are taken away in the progress of their fortunes. You yourselves look upon me with pity, not that you think I am going unprepared to meet the Judge of quick and dead, but that I am to leave a prosperous trade in the flower of my life.

This is the wisdom of our manly thoughts. And yet what folly of the silliest children, is so great as this? For what is there miserable or dreadful in death, but the consequences of it? When a man is dead, what does any thing signify to him, but the state he is then in?

Our poor friend *Lepidus*, you know died as he was dressing himself for a feast; do you think it is now part of his trouble, that he did not live till that entertainment was over? Feasts, and business, and pleasures and enjoyments, seem great things to us, whilst we think of nothing else; but as soon as we add death to them, they all sink into littleness not to be expressed; and the soul that is separated from the body, no more laments the loss of business, than the losing of a feast.

If I am now going to the joys of God, could there be any reason to grieve, that this happened to me before I was forty years of age. Can it be a sad thing to go to heaven, before I have made a few more bargains, or stood a little longer behind a counter?

And if I am to go amongst lost spirits, could there be any reason to be content, that this did not happen to me till I was old and full of riches.

If good angels were ready to receive my soul, could it be any grief to me that I was dying on a poor bed in a garret?

And if God has delivered me up to evil spirits, to be dragged by them to places of torment, could it be any comfort to me, that they found me upon a

bed of state? When you are as near death as I am, you will know, that all the different states of life, whether of youth or age, riches or poverty, greatness or meanness, signify no more to you, than whether you die in a poor or stately apartment.

The greatness of the things which follow death, makes all that goes before it sink into nothing.

Now, that *judgment* is the next thing which I look for, and *everlasting happiness* or *misery* is come so near to me, all the enjoyments and prosperities of life seem as vain and insignificant, and to have no more to do with my happiness, than the cloaths that I wore when I was a little child.

What a strange thing! that a little health, or the poor business of a shop, should keep us so senseless of these great things that are coming so fast upon us!

Just as you came into my chamber, I was thinking with myself, what numbers of souls there are in the world, in my condition at this very time, surprized with a summons to the other world: some taken from their shops and farms, others from their sports and pleasures; these at suits at law, those at gaming-tables; some on the road, others at their own fire-sides; and all seized at an hour when they thought nothing of it; frighted at the approach of death; confounded at the vanity of all their labours, designs, and projects; astonished at the folly of their past lives, and not knowing which way to turn their thoughts, to find any comfort. Their consciences flying in their faces, bringing all their sins to remembrance, tormenting them with the deepest convictions of their own folly, presenting them with the sight of the angry Judge, and the worm that never dies, the fire that is never quenched, the gates of hell, the powers of darkness, and the bitter pains of eternal death.

O my friends! bless God that you are not of this number; and take this along with you, that there is nothing but a real faith in the Lord Jesus, and a life of true piety, or a death of great stupidity, that can keep off these apprehensions.

Had I now a thousand worlds, I would give them all for one moment's scriptural assurance that I had really received the Lord Jesus by a living faith into my heart, and for one year's more continuance in life, that I might evidence the sincerity of that faith, by presenting unto God, one year of such devotion and good works, as I am persuaded I have hitherto never done.

Perhaps, when you consider that I have lived free from scandal and debauchery, and in the communion of the church, you wonder to see me so full of remorse and self-condemnation at the approach of death.

But alas! what a poor thing is it, to have lived only free from murder, theft, and adultery, which is all that I can say of myself. Was not the slothful servant, that is condemned in the gospel, thus negatively good? And did not the Saviour of mankind tell the young man who led a more blameless and moral life than I have done, that yet one thing he lacked.

But the thing that now surprizes me above all wonders, is this, that till of late I never was convinced of that reigning soul-destroying sin of unbelief; and that I was out of a state of salvation, notwithstanding my negative goodness, my seemingly strict morality, and attendance on public worship and the holy sacrament. It never entered into my head or heart, that the righteousness of Jesus Christ alone, could recommend me to the favour of a sin avenging God, and that I must be born again of God, and have Christ formed in my heart, before I could have any well-grounded assurance that I

was a Christian indeed, or have any solid foundation whereon I might build the superstructure of a truly holy and pious life.

Alas! I thought I had faith in Christ, because I was born in a Christian country, and said in my creed, that "I believed on Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord." I thought I was certainly regenerate and born again, and was a real Christian, because I was baptized when I was young, and received the holy sacrament in my adult age. But alas! little did I consider that faith is something more than the world generally thinks of; a work of the heart, and not merely of the head, and that I must know and feel that there is no other name given under heaven whereby I can be saved, but that of Jesus Christ.

It is true indeed, you have frequently seen me at church and the sacrament; but alas, you little think what remorse of conscience I now feel for so frequently saying, "the remembrance of our sins is grievous unto us, and the burden of them is intolerable," when I never experienced the meaning of them in all my life. You have also seen me join with the minister when he said, "we do not approach thy table trusting on our own righteousness;" but all this while I was utterly ignorant of God's righteousness, which is by faith in Christ Jesus, and was going about to establish a righteousness of my own. It is true indeed, I have kept the fasts and feasts of the church, and have called Christ, Lord, Lord; but little did I think, that no one could call Christ truly Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. I have attended upon ordinations, and heard the Bishop ask the candidates, "whether they were called by the Holy Ghost;" I have seriously attended to the minister, when he exhorted us to pray for true repentance and God's holy Spirit; but alas, I never enquired whether I myself had received the Holy Ghost to sanctify and purify my heart, and worked a true evangelical repentance in my soul. I have prayed in the litany that I might bring forth

the fruits of the Spirit, but alas, my whole life has been nothing but a dead life, a round of duties, and model of performances, without any living faith for their foundation. I have professed myself a member of the church of *England*; I have cried out, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord," and in my zeal have exclaimed against Dissenters; but little did I think, that I was ignorant all this while of most of her essential articles, and that my practice, as well as the want of a real experience of a work of regeneration and true conversion, when I was using her offices, and reading her homilies, gave my conscience the lie.

O my friends! a form of godliness without the power, and dead morality not founded on a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is such a dreadful delusion, so contrary to the lively oracles of God, that did not I know (though alas how late!) that the righteousness of Jesus Christ was revealed in them, and that there was mercy to be found with God, if we venture by a real faith on that righteousness, though at the eleventh hour, I must now sink into total despair.

Penitens was here going on, but had his mouth stopped by a convulsion, which never suffered him to speak any more. He lay convulsed about twelve hours, and then gave up the ghost.

Now if every reader would imagine this *Penitens* to have been some particular acquaintance or relation of his, and fancy that he saw and heard all which is here described; that he stood by his bed-side when his poor friend lay in such distress and agony, lamenting the want of a living faith in Jesus Christ, as the cause of a dead, lifeless, indevout life: if besides this, he should consider, how often he himself might have been surprized in the same formal dead state, and made an example to the rest of the world; this double reflection, both upon the distress of his friend, and the goodness of

that God, which ought to have led him to repentance, would in all likelihood set him upon seeking and earnestly praying for such a faith, of which *Penitens* felt himself void, and constrain him to let the Lord have no rest, till he should be pleased to apply the righteousness of his dear Son to his sin-sick soul, and enable him henceforward to study, out of love, to glorify him in all the actions of his future life, as the best and happiest thing in the world.

This therefore being so useful a meditation, I shall here leave the reader, I hope, seriously engaged in it.

CHAPTER IV.

Shewing, how the fear of being singular, and making the world their rule of action, is a second great cause, why so few devote themselves to God.

ANOTHER cause why so few devote themselves to God, is a *fear of contempt* from the world, and their making its modes and customs the general rule of all their actions.

The history of the gospel is chiefly the history of Christ's conquest over the world. And the number of true Christians, is only the number of those who following the Spirit of Christ, have lived, and do live, contrary to this spirit of the world.

"Whosoever is born of God, (says the apostle) overcometh the world. Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

This is the language of the whole New Testament; this is the mark of real Christianity. We are to be dead to the spirit and temper of the world, and live a new life in the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

It was this, that made Saint *Paul* so passionately express himself, “God forbid, that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” But why does he glory? because his Christian profession had called him to the honour of suffering for Christ, and of dying to the world, under reproach and contempt, as the Lord Jesus had died upon the cross. Hence he immediately adds, “by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”

Thus was the cross of Christ, in Saint *Paul*’s time, the glory of Christians. For he elsewhere asserts, speaking of Christians in general, that they are “to suffer, to be crucified, to die, and to rise with Christ;” or else his crucifixion, and death, and resurrection, will profit them nothing. As to his sufferings, says he, “if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.” As to his crucifixion and death, “Knowing that our old man is crucified with him. If we are dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.” And then as to the resurrection of Christ, says he, “If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.” From all which texts it plainly appears, that our blessed Lord not only died and rose again in our stead, and as our federal head and representative, but that also if we are Christians indeed, we are to be conformed to all he did and suffered for us.

It was for this reason, that the holy Jesus said of his Disciples, and of all true believers, “they are not of this world, as I am not of this world.” Because, all true believers conforming to the sufferings, crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Christ, live no longer after the spirit and temper of this world, but “their life is hid with Christ in God.”

How high this life is placed above the ways of the world, is wonderfully described by Saint *Paul*, in these words: “Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh;

yet henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

He that feels the force and spirit of these words, can hardly bear any human interpretation of them. "Henceforth, &c." that is, since the death and resurrection of Christ, the state of Christianity is become so glorious a state, that we do not even consider Christ himself as in the flesh upon earth, but as a God of glory in heaven; we know and consider ourselves not barely as men in the flesh, but as fellow members of a new society, that are to have all our hearts, our tempers and conversation in heaven.

Saint *John* plainly declares thus much: "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them; *we are of God*." This is his description of the followers of Christ; and it is proof enough, that no people are to be reckoned Christians in reality, who in their hearts and tempers belong to this world.

Saint *Paul* takes it for a certainty so well known to Christians, that they are no longer to be considered as living in this world, that he thus argues from it, as from an undeniable principle, concerning the abolishing the rites of the *Jewish* law: "Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" Here could be no argument in this, but in the Apostle's taking it for undeniable, that Christians knew, their profession required them to have done with all the tempers and passions of this world, and to live as citizens of the *New Jerusalem*, and to have their conversation in heaven.

Our blessed Lord himself has fully determined this point, in these words, "They are not of this world, as I am not of this world." This is the state of Christianity with regard to this world. If you are not thus out of and

contrary to the world, you want the distinguishing mark of Christianity: You do not belong to Christ, but by being out of the world as he was out of it.

We may deceive ourselves, if we please, with vain and softening comments upon these words; but they are and will be understood in their first simplicity and plainness, by every one who reads them in the same spirit that our blessed Lord spoke them. And to understand them in any lower and less significant meaning, is to let carnal wisdom explain away that doctrine, by which itself was to be destroyed.

But notwithstanding the clearness and plainness of these doctrines, which teach us thus to renounce the world, yet what a great part of Christians do live and die slaves to the customs and temper of the world.

How many people swell with pride and vanity for such things as they would not know how to value at all? but that they are admired in the world.

Would a man take ten years more drudgery in business to add two horses more to his coach, but that he knows, the world most of all admires a coach and six?

To abound in wealth, to have fine houses and rich cloaths, to be attended with splendor and equipage, to be beautiful in our persons, to have titles of dignity, to be above our fellow-creatures, to command the bows and obeisance of other people, to be looked on with admiration, to pursue our enemies with revenge, to subdue all that oppose us, to set ourselves in as much splendor as we can, to live highly and magnificently, to eat and drink, and delight ourselves in the most costly manner; these are the great, the honourable, the desirable things, to which the spirit of the world turns the eyes of all people; and many a one is afraid of standing still, and not engaging in the pursuit of these things, lest the same world should take him for a *fool*.

Many a man would often drop a resentment, and forgive an affront, but that he is afraid the world would not forgive him.

How many would practice Christian temperance and sobriety in its utmost extent, were it not for the censure which the world passes upon such a life?

Thus do the impressions which we have received from living in the world enslave our minds, so that we dare not attempt to be eminent in the sight of God, and holy angels, for fear of being little in the eyes of the world.

You will perhaps say, that the world is now become Christian, at least that part of it where we live; and therefore the world is not now to be considered in that state of opposition to Christianity, as when it was heathen.

It is granted, the world now professeth Christianity. But will any one say, that this Christian world is of the spirit of Christ? are its general tempers the tempers of Christ? are the passions of sensuality, self-love, pride, covetousness, ambition, and vain-glory, less contrary to the spirit of the gospel, now they are amongst Christians, than when they were among heathens? Or will you say, that the tempers and passions of the heathen world are lost and gone?

The world is fully described to our hands by Saint *John*. "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," &c. Now will you say, that this world is become Christian? But if all this still subsists, then the same world is now in being, and the same enemy to Christianity that was in Saint *John*'s days.

Had you lived with our Saviour, as his true disciple, you had then been hated as he was; and if you now live in his spirit, the world will be the same enemy to you now, that it was to him then.

"If ye were of the world, (saith our blessed Lord) the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the

world, therefore the world hateth you."

We are apt to lose the true meaning of these words, by considering them only as an *historical description* of something that was the state of our Saviour and his disciples at that time. But this is reading the scripture as a *dead letter*: for they as exactly describe the state of true Christians in this, and all other times, to the end of the world.

For as *true Christianity* is nothing else but the spirit of Christ, so whether that spirit appear in the person of Christ himself, or in his apostles, or followers in any age, it is the same thing: whoever hath his spirit, will be hated, despised, and condemned by the world, as he was. For the world will always love its own, and none but its own: this is as certain and unchangeable, as the contrariety between light and darkness.

When the holy Jesus saith, "If the world hate you," he does not add by way of consolation, that it may some time or other cease its hatred, or that it will not always hate them; but he only gives this as a reason for their bearing it, "You know that it hated me, before it hated you:" signifying, that it was he, or his spirit, that by reason of its contrariety to the world, was then, and always would be hated by it.

Whether, therefore, the world outwardly professeth, or openly persecuteth Christianity, it is still in the same state of contrariety to the true spirit and holiness of the gospel.

And indeed the world, by professing Christianity, is so far from being a less dangerous enemy than it was before, that it has by its favour destroyed more Christians, than ever it did by the most violent persecution.

It is a greater and more dangerous enemy, because it has greater power over Christians by its favours, riches, honours, rewards, and protections, than it had by the fire and fury of its persecutions.

It is a more dangerous enemy, by having lost its appearance of enmity. And the change that the world has undergone, has only altered its methods, but not lessened its power of destroying religion.

Christians had nothing to fear from the *heathen world*, but the loss of their lives; but the world become a friend, makes it difficult for them to save their religion.

How many consciences are kept at quiet, upon no other foundation, but because they sin under the authority of the Christian *world*? How many directions of the gospel lie by unregarded, and how unconcernedly do particular persons read them? for no other reason, but because they seem unregarded by the Christian world. So that there is hardly any possibility of saving yourself from the present world, but by considering it as the same wicked enemy to all true holiness, as it is represented in the scriptures; and by assuring yourself, that it is as dangerous to conform to its tempers and passions, now it is Christian, as when it was heathen.

From this quarter, therefore, arises a great obstruction to a really devout life, because it cannot subsist in any person, but so far as he is dead to the world. And though human prudence seems to talk mighty wisely about the necessity of avoiding *particularities*, yet he that dares not be so weak as to be particular, will be often obliged to avoid the most substantial duties of Christian piety.

CHAPTER V.

Shewing that the education which men generally receive in their youth, makes a devout life difficult to be practised; and the spirit of a better education represented in the character of Paternus.

ANOTHER obstruction to a devout life, arises from our *education*. We are all of us, for the most part, corruptly educated, and then sent to take our course in a corrupt world: so that it is no wonder, if examples of true piety are so seldom seen.

Numbers are undone by being born and bred in families that have no religion; where they are made vicious and irregular, becoming like those with whom they first lived.

But this is not the thing I now mean; the education that I here intend, is such as children generally receive from virtuous and sober parents, and learned tutors and governors.

The first temper that we try to awaken in them is *pride*: as dangerous a passion as that of *lust*. We stir them up to vain thoughts of themselves, and

do every thing we can to puff up their minds with a sense of their own abilities.

Whatever way of life we intend them for, we apply to the fire and vanity of their minds; and exhort them to every thing from corrupt motives. We stir them up to action from principles of strife and ambition; from glory, envy, and a desire of distinction, that they may overtop all others, and shine above their neighbours in the world. Nay, we repeat and inculcate these motives upon them, till they think it a part of their duty to be proud, envious, and vain-glorious of their own accomplishments.

If children are intended for *holy orders*, we set before them some eminent orator, whose fine preaching has made him the admiration of the age, and carried him through all the *dignities* and preferments of the church. We encourage them to have these *honours* in their eye, and to expect the reward of their studies from them.

If the youth is intended for a *trade*, we bid him look at all the rich men of the same trade, and to consider how many are carried about in their stately coaches, who began in the same low degree as he now does. We awaken his ambition, and endeavour to give his mind a right turn, by often telling him how very rich such and such a tradesman died.

If he is to be a *lawyer*, then we set great counsellors, lords, judges, and chancellors, before his eyes. We tell him what great fees, and great applause, attend fine pleading; we exhort him to take fire at these things, and to be content with nothing less than the highest honours of the long robe.

That this is the nature of our best education, is too plain to need any proof; and yet after all this, we complain of the effects of pride; we wonder to see grown men acted and governed by ambition, envy, scorn, and a desire

of glory; not considering, that they were all the time of their youth, called upon to all their action and industry upon the same principles.

How dry and poor must the doctrines of self-denial, and deadness to the world, sound to a youth, that has been spurred up to all his industry, by ambition, envy, and a desire of glory and distinction? And if he is not to act by these principles when he is a *man*, why do we call him to act by them in his *youth*?

I know it is said in defence of this method of education; that ambition, and a desire of glory, are necessary to excite young people to industry; and that if we were to press upon them the doctrines of self-denial, and renunciation of the world, we should deject their minds, and sink them into dulness and idleness.

But such objectors do not consider, that this reason, if it has any strength, is full as strong against pressing the like doctrines upon grown men, lest we should deject their minds, and sink them into dulness and idleness.

For who does not see, that *middle-aged men* want as much the assistance of pride, ambition, and vain-glory, to spur them up to action and industry, as do children? And it is very certain, that the precepts of humility are more contrary to the designs of such men, and more grievous to their minds, when they are pressed upon them, than they are to the minds of young persons.

But further: could such objectors think, that if any children had been educated by our blessed Lord, or his Apostles, that their minds would have been sunk into dulness and idleness? Or could they think, that such children would not have been trained up in the profoundest principles of self-denial and true devotion? Can they say, that our blessed Lord, who, considering him in his human nature, was the most devout, self-denying man that ever

was on earth, was hindered by his devotion from doing the greatest example of worthy and glorious actions that ever were done by man? Can they say, that his Apostles, who lived in the same spirit of their Master, did therefore cease to be laborious and active instruments of doing good to all the world?

A few such reflections as these, are sufficient to expose all the poor pretences for an education in pride and ambition.

Paternus lived about two hundred years ago; he had but one son, whom he educated himself, in his own house. As they were sitting together in the garden, when the child was *ten years* old, *Paternus* thus addressed him.

"The little time that you have been in the world, my child, you have spent wholly with me; and my love and tenderness to you, has made you look upon me as your only friend and benefactor, and the cause of all the comfort and pleasure that you enjoy. Your heart, I know, would be ready to break with grief, if you thought this was the last day that I should live with you.

But, my child, though you now think yourself mighty happy, because you have hold of my hand, you are now in the hands, and under the tender care of a much greater father and friend than I am, whose love to you is far greater than mine, and from whom you receive such blessings as no mortal can give.

That God, whom you have seen me daily to worship; whom I daily call upon to bless both you and me, and all mankind; whose wondrous acts are recorded in those scriptures which you constantly read; that God, who created the heavens and the earth; who brought a flood upon the old world; who saved *Noah* in the ark; who was the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*; whom *Job* blessed and praised in the greatest afflictions; who delivered the *Israelites* out of the hands of the *Egyptians*; who was the protector of righteous *Joseph*, *Moses*, *Joshua*, and holy *Daniel*; who sent so

many prophets into the world; and who sent his Son Jesus Christ to redeem mankind: this God, who has done all these great things; who has created the many millions of men, that lived and died before you was born; with whom the spirits of good men that are departed this life, now live; whom infinite numbers of angels now worship in heaven; this great God, who is the creator of worlds, of angels, and men, is your loving father and friend, your good creator and nourisher; from whom, and not from me, you received your being ten years ago, at the time that I planted that little *elm* which you there see.

I myself am not half the age of this *shady oak* under which we sit; many of our fathers have sat under its boughs; we have all of us called it ours in our turn; it stands, and drops its *masters*, as it drops its leaves.

You see, my son, this wide and large *firmament* over our heads, where the *sun* and *moon*, and all the *stars*, appear in their turn: if you was to be carried up to any of these bodies, you would discover others as much above you, as the stars are above this *earth*. Were you to go up or down, east or west, north or south, you would find the same height without any top, and the same depth without any bottom.

And yet, my child, so great is God, that all these bodies added together, are but as a grain of sand in his sight. Nevertheless, you are as much the care of this great God and Father of all worlds, and of all *spirits*, as if there were no creature for him to love and protect but you alone. He numbers the hairs of your head, watches over you sleeping and waking, and has preserved you from a thousand dangers, of which neither you nor I know any thing.

How poor my power is, and how little I am able to do for you, you have often seen. Your late sickness has shewn you how little I could do for you in

that state; and the frequent pains of your head are plain proofs, that I have no power to remove them.

I can bring you food and medicines, but have no power to turn them into your relief and nourishment: it is God alone that can do this for you.

Therefore, my child, fear, and worship, and love God. Secure an interest in his favour, by seeking after a living faith in Jesus Christ his dearly beloved Son; and then He, who blessed my father before I was born, will bless you when I am dead.

I shall in a short time die, and leave you to God and yourself; and as I know that my Redeemer liveth, and trust that God has forgiven me my sins, I shall go to my dear Saviour Christ Jesus, and live amongst patriarchs and prophets, saints and martyrs, and wait for your safe arrival at the same place.

Therefore, my child, meditate on these great things, and your soul, through the influences of God's blessed Spirit, will soon grow great and noble, by so meditating upon them.

Let your thoughts often leave these gardens, these fields, and farms, to contemplate upon God, and Christ, and heaven, to meditate upon angels and the spirits of good men living in light and glory.

As you have been used to look to me in all your actions, and have been afraid to do any thing unless you first knew my will; so let it now be a rule of your life, to look up to God, even a God in Christ, in all your actions; to do every thing in his fear, and to abstain from every thing that is not according to his will.

God keepeth a book of life, wherein all the actions of all men are written; and when you die, my child, this book will be laid open before men and angels; and according as your actions are there found to have been done in,

and proceeded from a living faith in Jesus Christ, you will either be received into the happiness of those holy men who have died in faith, or be turned away among those wicked spirits, those hypocrites and unbelievers, that are never to see God any more.

Never forget this book, my son, for it must be opened, you must see it, and you must be tried by it according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good, or whether they have been evil.

But above all, my child, learn of Jesus Christ to be meek and lowly in heart, and never do any thing through strife or vain-glory. Resist, therefore, and look up to Christ for a conquest over every thought of *self-pride* and *self-distinction*; and accustom yourself to rejoice in all the excellencies and perfections of your fellow-creatures, and pray and study that you may be as glad to see any of their good actions, as your own. For as God is as well pleased with their well-doings, as with yours; so you ought to desire, that every thing that is wise, and holy, and good, may be performed in as high a manner by other people, as by yourself.

When I am dead, my son, you will be master of all my estate, which will be a great deal more than the necessities of one family require. As you are, therefore, to be charitable to the souls of men, and wish them the same happiness with yourself, in heaven, so be charitable to their bodies, and endeavour to make them as happy as you can upon earth.

Study to have your heart filled with the love of God, and the love of your neighbour, and then be contented to be no deeper a scholar, no finer a gentleman, than these tempers will make you. I am teaching you *Latin* and *Greek*, not that you should desire to be a great critic, a fine poet, or an eloquent orator; but, that you may at proper times look into the history of past ages, and learn the methods of God's providence over the world; and

that by reading the writings of the ancient sages, you may see how wisdom and virtue have been the praise of great men of all ages, and fortify your mind by their wise sayings.

Avoid all superfluous shews of finery and equipage, and let your house be furnished with moderate conveniencies. Do not consider what your estate can afford, but what right reason and religion require.

Let your dress be decent, clean, and modest; and as to your meat and drink, in them observe the highest rules of Christian temperance and sobriety; consider your body only as the servant and minister of your soul; and only so nourish it, as it may best perform an humble and obedient service to it.

But, my son, observe as a principal thing, and which I shall remind you of as long as I live with you, *Hate and despise all human glory*; it is nothing else but human folly. Love humility in all its instances, practise it in all its parts; condescend to all the weakness and infirmities of your fellow-creatures, cover their frailties, love their excellencies, encourage their virtues, relieve their wants, rejoice in their prosperities, compassionate their distress, receive their friendship, overlook their unkindness, forgive their malice, be a servant of servants, and condescend to do the lowest offices to the lowest of mankind.

Aspire after nothing but an interest in the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and as a consequence of that, your own purity and perfection. Remember, my dear child, remember, that there is but one man in the world, with whom you are to have perpetual contention, and whom you should be always striving to exceed, and that is yourself.

The time of practising these precepts, my son, will soon be over with you; the world will soon slip through your hands, or rather you will soon slip

through it. It seems but the other day, since I received the same instructions from my dear father, that I am now leaving with you. And the God that gave me ears to hear, and a heart to receive what my father said unto me, will, I hope, give you grace to love and follow the same instructions."

Thus did *Paternus* educate his son.

Can any one think, that such an education as this would weaken and deject the minds of young people, and deprive the world of any worthy and reasonable labours?

So far therefrom, that there is nothing so likely to enoble and exalt the mind, and prepare it for the most heroical exercise of all virtues. And fatal experience every day evinces, that a contrary way of educating youth, is no small hindrance to their devoting themselves entirely to God, and living up to the strictest rules of the blessed and everlasting gospel.

An education which is not wholly intent upon this, is as much beside the point, as an art of physic that had little or no regard to the restoration of health: or rather, it is like administering poison instead of physic.

For as the only end of the physician, is to restore nature to its own state; so the only end of education is, to restore our rational nature to its proper state. And as physic may justly be called the art of restoring health, so education should be considered in no other light, than as the art of recovering man to the use of reason and religion.

The youths that attended upon *Pythagoras*, *Socrates*, *Plato*, and *Epictetus*, were thus educated. And since Christianity hath, as it were, new created the *moral* and *religious world*, and set every thing that is reasonable, wise, holy, and desirable, in its true point of light; one may reasonably expect, that the education of youth should be as much bettered by Christianity, as the faith and doctrines of religion are amended by it.

But since our modern education is not of this kind, a deficiency in such an essential point, may be justly assigned as *one great reason* why many men find it so exceedingly difficult to devote themselves wholly unto God.

CHAPTER VI.

Shewing how the method of educating daughters, makes it difficult for them to enter into the spirit of Christianity; how miserably they are injured and abused by such an education; and the spirit of a better education represented in the character of Eusebia.

THAT turn of mind which is taught and encouraged in the *education of daughters*, makes it exceeding difficult for them to enter into such a sense and practice of true devotion, as the spirit of Christianity requires.

For if it were a virtue in a woman, to be proud and vain in herself, and fond of the world; we could hardly use better means to raise these passions, than those that are now used in their education.

Matilda is a fine woman, of good breeding, great sense, and has a great deal of regard for religion: she has three daughters, educated by herself; she will trust them to no one else, nor at any school, for fear they should learn any thing ill. She stays with the *dancing-master* all the time he is with them, because she will hear every thing that is said to them. She has heard them read the *scriptures* so often, that they can repeat great part of them without

book; and there is scarce a good book of devotion, but you may find it in their closets.

Her daughters see her great zeal for religion, but then they see an equal earnestness for all sorts of finery. They are afraid to meet her, if they have missed the *church*; but then they are more afraid to see her, if they are not laced as strait as they can possibly be.

Matilda is so intent upon all the arts of improving their *dress*, that she has some new fancy almost every day, and leaves no ornament untryed, from the richest jewel to the poorest flower. She is so nice and critical in her judgment, and so sensible of the smallest error, that her maid is often forced to dress and undress her daughters three or four times a day, before she can be satisfied with it.

As to the *patching*, she reserves that to herself; for she says, if they are not stuck on with judgment, they are rather a prejudice, than an advantage to the face.

The children see so plainly the temper of their mother, that they even affect to be more pleased with dress, than they really are, merely to gain her favour.

They saw the eldest sister once brought to her tears, and her perverseness severely reprimanded, for presuming to say, that she thought it was better to cover the neck, than to go so far naked as the modern dress requires.

She stints them in their meals, and is very scrupulous of what they eat and drink; and tells them how many fine shapes she has seen spoiled in her time, for want of such care. If a *pimple* rises in their faces, she is in a great fright, and they themselves are as afraid to see her with it, as if they had committed some great sin.

Whenever they begin to look sanguine and healthy, she calls in the assistance of the *doctor*; and if physic and issues will keep the complexion from inclining to *coarse* or *ruddy*, she thinks them well employed.

By this means they are pale, sickly, infirm creatures, vapoured through want of spirits, crying at the smallest accidents, swooning away at any thing that frightens them, and hardly able to bear the weight of their best cloaths.

The eldest daughter lived as long as she could under this discipline, and died in the twentieth year of her age. When she was opened, it appeared, that her ribs had grown into her liver, and that her other entrails were much hurt, by being crushed together with her stays, which her mother had ordered to be twitched so strait, that it often brought tears into her eyes, whilst the maid was dressing her.

Her youngest daughter is run away with a gamester, a man of great beauty, and who, in dressing and dancing, has no superior.

Matilda says, she should die with grief at this accident, but that her conscience tells her, she has contributed nothing to it herself. She appeals to their closets and their books of devotion, to testify what care she has taken to establish her children in a life of solid piety and devotion.

Now, though I do not intend to say, that no daughters are brought up in a better way than this (for I hope many are) yet thus much, I believe, may be said, that the much greater part of them are not brought up so well, or accustomed to so much religion, as in the present instance.

Their minds are turned as much to the care of beauty and dress, and the indulgence of vain desires, as in the present case, without having such rules of devotion to stand against it. So that if solid piety is much wanted in that sex, it is the plain and natural consequence of a vain and corrupt education. If they are often too ready to receive the first fops, beaux, and fine dancers

for their husbands; it is no wonder they should like that in men, which they have been taught to admire in themselves. And if they are often seen to lose that little regard to religion, that they were taught in their youth, it is no more to be wondered at, than to see a little flower choaked and killed amongst rank weeds.

Personal pride, affectation, a delight in beauty, and fondness of finery, are tempers that must kill all religion in the soul, or be killed by it; they can no more thrive together than health and sickness.

But how possible it is to bring up daughters in a more excellent way, let the following character declare.

Eusebia is a pious widow, well born, and well bred, and has a good estate for five daughters, whom she loves not only as her natural, but also as her spiritual children; and they reverence her as their spiritual mother, with an affection equal to that of the fondest friends.

"My children, (says she) your dear father was an humble, watchful, truly devout man. Whilst his sickness would suffer him to talk with me, his discourse was chiefly about your education. He knew the ruins that a wrong education made in our sex; and therefore conjured me with the tenderest expressions, to renounce the *fashionable ways* of educating daughters, and to bring you all up in the most unaffected instances of a truly Christian and devout life.

When your father died, I was much pitied by my friends, as having all the care of a family, and the management of an estate fallen upon me. But my own grief was founded on another principle; I was grieved to see myself deprived of so faithful a friend, and that such an eminent example of real devotion, should be taken from the eyes of his children, before they were of an age to love and follow it. But as to worldly cares, which my friends

thought lay so heavy upon me, they are most of them of our own making, and fall away as soon as we begin to *know ourselves*.

For this reason, all my discourse with you, has been to acquaint you with yourselves, and to accustom you to such books of devotion, as may best instruct you in this greatest of all knowledge.

You would think it hard, not to know the family into which you was born, what ancestors you were descended from, and what estate was to come to you. But, my children, you may know all this with exactness, and yet be as ignorant of yourselves, as a man that should take himself to be wax, and therefore dared not to let the sun shine upon him.

In order to know yourselves aright, you must consider yourselves as so many fallen embodied spirits, conceived and born in sin, and that your lives began in a state of corruption and disorder, full of tempers and passions, that blind and darken the reason of your minds, and incline you to that which is hurtful.

Your bodies are not only poor and perishing like your cloaths, but they are as *infected cloaths*, that fill you with ill distempers, which oppress the soul with sickly appetites, and vain envyings.

Hence all of us are like two beings, that have as it were two hearts within us: with the one, we see, taste, and admire reason, purity, and holiness; with the other we incline to pride, vanity, and sensual delights.

This internal war we always feel within us more or less; and if you would know the one thing necessary to you and all the world, it is this, to preserve, strengthen, and perfect all that is rational, holy, and divine in our nature, and by the assistance of the blessed Spirit of God, to mortify and subdue all that vanity, pride, and sensuality, which springs from the corruption of our state.

Whilst you live thus, you live like yourselves, and what is more, like Christians; but whenever you are more intent upon adorning your persons, than upon perfecting your souls, you are much more beside yourselves, than he, that had rather have a laced coat, than an healthful body.

Never consider yourselves, therefore, as persons that are to be seen, admired, and courted by men; but as *poor sinners*, that are to be washed in the blood of the Lamb of God, and accepted through his all-sufficient righteousness, received by faith, and to be saved from the follies of a miserable world, and made meet for heaven by the powerful operations of his blessed Spirit.

These considerations have made me think it my duty to teach you nothing that was dangerous for you to learn. I have kept you from every thing that might betray you into weakness and folly, or make you think any thing fine, but a *fine mind*; any thing happy, but an interest in the favour of God, through Jesus Christ; or any thing desirable, but his love shed abroad in the heart, and to do all the good you possibly can to your fellow-creatures.

Instead of the vain, immodest entertainment of *plays* and *operas*, I have taught you to delight in pious reading and religious conversation. What music, dancing, and diversions are to the people of the world, that holy meditation, fervent prayers, and other acts of devotion, have been to you. Instead of forced shapes, patched faces, and affected motions, I have taught you to conceal your bodies with *modest garments*, and to let the world have nothing to view of you, but the plainness and sincerity, the humility and unaffectedness of all your behaviour.

You know, my children, that a single state frees from worldly cares and troubles, and gives a woman an opportunity of caring only how she may please the Lord; but as I look upon you all to be so many great blessings of

a married state; so I leave it to your choice, either to do as I have done, or to continue in a virgin state. Only let me remind you, if you intend to marry, let the time never come till you find a man that has those graces, which you are aspiring after yourselves; who is likely to be a friend to all your virtues, and with whom it is better to live, than to want the benefit of his example.

Avoid therefore the conversation of what the world calls *fine-bred fops*, and *beaux*; for they are the shame of their own sex, and ought to be the abhorrence of yours.

If evil speaking, scandal, or backbiting, be the conversation where you happen to be, keep your hearts to yourselves; and if you have no opportunity to reprove or turn the stream of such conversation into a proper channel, retire as soon as you can.

Love and reverence *poor people*; as for many reasons, so particularly for this, because our blessed Saviour was one of the number. Visit and converse with them frequently: you will often find simplicity, innocence, patience, fortitude, and great piety amongst them; and where they are not so, your good example may amend them. For this cause, you know I have divided part of my estate already amongst you, that you each may be charitable out of your own stock, and take it in your turns to provide for the poor and sick of the parish.

Whether married or unmarried, consider yourselves as mothers and sisters, as friends and relations to all that want your assistance; and never allow yourselves to be idle, whilst others want any thing that your hands can make for them.

I have brought you up to all kinds of labour, that are proper for women, as sowing, knitting, spinning, and all other parts of housewifery; not merely for your amusement, and that you may know how to direct your servants;

but that you may be serviceable to yourselves and others, and be saved from those temptations which attend an idle life. I must therefore repeat to you, my daughters, what I have often reminded you of before, that I had rather see you reduced to the necessity of maintaining yourselves by your own hands, than to have riches to excuse yourselves from labour. Never therefore consider your labour merely as an amusement to get rid of your time, and so may be as trifling as you please; but consider it as something that is to be serviceable to yourselves and others, that is to serve some sober ends of life, to save and redeem your time, and make it turn to your account, when the works of all people shall be tried by fire.

What would you think of the wisdom of him, that should employ his time in distilling of waters, and making liquors which no body could use, merely to amuse himself with the variety of their colour and clearness; when with less labour and expence, he might satisfy the wants of those who have nothing to drink? And yet he would be as wisely employed, as those that are amusing themselves with such tedious works as they neither need, nor hardly know how to use when they are finished; when with less labour and expence they might be doing as much good, as he that is cloathing the naked, or visiting the sick. Be glad therefore to know the wants of the poorest people, and think it not beneath you, to let your hands be employed in making such mean and ordinary things for them, as their necessities require. Thus *Dorcas* was employed, who is mentioned with so much honour in holy writ; and by so doing, you will behave like true disciples of that Lord and Master, ‘who came into the world not to be ministered unto, but to minister.’

In short, my dear children, strive to do every thing that is praise-worthy, but do nothing in order to be praised; nor think of any reward of all your

works of faith and labours of love, till Jesus Christ cometh with all his holy angels. Think, my children, that the soul of your good father, now with God, speaks to you through my mouth; and let the double desire of your father who is gone, and of me who am with you, above all, let the mercies of God in Christ Jesus, prevail upon you to love God with all your souls, to study your own perfection, to practise humility, and to do all the good you can to all your fellow-creatures, especially to those who are of the houshold of faith, till it shall please God to call you to another life."

Thus did the pious widow educate her daughters. The spirit of this education speaks so plainly for itself, that, I hope, I need say nothing in its justification. If we could see it in life, as well as read of it in books, the world would soon find the happy effects.

There is nothing more desirable for the common good of all the world, than that we might see it. For though *women* do not carry on the trade and business of the world, yet as they are *mothers* and *mistresses* of families, they have for some time the care of the education of their children of both sorts, and are entrusted with that which is of the greatest consequence to human life. For as the health and strength, or weakness of our bodies, is very much owing to their methods of treating us when we are young; so the soundness or folly of our minds, are not less owing to those first tempers and ways of thinking, which we eagerly received from the love, tenderness, authority and constant conversation of our mothers.

Is it not then much to be lamented, that this sex, on whom so much depends, who have the first forming of our bodies and our minds, are not only educated in pride, but in the silliest and most contemptible part of it?

They are not suffered to dispute with us the proud *prizes* of arts and sciences, of learning and eloquence, in which I have much suspicion they

would often prove our superiors; but we turn them over to the study of beauty and dress, and the whole world conspire to make them to think of nothing else. Fathers and mothers, friends and relations, seem to have no other wish towards the *little girl*, but that she may have a *fair skin*, a *fine shape*, *dress well*, and *dance* to admiration.

And what makes this matter the more to be lamented, is this. That women are not only spoiled by this education, but we spoil that part of the world, which would otherwise furnish the most instances of an eminent and exalted piety. The *Church* has formerly had eminent saints in that sex; and it may reasonably be thought, that it is purely owing to their poor and vain education, that this honour of their sex is for the most part confined to former ages.

The corruption of the world indulges them in great vanity, and mankind seem to consider them in no other view, than as so many *painted idols*, that are to allure and gratify their passions; so that if many women are vain, light, gew-gaw creatures, they have this to say in excuse of themselves, that they are not only such as their education has made them, but such as the generality of the world allow them to be.

Some indeed are pleased to say, that women are naturally of little and vain minds, and consequently their trifling vain behaviour is owing solely to that; but this I look upon to be as false and unreasonable, as to say, that *butchers* are naturally cruel: for as their cruelty is not owing to their natures, but to their *way* of life, which has changed their natures; so whatever littleness and vanity is to be observed in the minds of women, it is like the cruelty of butchers, a temper that is wrought into them by that life which they are taught and accustomed to lead. At least thus much must be

said, that we cannot justly charge any thing upon their nature, till we take care that it is not perverted by their education.

But supposing it were true, that they were thus naturally vain and light, then how much more blameable is that education, which seems contrived to strengthen and increase the folly and weakness of their minds? For if it were a virtue in women to be proud, and vain, and indevout, we could hardly take better means to raise these bad things in them, than those which are now used in their education.

Some people that judge hastily, will perhaps say, I have been exercising too great a severity against the sex. But more reasonable persons will easily observe, that I entirely spare the sex, and only arraign their education; that, I profess, I cannot spare; but the only reason is, because it is their greatest enemy, because it deprives the world of so many blessings, and the church of so many saints as might reasonably be expected from persons, formed by their natural temper to all goodness and tenderness, and fitted, by the clearness and brightness of their minds, to contemplate, love and admire every thing that is holy, virtuous, and divine.

CHAPTER VII.

Shewing, how true devotion fills our lives the greatest peace and happiness that can be enjoyed in this world.

SOME people perhaps may object, that by thus living wholly unto God, and introducing a regard to his glory in all that we do, too great a restraint will be put upon human nature; and that by thus depriving ourselves of so many seemingly innocent pleasures, as such a way of life would hinder us from pursuing, we shall render our lives dull, uneasy, and melancholy.

But this objection is entirely groundless. For Christian devotion requires us to renounce no ways of life, wherein we can act reasonably, and offer what we do to the glory of God. All ways of life, all satisfactions and enjoyments that are within these bounds, are no ways denied by the strictest rules of real devotion. And will you think that your life must be *uncomfortable*, unless you may displease God, be fools and mad, and act contrary to that reason and wisdom which He has implanted in you?

As for those satisfactions which we dare not offer to a holy God, which are only invented by the folly and corruption of the world, which inflame

our passions, and sink our souls into grossness and sensuality, and thereby render us unmeet for communion with God here, and the eternal enjoyment of Him hereafter, surely it can be no uncomfortable state of life, to be rescued by religion from such murderers both of our souls and bodies.

Let us suppose a person destitute of that knowledge which we have from our senses, placed somewhere alone by himself, in the midst of a variety of things which he did not know how to use; that he has by him bread, wine, gold-dust, iron chains, gravel, garments, and fire. Let it be supposed, that he had no knowledge of the right use of these things, nor any direction from his senses how to quench his thirst, or satisfy his hunger, or make any use of the things about him. Let it be supposed, that in his drought he puts gold dust into his eyes; when his eyes smart, he puts wine into his ears; that in his hunger, he puts gravel in his mouth: that in pain, he loads himself with the iron chains; that feeling cold, he puts his feet in the water; that being frighted at the fire, he runs away from it; and that being weary, he makes a seat of his bread. Let it be supposed, that through his ignorance of the right use of the things that are about him, he will vainly torment himself whilst he lives; and at last die, blinded with dust, choaked with gravel, and loaded with irons. Let it be supposed, that some good being came to him, and shewed him the nature and use of all the things that were about him, and gave him such strict rules of using them, as would certainly, if observed, make him the happier for all that he had, and deliver him from the pains of hunger, and thirst, and cold; could you with any reason affirm, that those strict rules of using the things that were about him, had rendered that poor man's life dull and uncomfortable?

Now this is, in some measure, a representation of the *strict rules* of religion; they relieve our ignorance, save us from tormenting ourselves, and

teach us to use every thing about us, not only to the glory of God, but to our own proper advantage.

If religion commands us to live wholly unto God, and to do all to his glory, it is because every other way of life is living wholly against ourselves, and will end in our own shame and confusion.

Would you see how happy they are, who live according to their own wills, and who cannot submit to the dull and melancholy business of a life devoted unto God, look at *Flatus*; *Flatus* is rich and in health, yet always uneasy, and always searching after happiness.

At his first setting out in life, *fine cloaths* was his delight; his enquiry was only after the best taylors and peruke-makers, and he had no thoughts of excelling in any thing but dress. He spared no expence, but carried every nicety to its greatest height. But this happiness not answering his expectation, he left off his *brocades*, put on a plain coat, railed at fops and beaux, and gave himself up to gaming with great eagerness.

This new pleasure satisfied him for some time: he envied no other way of life. But being by the fate of *play* drawn into a *duel*, where he narrowly escaped his death, he left off the *dice*, and sought for happiness no longer amongst the gamesters.

The next thing that seized his wandering imagination, was the *diversions* of the town; and for more than a twelvemonth, you heard him talk of nothing but ladies, drawing-rooms, birth-nights, plays, balls, and assemblies. But growing sick of these, he had recourse to hard drinking. Here he had many a merry night, and met with stronger joys than any he had felt before. Here he had thoughts of setting up his staff, and looking out no farther; but unluckily falling into a *fever*, he grew angry at all strong liquors, and took his leave of the happiness of being drunk.

The next attempt after happiness, carried him into the field. For two or three years nothing made him so happy as *hunting*; he entered upon it with all his soul, and leaped more hedges and ditches than had ever been known in so short a time. You never saw him but in a *green coat*; he was the envy of all that blew the *horn*, and always spoke to his dogs in great propriety of language. If you met him at home in a bad day, you would hear him blow his horn, and be entertained with the surprizing accidents of the last *noble chace*. No sooner had *Flatus* outdone all the world in the breed and education of his dogs, built new kennels, new stables, and bought a new *hunting-seat*, but he immediately got sight of another happiness, hated the senseless noise and hurry of hunting, gave away his dogs, and was for some time after deep in the *pleasures of building*.

Now he invents new kinds of *dove-cotes*, and has such contrivances in his barns and stables, as were never seen before: he wonders at the dulness of the old builders, is wholly bent upon the improvement of *architecture*, and will hardly hang a door in the ordinary way. He tells his friends, that he never was so delighted in any thing in his life; that he has more happiness amongst his *brick* and *mortar*, than ever he had at *court*; and that he is contriving how to have some little matter to do that way as long as he lives.

The next year he leaves his house unfinished, complains to every body of *masons* and *carpenters*, and devotes himself wholly to the happiness of *riding about*. After this, you can never see him but on horseback, and so highly delighted with this new way of life, that he would tell you, give him but his *horse* and a *clean country* to ride in, and you might take all the rest to yourself. A variety of new saddles and bridles, and a great change of horses, added much to the pleasure of this new way of life. But however, after some time having tired both himself and his horses, the happiest thing

he could think of next, was to go abroad and *visit foreign countries*; and there, indeed, the happiness exceeded his imagination, and he was only uneasy that he had begun so fine a life no sooner. The next month he returned home, unable to bear any longer the impertinence of *foreigners*.

Alter this, he was a great *student* for one whole year; he was up early and late at his *Italian grammar*, that he might have the happiness of understanding the *opera*, whenever he should hear one, and not be like those unreasonable people, that are pleased with they don't know what.

Flatus is now at a full stand, and is doing what he never did in his life before, he is *reasoning* and reflecting with himself. He loses several days, in considering which of his cast-off ways of life he should try again.

But here a new project comes in to his relief. He is now living upon herbs, and running about the country, to get himself into as *good wind* as any *running footman* in the kingdom.

I have been thus circumstantial in so many foolish particulars of this kind of life, because I hope, that every particular folly that you here see and read of, will naturally turn itself into an argument for the wisdom and happiness of a religious life.

But you will perhaps say, that the ridiculous, restless life of *Flatus*, is not the common state of those, who resign themselves up to live by their own humour, and neglect the strict rules of religion; and that therefore it is not so great an argument of the happiness of a religious life, as I would make it.

I answer, that I am afraid it is one of the most *general characters* in life; and that few people can read it, without seeing something in it which belongs to them. But let it be granted, that the *generality* of people are not of such restless, fickle tempers as *Flatus*; the difference is only this, *Flatus* is continually changing and trying something new, but others are content

with some one state; they do not leave *gaming*, and then fall to *hunting*; but they have so much steadiness in their tempers, that some seek after no other happiness, but that of heaping up riches; others grow old in the sports of the field; and others are content to drink themselves to death, without the least enquiry after any other happiness.

Now is there any thing more happy or reasonable in such a life as this, than in the life of *Flatus*? Is it not as great and desirable, as wise and happy, to be constantly changing from one thing to another, as to be nothing else but a gatherer of money, a hunter, a gamester, or a drunkard all your life? Shall religion be looked upon as a burden, or as a dull and melancholy state, for calling men from such a happiness as this?

But turn your eyes now another way, and let the glorious joys, the exquisite happiness of *Feliciana*, teach you how miserable, and how dull they must needs be, and what a delusion they are in, whole hearts are not wholly devoted unto God.

If you was to live with *Feliciana* but one half year, you would see all the happiness that she is to have as long as she lives. She has no more to come, but the poor repetition of that which could never have pleased once, but through a wrong turn of mind, and want of thought.

She is to be again dressed fine, and keep her visiting days. She is again to change the colours of her cloaths, again to have a new head, and again put patches on her face. She is again to see who acts best at the play-house, and who sings finest at the opera. She is again to make ten visits in a day, and be ten times in a day trying to talk artfully, easily, and politely about nothing.

She is to be again delighted with some new fashion; and again angry at the change of some old one. She is to be again at cards and gaming at midnight, and again in bed at noon. She is to be again pleased with

hypocritical compliments, and again disturbed with imaginary affronts. She is to be again pleased with her good luck at gaming, and again tormented with the loss of her money.

She is again to prepare herself for a birth night, and again see the town full of good company. She is again to hear the cabals and intrigues of the town, again to have secret intelligence of private amours, and early notice of marriages, quarrels, and partings.

If you see her come out of her chariot more briskly than usual, converse with more spirit, and seem fuller of joy than she was last week, it is because there is some surprizing new dress, or new diversion just come to town.

These are all the substantial and regular parts of *Feliciana*'s happiness; and she never knew a pleasant day in her life, but it was owing to some one or more of these things.

It is for this happiness, that she has been always deaf to the reasonings of religion; and if you look into the world, and observe the lives of those women, whom no arguments can prevail on to live wholly unto God; you will find most of them to be such, as lose all the comforts of religion, without gaining the tenth part of *Feliciana*'s happiness. They are such as spend their time and fortunes only in mimicking the pleasures of richer people; and rather look and long after, than enjoy those delusions, which are only to be purchased by considerable fortunes.

Nor does a life only of such vanity and sensuality as that of *Flatus* or *Feliciana*'s, but even the most regular kind of life, that is not governed by *great* devotion, sufficiently shews how dull and uncomfortable their lives must needs be, who are not wholly devoted unto God.

Octavius is a learned, ingenious man, well versed in most parts of literature, and no stranger to any kingdom in *Europe*. The other day, being

just recovered from a lingering fever, he thus addressed his friends.

"My glass, says he, is almost run out; and your eyes see how many marks of age and death I bear about me: But I plainly feel myself sinking away faster than any standers by do imagine. I fully believe, that one year more will conclude my reckoning."

The attention of his friends was much raised by such a declaration, expecting to hear something truly excellent from so learned a man, who had but a year longer to live; when *Octavius* proceeded in this manner: "For these reasons, my friends, I have left off all taverns, the wine of those places is not good enough for me in this decay of nature. I must now be nice in what I drink; I cannot pretend to do as I have done; and therefore am resolved to furnish my own cellar with a little of the very best, though it cost me ever so much.

I must also tell you, my friends, that age forces a man to be wise in many other respects, and makes us change many of our opinions and practices.

You know how much I have liked a large acquaintance; I now condemn it as an error. Three or four chearful, diverting companions, is all that I now desire; because I find, that in my present infirmities, if I am left alone, or to grave company, I am not so easy to myself."

A few days after *Octavius* had made this declaration to his friends, he relapsed into his former illness, and was committed to a nurse, who closed his eyes before his fresh parcel of wine came in.

Young *Eugenius*, who was present at this discourse, went home a new man, with full resolutions of devoting himself to God. "I never, says *Eugenius*, was so deeply affected with the wisdom and importance of religion, as when I saw how poorly and meanly the learned *Octavius* was to leave the world, through the want of it.

How often had I envied his great learning, his skill in languages, his knowledge of antiquity, his address, and fine manner of expressing himself upon all subjects! But when I saw how poorly it all ended, what was to be the last year of such a life, and how foolishly the master of all these accomplishments was then forced to talk, I was then convinced that there must be nothing so happy and comfortable as a life of true devotion; nor any thing so poor and comfortless, as death without it."

Look now at that condition of life, which draws the envy of all eyes.

Negotius is a temperate honest man: he served his time under a master of great trade, but has by his own management made it a more considerable business than ever it was before. For thirty years past, he has written fifty or sixty letters in a week, and is busy in corresponding with all parts of *Europe*. The general good of trade seems to *Negotius* to be the general good of life; whomsoever he admires, whatever he commends, or condemns, either in church or state, is admired, commended, or condemned, with some regard to trade.

As money is continually pouring in upon him, so he often lets it go in various kinds of expence and generosity, and sometimes in ways of charity.

Negotius is always ready to join in any public contribution: If a purse is making at any place where he happens to be, whether it be to buy a plate for a horse-race, or to redeem a prisoner out of jail, you are always sure of having something from him.

He has given a fine ring of bells to a church in the country; and there is much expectation, that he will some time or other make a more beautiful front to the market-house, than has yet been seen in any place. For it is the generous spirit of *Negotius* to do nothing in a mean way.

The generality of people, when they think of happiness, think upon *Negotius*, in whose life every instance of happiness is supposed to meet; sober, prudent, rich, prosperous, generous, and as the world thinks, charitable.

Let us now then look at this condition in another, but truer light.

Let it be supposed, that this same *Negotius* was a painful, laborious man, every day deep in a variety of affairs; that he neither drank, nor was debauched; but was sober and regular in his business. Let it be supposed that he grew old in this course of trading; and that the end and design of all this labour, care, and application to business, was only that he might die possessed of more than a hundred thousand pair of boots and spurs, and as many great-coats. Now if this was really the case, I believe it would be readily granted, that a life of such business was as poor and ridiculous, as any that can be invented. But it would puzzle any one to shew, that a man that has spent all his time and thoughts in business and hurry, that he might die, as it is said, worth a hundred thousand pounds, is any whit wiser than he, who has taken the same pains to have as many pair of boots and spurs when he leaves the world.

For if when he has gotten his hundred thousand pounds, or all his boots, his soul is to go to his own place, as every soul needs must that has not closed with Jesus Christ, and is not born again of God; how can we say, that he who has worn out his life in raising an hundred thousand pounds, has acted a wiser part for himself, however his money may profit others, than he who has had the same care to provide a hundred thousand pair of boots and spurs, and as many great-coats?

It would be endless to multiply examples of this kind, to shew how little is lost, and how greatly they are mistaken, who imagine they should render

themselves dull and comfortless by introducing a strict piety into every condition of human life.

Examples of great piety are not now common in the world; but the misery and folly of worldly men, and vain and trifling women, is what meets your eyes in every place; and you need not look far to see, how poorly, how vainly men dream away their lives for want of real devotion.

This is the reason that I have laid before you so many characters of the vanity of a worldly life, to teach you to make some benefit of the corruption of the age, and that you may be made wise, though not by the sight of what piety is, yet by seeing what misery and folly reign where piety is not.

To meditate upon the perfection of the divine attributes, to contemplate the love of God in Christ, the glories of heaven, the joys of saints and angels, living for ever in the brightness and glory of the divine presence; these are the meditations of souls advanced in piety, and not so suited to every capacity.

But to see and consider the emptiness and error of all worldly happiness; to see the grossness of sensuality, the poorness of pride, the stupidity of covetousness, the vanity of dress, the delusion of honour, the blindness of our passions, the uncertainty of our lives, and the shortness of all worldly projects; these are meditations which are suited to all capacities, and fitted to strike all minds: This is that “wisdom that crieth, and putteth forth her voice in the streets,” that standeth at all our doors, that appealeth to all our senses, teaching us in every thing, and every where, by all that we see, and all that we hear, by births and burials, by sickness and health, by life and death, by pains and poverty, by misery and vanity, and by all the changes and chances of life; that there is nothing else for man to look after, no other

end in nature for him to drive at, but a happiness, which is only to be found in a *life devoted to God*.

CHAPTER VIII.

Shewing the excellency and greatness of a devout spirit, and proving that a contrary spirit, is an indication of great ignorance and stupidity.

I HAVE now finished what was intended; I have explained the nature of Christian *devotion*, and shewn that it belongs to all orders, and more especially to those whose fortunes set them above the common level of mankind. I have endeavoured to point out to you, the *chief causes* of the general indevotion of the professing Christian world; and have shewn in *various characters*, how poor, how miserable they live, who are strangers to a life wholly devoted to God. I shall only add a word or two by way of conclusion, to prove that fervent devotion is the noblest temper of the greatest and noblest souls; and that a want of devotion, wherever it is, either amongst the learned or unlearned, is founded in gross ignorance, and in the greatest blindness and insensibility that can happen to a rational creature.

And here, I suppose it will be granted on all hands, that it is a sign of a great and noble mind for a man to be full of reverence and duty to his parents, to have the truest love and honour for his friend, and to excel in the

highest instances of gratitude to his benefactor. Are not these tempers, in the highest degree, signs of the most exalted and perfect minds?

And yet what is *devotion*, but the highest exercise of these tempers, of *duty*, *reverence*, *love*, *honour*, and *gratitude*, to the amiable, glorious *parent*, *friend* and *benefactor* of all mankind? So long, therefore, as duty to parents, love to friends, and gratitude to benefactors, are thought great and honourable tempers; devotion, which is nothing else but duty, love, and gratitude to God, must have the chief place amongst our highest virtues.

Again; we know how our blessed Lord acted in a human body; it was "his meat and drink to do the will of his Father which is in heaven." And if any number of heavenly spirits were to leave their habitations in the light of God, and be for a while united to human bodies, they would certainly tend towards God in all their actions, and be as heavenly as they could, in a state of flesh and blood.

They would act in this manner, because they know that God is the only good of all spirits; and that whether they were in the body or out of the body, in heaven or on earth, they must have every degree of their greatness and happiness from God alone. All human spirits therefore, the more exalted they are, and the more they know their divine original, and the nearer they come to heavenly spirits, by so much the more will they live to God in all their actions, and make their whole life a state of devotion.

A *devout man* makes a true use of his reason; he sees through the vanity of the world, discovers the corruption of his nature, and the blindness of his passions. He lives by a *law* which is not visible to vulgar eyes; he enters into the world of *spirits*, he compares the greatest things, sets eternity against time; and chuses rather to be forever great in the presence of God when he dies, than to have the greatest share of worldly pleasures whilst he

lives. There is nothing, therefore, that shews so great a genius, nothing that so raises us above vulgar spirits, nothing that so plainly declares an *heroic* greatness of mind, as great and fervent devotion.

When you suppose a man to be a *saint*, or all devotion, you have raised him as much above all other conditions of life, as a *philosopher* is above an *animal*.

The greatest spirits of the heathen world, such as, *Pythagoras*, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Epictetus*, and *Marcus Antoninus*, owed all their greatness to something they possessed, that resembled devotion. Their wisdom and deep contemplations, tended only to deliver men from the vanity of the world, and the slavery of bodily passions; and had they been endowed with the revelation of Jesus Christ, they might have justly been stiled great and devout men. For their main end of living, seemed to be, that they might act as spirits that came from God, and were soon to return to him.

But to proceed: Courage and bravery are words of a great sound, and seem to signify an heroic spirit; but yet humility, which seems to be the lowest, meanest part of devotion, is a more certain argument of a noble and courageous mind. A man that dares be poor and contemptible in the eyes of the world, to approve himself to Jesus Christ; that resists and rejects all human glory, that opposes the clamour of his passions, that meekly puts up all injuries and wrongs, and dares stay for his reward, till the invisible hand of God gives to every one their proper places, endures a much greater trial, and exerts a nobler fortitude, than he that is bold and daring in the fire of battle. For the boldness of a soldier, if he is a stranger to devotion, is rather weakness than fortitude; it is at best but mad passion, and heated spirits, and has no more true valour in it, than the fury of a tyger. For as we cannot lift up a hand, or stir a foot, but by a power that is lent us from God; so bold

actions that are not directed by the laws of God, and done with a regard to his glory, are no more true bravery, than sedate malice is Christian patience.

Farther; That part of devotion which expresses itself in sorrowful confessions, and penitential tears of a broken and contrite heart, which with some seems likewise another of the poorest and meanest things; is notwithstanding an indication of the most great and noble mind. For who does not acknowledge it an instance of an ingenuous, generous and brave mind, to acknowledge a fault, and ask pardon for any offence? Are not the finest and most improved minds the most remarkable for this excellent temper? Is it not also allowed, that the ingenuity and excellency of a man's spirit is much shewn, when his sorrow and indignation at himself, rises in proportion to the folly of his crime, and the goodness and greatness of the person he has offended? Now if these things are so, then the greater any man's mind is, the more he will be disposed to prostrate himself, and confess his faults before God, in all the humblest acts and expressions of repentance. And the greater the ingenuity, the generosity, judgment, and penetration of his mind is, the more will he exercise and indulge a passionate, tender sense of God's just displeasure; and the more he knows of the greatness, the goodness, and perfection of the divine nature, the fuller of shame and confusion he will be at his own sins and ingratitude.

From all which considerations, it plainly appears, that devotion is a true elevation of the soul, and that a lively sense of honour, and great knowledge of ourselves, are the best natural helps that devotion hath. And if this does not prove, that *great devotion* is the *noblest temper* of the greatest and *noblest souls*, we have not an argument to prove, that there is any such thing as a wise man or a fool.

On the other hand, it will as evidently appear that a want of devotion, wherever it is, among the learned or unlearned, is founded on gross ignorance, and the greatest blindness and insensibility that can happen to a rational creature.

People indeed of fine parts and learning, or of great knowledge in worldly matters, may perhaps think it hard to have their want of devotion charged upon their ignorance; but if they will be content to be tried by reason and scripture, it may soon be made appear. For were not our Lord and his apostles, eminent instances of great and exalted devotion? And if we will grant, (as all professed Christians must grant) that their devotion was founded on a true knowledge of the nature of devotion, the nature of God, and the nature of man; then it is plain, that all those who are insensible of devotion, neither know God, themselves, nor devotion.

Pray how comes it to pass, that most people have recourse to devotion, when they are under sickness, distress, or in fear of death? Is it not, because this state shews them more the want of God, and their own weakness, than they perceive at other times? And if devotion at these seasons, is the effect of a better knowledge of God, and ourselves, then the neglect and want of it at other times must be always owing to ignorance. Ignorance did I say? Yes, undoubtedly, and that the most *shameful ignorance*: for it is an ignorance of those things, which are most essential to us as rational creatures; I mean our relation to God, and the obligations we lie under to live wholly to his glory.

If a Judge had fine skill in painting, architecture, and music, but at the same time had gross and confused notions of equity, and a poor, dull apprehension of the value of justice, who would scruple to reckon him a poor ignorant Judge? If a Bishop should be a man of great address and skill in the art of preferment, and of a quick understanding how to raise and

enrich his family in the world, but should have no taste or sense of the maxims and principles of the saints and fathers of the church; if he did not conceive the holy nature, and great obligations of his calling, and judge it better to be crucified to the world, than to live idly in pomp and splendor; who would scruple to charge such a Bishop with want of understanding?

But now, if a Judge is to be reckoned ignorant, nay shamefully so, if he does not feel and perceive the value and worth of justice; if a Bishop is to be looked upon as void of understanding, if he is more experienced in other things, than in the exalted virtues of his apostolical calling; then all common Christians are to be looked upon as more or less shamefully ignorant, as they are more or less ignorant of those great things, which are the common, and ought to be the greatest concern of all Christians.

If a man had eyes that could see beyond the stars, or pierce into the heart of the earth, but could not see the things that were before him, or discern any thing that was serviceable to him, we should reckon that he had but a very bad sight. And if another had ears that received sounds from the world in the moon, but could hear nothing that was said or done upon earth, we should look upon him to be as bad as deaf. In like manner, if a man has a memory that can retain a great many things; if he has a wit that is sharp and acute in arts and sciences, or an imagination that can wander agreeably in fictions; but has a dull, poor apprehension of his duty and relation to God, of the value of piety, or the worth of an interest in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, he may very justly be reckoned to have a very bad understanding. He is but like the man that can only see or hear such things as are of no benefit to him.

If an human spirit should imagine some mighty Prince to be greater than God, we should take it for a poor, ignorant creature; all people would

acknowledge such an imagination to be the height of stupidity: But if this same human spirit should think it better to be devoted to some mighty Prince, than to be devoted to God, would not this be a greater proof of a poor, ignorant, and blinded nature?

Yet this is what all people do, who think any thing greater, better, or wiser, than a devout life. So that which way soever we consider this matter, it plainly appears, that devotion is an instance of great judgment, and of an elevated nature; and the want of devotion is a certain proof of the most shameful ignorance, and want of understanding.

Would you therefore not incur the imputation of the highest folly, and most shameful ignorance; would you be possessed of the noblest and most exalted judgment; would you avoid the senseless and vexatious miseries that attend a vain, sensual, and indevout life; would you act like a rational and redeemed creature; would you enjoy solid peace and happiness here, and have a well grounded hope and assurance of being invested with eternal joy and comfort in the blissful fruition of the glorious and ever-blessed God hereafter; let it be your highest concern henceforward, to ask, seek, and knock at the door of divine grace, till you obtain a true living faith in the righteousness of the once humbled but now exalted Redeemer, and as a proof of that, to devote yourself entirely, without reserve, to his honour, and do all the good you possibly can to all your fellow-creatures, for his great name’s sake.

PREFACE TO A NEW EDITION OF THE HOMILIES; AS INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED BY MR. WHITEFIELD.

PREFACE TO A NEW EDITION OF THE HOMILIES, AS INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED BY MR. WHITEFIELD.

THE word *Homily* signifies a sermon. Consequently the book of homilies, implies a book of sermons. Particularly that book, which was composed by those great reformers, *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, *Latimer*, *Hooper*, and others, in the beginning of the reign of that *Josiah* of his age, *Edward the sixth*. It was again republished, after the short interval of bloody *Mary*'s government, in the reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, and continued interwoven with our ecclesiastical constitution, under her immediate successor King *James* the first. Even to this very day, the thirty-ninth article of our church runs thus: "The second book of Homilies, the several titles whereof we have joined under this article, doth contain a godly and wholesome doctrine, and necessary for these times; as doth the former book of Homilies, which were set forth in the time of *Edward* the sixth; and therefore we judge them to be

read in churches by the ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understanded of by the people."

Such are the express words of our 39th article; and yet, though we subscribe this article, which enjoins these Homilies to be read in our churches by the ministers diligently and distinctly, this is so far from being our practice, that almost for time immemorial, at least in our days, they are seldom if ever read at all. What reason can be assigned for such neglect, I will not take upon me to determine: surely it cannot be, that our clergy look upon this book, as containing ungodly or unwholsome doctrine; for why then do they subscribe to the diligent and frequent reading of it? Neither can it be supposed that they so much as imagine, that this godly and wholesome doctrine is less necessary for the present age, than for that in which it was first published. But however it is, if we act consistently, the subscribers to our articles seem not to be left at their liberty to use or disuse them; they being judged to be read, as much now as formerly, in churches by the ministers diligently and distinctly. For if I may be suffered to give my opinion, the dreadful ignorance, as to the fundamentals of our holy religion, that almost every where abounds amongst the members of our established church, is chiefly owing to our neglect of preaching and putting into their hands the grand doctrines of the Reformation, contained in these Homilies and our other doctrinal articles. And hence undoubtedly it is, that they become such an easy prey to popish emissaries, who lie in wait to deceive. For these reasons, in order to contribute my poor mite towards putting a stop to the growth of this common and almost epidemical evil, I have selected a few of the most essential Homilies, with a suitable collect and a hymn to each, at a very small price, on purpose for the instruction and

edification of the poorer sort, who are generally chiefly attacked by the partizans of the *Romish* communion.

The church of *Scotland*, called our sister church, hath herein set us an example; and I could wish, that in this particular we would endeavour to copy after it. Her confessions of faith, and directory, are printed so frequently and so cheap, that they are almost in every hand; and so constantly explained and insisted upon in the ministers stated parochial visitations, that perhaps (tho' no doubt even *there*, there is an awful degeneracy) their commonalty, in respect to doctrinal points, are some of the most knowing in the world. Would to God the same could be said of the Church of *England* professors, either at home or abroad! The darkness, the gross and thick darkness of those at home, is so notorious, that it is every where seen, felt, and complained of, by those that have eyes to see and ears to hear. What a pity is it therefore, that this book of Homilies is not judged proper, and insisted on to be read in churches, by ministers diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood by the people now, as well as at the first dawnings of the Reformation. And what a further pity is it, that among the various books recommended and given away by the worthy societies for promoting Christian knowledge, and propagating the gospel in foreign parts, the book of Homilies, containing such godly and wholesome doctrine diligently and distinctly to be read, should never find a place in their catalogue; though both these societies have been established so long as soon after the glorious and happy revolution.

If our societies at home, or missionaries abroad, should urge in excuse for their not reading or dispersing this book of Homilies, that its language and diction is too antique and obsolete; I humbly apprehend, they might with equal propriety make the same objection against the use of, and dispersing

the book of *Common Prayer*. For both were compiled by the same great luminaries of our Church, and that too at the very self same important æra of the Reformation. Both contain the same godly and wholesome doctrine, and both are equally adapted to instruct the ignorant, and at the same time to raise and elevate the devout and simple heart. And therefore since the one is constantly to be read in the desk, why should not the other be diligently and distinctly read and enforced from the pulpit? Would to God that this was our universal practice: for then our daily or weekly worshippers and hearers, would not only be taught the first principles and doctrines of Christ, in a language suitable to their capacities; but, which alas! alas! hath been too too long the case of the desk and pulpit, these would not so frequently and so wretchedly oppose and contradict each other. Heterodoxy and mere heathen morality would then be no longer our famous declamatory topics, or those be deemed and cast out as enthusiasts, madmen, troublers of *Israel*, setters forth of strange doctrines, and turners of the world and church upside down, who after the strictest and most impartial examination, must be confessed to adhere most steadily to the Homilies, Articles, and Liturgy of the Church of *England*; and who at the same time endeavour to adorn her godly and wholesome doctrines therein contained, (as being in their judgments the doctrines of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ) with a suitable life and conversation.

If this is to be vile, God grant they may be more vile! If this be enthusiasm, God grant it an universal flow! For the consequence I know will be, that not only our own, but every protestant reformed church, would then not only be a common barrier against popery and prophaneness, but would shine as bright as the sun, be as fair as the moon, and terrible like an army with banners. That this may be our happy case, is the hearty prayer of,

Christian reader, Thy, &c.

George Whitefield.

I.

BLESSED Lord, who hast caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning; grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen!

The Homily on the Holy Scriptures. [1]

Come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire,
Let us thy influence prove;
Source of the old prophetic fire,
Fountain of life and love.

Come, Holy Ghost (for mov'd by Thee,
Thy holy prophets spoke)
Unlock the truth, thyself the key,
Unseal the sacred book.

Expand thy wings, prolific dove,
Brood o'er our nature's night;
On our disorder'd spirits move,
And let there now be light.

God through Himself we then shall know,
If thou within us shine;
And sound with all thy saints below,
The depths of love divine.

II.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent; create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!

TURN thou us, O good Lord, and so shall we be turned. Be favourable, O Lord, be favourable to thy people, who turn to thee in weeping, fasting and praying; for thou art a merciful God, full of compassion, long-suffering, and of great pity. Thou sparest, when we deserve punishment, and in thy wrath thinkest upon mercy. Spare thy people, good Lord, spare them, and let not thine heritage be brought to confusion. Hear us, O Lord, for thy mercy is great, and after the multitude of thy mercies look upon us, through the merits and mediation of thy blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!

The Homily on the Misery of Mankind.

Lord, we are vile, conceiv'd in sin,
And born unholy and unclean;
Sprung from the man, whose guilty fall
Corrupts the race, and taints us all.
Soon as we draw our infant breath,
The seeds of sin grow up for death;
Thy law demands a perfect heart,
But we're defil'd in ev'ry part.
Behold, we fall before thy face,
Our only refuge is thy grace;
No outward forms can make us clean,
The leprosy lies deep within.
Jesus, our God, thy blood alone

Hath power sufficient to atone;
Lord, let us hear thy pard'ning voice,
And make our downcast hearts rejoice.

III.

ALMIGHTY God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all men; we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word and deed, against thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!

The Homily on the Salvation of Mankind.

Bury'd in shadows of the night,
We lie, 'till Christ restores the light;
Wisdom descends to heal the blind,
And chace the darkness of the mind.
Lost guilty souls are drown'd in tears,
'Till the atoning blood appears;
Then they awake from deep distress,
And sing the Lord our righteousness.
Jesus beholds where Satan reigns,
Binding his slaves in heavy chains;
He sets the pris'ner free, and breaks

The iron bondage from our necks.
Poor helpless worms in Thee possess
Grace, wisdom, power and righteousness:
Thou art our mighty All; may we
Give our whole selves, O Lord, to Thee!

IV.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hast given unto us thy servants, grace, by the confession of a true faith to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the divine Majesty to worship the Unity; we beseech thee, that thou wouldst keep us stedfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities, who livest and reignest one God, world without end. Amen!

The Homily on Faith.

Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.
But Christ, the heav'nly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name,
And richer blood than they.
My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine,
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin.
My soul looks back to see
The burdens thou didst bear,

When hanging on the cursed tree,
And hopes her guilt was there.
Believing, we rejoice
To see the curse remove;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing his bleeding love.

V.

LORD, we pray thee, that thy grace may always prevent and follow us; and make us continually to be given to all good works, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!

GRANT, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honour and praise of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!

The Homily on Good Works.

Zion's a garden wall'd around,
Chosen, and made peculiar ground;
A little spot enclos'd by grace,
Out of the world's wide wilderness.
Like spicy trees, believers stand
Planted by an Almighty hand;
And all the springs in Zion flow,
To make the rich plantation grow.
Awake, O heav'nly wind, and come,
Blow on thy garden of perfume;
Spirit divine, descend, and breathe

A gracious gale on plants beneath.
Make thou our spices flow abroad,
A grateful incense to our God;
Let faith and love and joy appear;
And every grace be active here.

VI.

ALMIGHTY God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name, through Christ our Lord. Amen!

O Lord, who hast taught us, that all our doings without charity are nothing worth; send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which, whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee. Grant this, for thy only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen!

The Homily on Charity.

Come, dearest Lord, descend and dwell
By faith and love, in ev'ry breast;
Then shall we know, and taste, and feel,
The joys that cannot be express'd.
Come, fill our hearts with inward strength,
Make our enlarged souls possess
And learn the height, and breadth and length
Of thine unmeasurable grace.
Now to the God whose power can do
More than our thoughts or wishes know,
Be everlasting honours done,

By all the church, through Christ his Son!

VII.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin; grant that we being regenerate and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen!

The Homily for the Nativity, &c.

Father, our hearts we lift
Up to thy gracious throne,
And bless thee for the precious gift
Of thine incarnate Son.
The gift unspeakable
We thankfully receive,
And to the world thy goodness tell:
Oh may we to thee live!
Jesus, the Holy Child,
Doth by his birth declare,
That God and man are reconcil'd,
And one in Him we are.
Salvation, through his name,
To lost mankind is giv'n,
And loud his infant cries proclaim,
A peace 'twixt earth and heav'n.
A peace on earth he brings,
Which never more shall end;

The Lord of hosts, the King of kings,
Declares himself our friend;
Assumes our flesh and blood,
Angels the wonder scan,
The everlasting Son of God,
The mortal Son of man.
O may we all receive
The new-born Prince of Peace,
And meekly in his Spirit live,
And in his love increase!
Till He convey us home,
Cry ev'ry soul aloud,
Come, thou desire of nations, come,
And take us all to God.

VIII.

WE are chiefly bound to praise thee for thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord: for he is the very Paschal Lamb, which was offered for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world; who by his death hath destroyed death, and by his rising to life again, hath restored to us everlasting life. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. Amen!

The Homily for *Good Friday*.

Ye that pass by, behold the Man,
The man of griefs condemn'd for you;
The Lamb of God for sinners slain,

Weeping to Calvary pursue.
His sacred Limbs they stretch, they tear;
With nails they fasten to the wood
His sacred Limbs, expos'd and bare,
Or only cover'd with his blood.
See there! his temples crown'd with thorns,
His bleeding hands extended wide,
His streaming feet transfixt and torn,
The fountain gushing from his side.
Oh thou dear suffering Son of God,
How doth thy heart to sinners move!
Help us to catch thy precious blood,
Help us to taste thy dying love.
The earth could to her centre quake,
Convuls'd whilst her creator dy'd;
O may our inmost nature shake,
And bow, with Jesus crucify'd!
At thy last gasp, the graves display'd
Their horrors to the upper skies;
O that our souls might burst the shade,
And, quicken'd by thy death, arise!
The rocks could feel thy pow'rful death,
And tremble, and asunder part;
O rend with thy expiring breath
The harder marble of our heart!
IX.

ALMIGHTY God, who through thine only begotten Son Jesus Christ, hath overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; we humbly beseech thee, that as by thy special grace preventing us, thou dost put into our minds good desires; so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen!

The Homily for the Resurrection.

Bless'd morning, whose first dawning rays
Beheld our rising God;
That saw him triumph o'er the dust,
And leave his last abode!
In the cold prison of a tomb,
The dead Redeemer lay;
'Till the revolving skies had brought
The third, th' appointed day.
Hell and the grave unite their force
To hold our God in vain;
The sleeping conqueror arose,
And burst their feeble chain.
To thy great name, Almighty Lord,
These sacred hours we pay;
And loud Hosannas shall proclaim,
The triumph of the day.
Salvation and immortal praise
To our victorious King;
Let heav'n, and earth, and rocks, and seas,
With glad Hosannas ring.

X.

GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort, through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen!

Homily on *Whitsunday*.

IT is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, according to whose most true promise, the Holy Ghost came down as at this time from heaven with a sudden great sound, as it had been a mighty wind, in the likeness of fiery tongues, lighting upon the Apostles, to teach them, and to lead them into all truth, giving them both the gift of divers languages, and also boldness with fervent zeal, constantly to preach the gospel to all nations, whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error into the clear light and true knowledge of thee, and of thy Son Jesus Christ. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. Amen!

Creator Spirit, by whose aid,
The world's foundations first were laid;
Come, visit ev'ry waiting mind,
Come pour thy joys on human-kind;
From sin and sorrow set us free,

And make us temples worthy thee.
O source of uncreated heat,
The Father's promis'd paraclete!
Thrice holy fount, immortal fire,
Our hearts with heavenly love inspire;
Come and thy sacred unction bring,
To sanctify us, while we sing.
Create all new, our wills controul,
Subdue the rebel in our soul;
Chase from our minds th' infernal foe,
And peace, the fruit of faith, bestow;
And lest again we go astray,
Protect and guide us in thy way.
Immortal honours, endless fame,
Attend th' Almighty Father's name;
The Saviour Son be glorified,
Who for lost Man's redemption dy'd;
And equal adoration be,
Eternal Comforter, to thee!

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1. A separate edition, with the Homilies here selected, is intended to be published.

PRAYERS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

PRAYERS.

A Prayer for one desiring and seeking after the New-Birth.

BLESSED Jesus, thou hast told us in thy gospel, that unless a man be born again of the Spirit, and his righteousness exceed the outward righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, he cannot in anywise enter into the kingdom of God. Grant me therefore, I beseech thee, this true circumcision of the heart; and send down thy blessed Spirit to work in me that inward holiness, which alone can make me meet to partake of the heavenly inheritance with the saints in light.

Create in me, I beseech thee, a new heart, and renew a right spirit within me. For of whom shall I seek for succour but of thee, O Lord, with whom alone this is possible? Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me whole! O say unto my soul, as thou didst once unto the poor leper, I will, be thou renewed. Have compassion on me, O Lord, as thou once hadst on blind *Bartimeus*, who sat by the way-side begging.

Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest what I would have thee to do. Grant, Lord, that I may receive my sight; for I am conceived and born in Sin; my whole head is sick, my whole heart is faint; from the crown of my head to the sole of my feet, I am full of wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores; and yet I see it not. O awaken me, though it be with thunder, to a sensible feeling of the corruptions of my fallen nature; and for thy mercies sake, suffer me no longer to sit in darkness, and the shadow of death.

O prick me, prick me to the heart! Dart down a ray of that all-quickening light, which struck thy servant *Saul* to the ground; and make me cry out with the trembling jailor, "What shall I do to be saved?"

Lord, behold I pray, and blush, and am confounded that I never prayed on this wise before.

But I have looked upon myself as rich, not considering that I was poor, and blind, and naked. I have trusted to my own righteousness. I flattered myself I was whole, and therefore blindly thought I had no need of thee, O great physician of souls, to heal my sickness.

But being now convinced by thy free mercy, that my own righteousness is as filthy rags; and that he is only a true Christian who is one inwardly; behold with strong cryings and tears, and groanings that cannot be uttered, I beseech thee to visit me with thy free Spirit, and say unto these dry bones, Live.

I confess, O Lord, that thy grace is thy own, and that thy Spirit bloweth where he listeth. And wast thou to deal with me after my deserts, and reward me according to my wickednesses, I had long since been given over to a reprobate mind, and bad my conscience seared as with a red-hot iron.

But, O Lord, since, by sparing me so long, thou hast shewn that thou wouldst not the death of a sinner; and since thou hast promised, that thou

wilt give thy holy Spirit to those that ask, I hope thy goodness and long-suffering is intended to lead me to repentance, and that thou wilt not turn away thy face from me.

Thou seest, O Lord, thou seest, that with the utmost earnestness and humility of soul, I ask thy holy Spirit of thee, and am resolved in confidence of thy promise, who canst not lye, to seek and knock, till I find a door of mercy opened unto me.

Lord, save me, or I perish; visit, O visit me with thy salvation. Lighten mine eyes that I sleep not in death. O let me no longer continue a stranger to myself, but quicken me, quicken me with thy free Spirit, that I may know myself, even as I am known.

Behold, here I am. Let me do or suffer what seemeth good in thy sight, only renew me by thy Spirit in my mind, and make me a partaker of the divine nature. So shall I praise thee all the days of my life, and give thee thanks for ever in the glories of thy kingdom, O most adorable Redeemer; to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and praise, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

A Prayer for one newly awakened to a Sense of the Divine Life.

O ALMIGHTY and everlasting Father, who in the beginning spake and it was done, saying, “Let there be light, and there was light;” O most adorable Redeemer, who, when *Adam* had eaten the forbidden fruit, wast revealed as the seed of the woman, and didst in the fulness of time die an accursed death to save us from the guilt and power of our sins, and thereby break the serpent’s head; O blessed and eternal Spirit, who didst once move upon the face of the great deep, who didst overshadow the blessed virgin, who didst descend on the Son of God at his baptism, and didst come down after his ascension in fiery tongues upon the heads of each of his apostles; O holy,

blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God, by whose joint consultation we were first made, and into whose name we have been again baptized; Accept my humble and hearty sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, for calling me out of darkness into thy marvelous light; for quickening me when dead in trespasses and sins, and moving on the face of my polluted and disordered soul.

Thou hast promised, O Lord, that thou wilt not quench the smoaking flax, or break the bruised reed. And thou hast told us, that thy Holy Spirit should be in us as a well of water springing up unto eternal life. Finish therefore, I beseech thee, the good work begun in my soul, and now thou hast called me, never let me lie down again in sin.

Thou seest, O Lord, the good seed sown in my heart, is but as yet as a very small grain of mustard-seed. O continue to water, with the dew of thy heavenly blessing, what thy own right-hand hath planted, and it shall become a great tree.

Thou hast touched the eye of my mind by thy divine power, and I see men as trees walking. Let thy holy Spirit, by his blessed influences, more and more remove the remaining scales, 'till I at length see all things clearly.

With shame and confusion of face, O Lord, I confess, I am unworthy of this and all other thy mercies. For I have long since done despite to the Spirit of grace, crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame. But do thou, who art rich in mercy to all that call upon thee, in faithfulness forgive me what is past, and grant I may from henceforward work out my salvation with fear and trembling, since thou hast so graciously wrought in me both to will and to do, after thy good pleasure.

I know, O Lord, that now thou hast begun to deliver me out of my natural, and worse than *Egyptian* bondage, I must expect to pass through a barren

and dry wilderness, that there are lions in the way, that the sons of *Anak* are to be grappled with, before I attain to the true sabbath of the soul.

But thou, angel of the everlasting covenant, who didst send thy ministring spirits to rescue righteous *Lot*, who leddest thy sheep by the hands of *Moses* and *Aaron*, and didst appear in a vision to *Ananias*, commanding him to go and lay his hands upon thy servant *Saul*; send me always a faithful and experienced pastor, who may lead me by the hand, and keep me from lingring in my spiritual *Sodom*, by his prudent directions under thee; and preserve me from the snares and fury of my spiritual adversaries, which otherwise may overtake and destroy my soul.

O make me teachable like a little child. Convert my soul and bring it low. Grant I may be willing to learn what things I ought to do, and also may have power faithfully to fulfil the same.

Strengthen me, I beseech thee, by the holy Spirit, to cut off a right-hand, to pluck out a right-eye, to lay aside every weight, especially the sin that doth most easily beset me; to forsake father and mother, brethren and sisters, yea, and my own life also, rather than not be thy disciple.

O suffer me not to deceive my own soul by a partial reformation. Search me and try me, and examine my heart, and let no secret unmortified lust or passion ever keep me from life everlasting.

Lord, I am not my own: Thou hast bought me with the price of thy Son's most precious blood.

Thou hast often required, and lo! I now give thee my heart, to the best of my knowledge, without secretly keeping back the least part. For whom have I in heaven but thee, and what is there on earth that I can desire in comparison of thee!

O mould me into thy own most blessed image, my Lord and my God. Fill me with thy grace here, fit me for thy glory hereafter. Even so, Lord Jesus. Amen, and Amen.

A Prayer for one under Spiritual Desertion.

O EVER blessed and most compassionate Redeemer, who wast in all things tempted like as we are, sin only excepted. O thou lover of souls, who in the days of thy flesh didst offer up strong cries and tears, and wast heard in that thou fearedst. O thou restorer of mankind, who wast in such an agony in the garden, that thou didst sweat great drops of blood, falling to the ground. O thou Almighty High-Priest, who, when through the eternal Spirit thou wast about to make thy soul an offering for sin, wast deserted of thy Father, and didst cry out, in the bitterness of thy soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." O thou, who now sittest at the right-hand of the Father, continually to make intercession for us, look down, I beseech thee, upon me, thy unworthy servant; for thou hast turned away thy face, and lo! I am troubled; thou hast taken off my chariot-wheels, and I drive heavily; thou hast permitted a cloud to overshadow me, and an horrible darkness, fearfulness, and dread to overwhelm me, so that my spirit would utterly sink within me, did I not believe thou wouldst yet turn again and visit me.

Father, if it be possible, remove this horrible darkness; but if my soul cannot be made perfect without it, thy holy, thy blessed will be done.

Lo here I am! Deal with me as it seemeth good in thy sight. Only let thy grace be sufficient for me; and in the midst of my agonies send down, I beseech thee, an angel from heaven to strengthen me.

Lord, thou knowest that Satan hath desired to have me, that he may sift me as wheat: O grant that my faith fail not.

Suffer, O suffer him not to get an advantage over me, for thou art not ignorant of his devices. O let him not so prevail against me, as to make me entertain hard thoughts of thee, my most loving Master; and compassionate Redeemer. For I know, thou of very faithfulness hast caused me thus to be troubled, and dost afflict me for no other reason, but to make me partaker of thy holiness.

Give me, O give me the shield of faith, and enable me to repel all the fiery blasphemous thoughts, which that wicked one shall, at any time, dart into my mind. Let me drive them off, as carefully as *Abraham* did the birds that came to devour his sacrifice. And oh! let him never tempt me to think, thou wilt impute them to me for sin.

Lord, thou only knowest the present dryness and barrenness of my soul, and how liable I am to be tempted to fret against thee, and to seek pleasure in the creature when I can find no sensible satisfaction in thee, my great Redeemer, who art God, blessed for ever.

But, I beseech thee, keep my soul quiet and composed, and for thy mercy's sake, enable me only to take pleasure in thee, and to sit down solitary in the bitterness of my soul, and patiently wait till I can draw comfort from thee, the fountain of living waters, rather than hew out to myself broken cisterns, that will hold no water.

Never, never let me fall out with any of thy ordinances; or think I do not please thee in my holy duties, because I have no inward sensible pleasure in them myself.

Enable me to walk by faith, and not by sight, and to seek thee in the use of all appointed means, though it be sorrowing; being assured, that after three days I shall find thee in the temple; or that thou wilt make thyself known unto me, by breaking of bread, or in some other way.

Lord, I believe (help thou my unbelief) that I am now talking with thee, as certainly as *Mary* was, when thou didst converse with her at the sepulchre; though she knew it not. In thy due time reveal thyself again to me, as thou didst to her, and let me hear the voice of my beloved.

Thou hast promised, thou wilt not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, but wilt, with the temptation, make a way for us to escape, that we may be able to bear it. Fulfil, O Lord, this thy promise! And after I have suffered a while, strengthen, establish, settle, and visit me, as thou didst thy servant *Abraham*, when he returned from the slaughter of the five Kings.

Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me; restore to me the joy of thy salvation; and when my heart is duly prepared, and humbled by these inward trials, grant me a feeling possession of thee, my God, for the sake of thy dear Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*, *Amen*.

A Prayer for one under the Displeasure of Relations, for being Religious.

BLESSED Lord, who hast commanded us to call upon thee in the time of trouble, and thou wilt deliver us; and hast always shewn thyself to be a God hearing prayer, mighty and willing to save; hear me now, I pray thee, when I call upon thee, for trouble is at hand.

Thou seest, O Lord, how many of my brethren, according to the flesh, persecute me for thy name's sake; so that I must renounce them, or decline openly professing thee before men.

But God forbid I should love father or mother, brethren or sisters, more than thee, and thereby prove myself not worthy of thee. No! I have long since given thee my soul and my body; so, lo! I now freely give thee my friends also.

I now find by experience, that as it was formerly, so it is now. They that are born after the flesh, do persecute those that are born after the spirit. Thou camest not to send peace on earth, but a sword. And unless a man forsake all that he hath, he cannot be thy disciple.

Lo! I come to perform this part of thy will, O my God; being assured, that whosoever forsaketh father or mother, brethren or sisters, houses or lands, for thy sake, or the gospel, shall receive a hundred-fold in this present life, with persecution, and in the world to come life everlasting.

I trust, O Lord, it is for thy sake alone, that I now make an offering of the favour of my friends to thee; for thou knowest, O Lord, how continually they cry out against me, though I am doing no more than thy holy word strictly requires me to do.

But do thou, O blessed Saviour, who saidst unto *Peter*, "Get thee behind me Satan," enable me to stop my ears to their false insinuations, charm they never so sweetly; for they favour not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men. And unless, O Lord, thou dost help, they will be an offence unto me, and cause me to deny the Lord that bought me.

Far be it from me, O Lord, to be surprized, because of those offences; for thou hast long since denounced woe against the world because of offences; and I find it is needful for my soul, that such offences should come, to try what is in my heart; and to try whether I love thee in deed and in truth.

Blessed, therefore, for ever blessed be thy holy name, that I am accounted worthy to suffer for thy name's sake. O let me rejoice, and be exceeding glad, that my reward shall be great in heaven.

O let me never regard any of their threatnings; for when my father and mother forsake me, thou, O Lord, I am assured, wilt take me up.

Take me, O take me into the arms of thy mercy; for henceforward know I no man after the flesh; and whosoever doth the will of my heavenly Father, the same shall be my brother, and sister, and mother.

I know, O Lord, I know that this will expose me to the derision and persecution of those that are round about me. But do thou, who didst seek for the poor beggar, after he was cast out by the *Jewish* council, and didst reveal thyself unto him, reveal thyself to me also, when my name is cast out as evil by my friends and the world. Though they curse, yet bless thou me, O Lord, and enable me, I most humbly beseech thee, to pray for them, even when they most despitefully use me, and persecute me. “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

It is owing, O Lord, to thy free mercy alone, that I have in any measure been enlightened to know thee and the power of thy resurrection. O let the same grace be sufficient for them also, and make thy almighty power to be known in their conversion.

Thou didst once, O blessed Saviour, magnify thy goodness in turning thy servant *Paul*, from a bitter persecutor, to be a zealous preacher of thy gospel; and madest the trembling jailor cry out, even to those whose feet he had hurt in the stocks, “Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?”

Look down, therefore, I beseech thee, in pity and compassion, on those of my own houshold; and after I am converted myself, make me or some other person instrumental to strengthen these my weak brethren; that though we are now divided amongst ourselves, two against three, and three against two, yet we may at last, all with one heart and one mouth, glorify thee, O Lord; that thou mayest come and abide with us, and love us as thou didst *Lazarus*, *Mary*, and her sister *Martha*. Grant this, O Saviour, for thy infinite merits sake! *Amen* and *Amen*.

A Prayer for one entrusted with the Education of Children.

O DEAREST Jesus, who gatherest thy lambs into thy bosom, and didst solemnly command thy servant *Peter*, to feed them; grant I may shew that I love thee more than all things, by doing as thou hast commanded him.

Lord, who am I, or what is in me, that thou should thus put honour upon me, in making me any way instrumental to the preparing souls for thee? O thou blessed Saviour, I have sinned against heaven, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, much less to be employed in the service of thy children.

But since thou hast been pleased in me, to shew forth all thy mercy, and hast called me by thy good providence to this blessed work, grant I may always remember, that the little flock committed to my charge, are bought with the price of thy own most precious blood. And let it, therefore, be my meat and drink, to feed them with the sincere milk of thy word, that they may grow thereby.

To this end, I beseech thee of thy free grace, first to convert my own soul, and cause me to become like a little child, that from an experimental knowledge of my own corruptions, I may have my spiritual senses exercised, to discern the first emotions of evil that may at any time arise in their hearts.

O give me, I beseech thee, a discerning spirit, that I may search, and try, and examine the different tempers of their sin-sick souls; and, like a skilful physician, apply healing or corrosive medicines, as their respective maladies may require.

Gracious Jesus, let punishing be always my strange work; and, if it be possible, grant that they may be all drawn to their duty, as I would be drawn myself, by the cords of love. And when I am obliged to correct them, grant

it may not be to shew my authority, or gratify a corrupt passion, but purely out of the same motive from which thou dost correct us, to make them partakers of thy holiness.

O! keep me, I beseech thee, from being angry without a cause: Permit me not rashly to be provoked by the infirmities and perverseness of their infant years; but grant I may shew all long-suffering towards them: And by exercising such frequent acts of patience and forbearance, grant I myself may learn the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

O thou, who didst teach thy disciples how to pray, pour down, I beseech thee, the Spirit of grace and supplication into their hearts, that at all times, and in all places, they may both desire and know how to call upon thee by fervent prayer.

Father, into thy hands I commend my own and their spirits: Look down from heaven, the habitation of thy holiness, and bless them from thy holy hill.

Keep them, O keep them unspotted from the world; grant they may fly youthful lusts, and remember thee, their Creator, in the days of their youth. Train them up, I beseech thee, in the way wherein they should go; and when they are old, let them not depart from it.

O thou, who didst sanctify *Jeremiah* from the womb, and calledst young *Samuel* betimes, to wear a linnen ephod before thee, sanctify their whole spirits, souls and bodies, and preserve them blameless, till the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

O thou, who didst endue *Solomon* with grace, to chuse wisdom before riches and honour; incline their hearts to make the same choice of thee, their only good; and may they always renounce and triumph over the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.

Finally, do thou, O blessed Jesus, who at twelve years old wast found in the temple, sitting among the Doctors, both hearing and asking them questions, grant, that these children may love to tread the courts of thy house, and have their ears opened betimes, to receive the discipline of wisdom, that so, if it be thy good pleasure, to prolong the time of their pilgrimage, here on earth, they may shine as lights in the world; or, if thou seest it best, to bring down their strength in their journey, and to shorten their days, they may be early fitted by purity of heart, to sing eternal *Hallelujah*'s to thee, the Father, and the Holy Ghost, in the kingdom of heaven for ever. Grant this, O Father, for thy dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*, *Amen*.

A Prayer for a Person in Want.

O ALL-POWERFUL and gracious God, who didst bring water out of a rock for the children of *Israel*, and water out of a jaw-bone to sustain a thirsty *Samson*; who hadst compassion upon *Hagar* when she was ready to perish, who sentest ravens to feed *Elijah*, and dost feed the young ravens who daily call upon thee, behold me, O Lord, who now cry unto thee in great distress.

I confess, O Lord, I am unworthy of the crumbs which fall from any rich man's table. Wast thou to deal with me according to my deserts, I should now be lifting up my eyes in torments. But in the midst of judgment, remember mercy. Thou, O Lord, art the preserver of the body. Thou hast declared, that godliness has the promise of the life that now is, and that if we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, food and raiment shall be added unto us. Fulfil these promises in me thy unworthy servant.

I behold the lillies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin; wilt thou not feed me? Lord, I believe; O help my unbelief! I am ashamed that I have

so little faith. Lord Jesus, thou Son of *David*, I believe that thou wilt help me. Only give me patience to wait till the hour appointed for helping me, is fully come. I know, in thy due time, thou wilt turn my water into wine, and richly supply all my wants. Patiently let me tarry thy leisure. Never let me fret against thee, my Lord. Though I am poor, let me not be tempted to steal; but strengthen me, I beseech thee, against Satan's assaults. Let me know, that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of thee, my God. Though poor as *Lazarus*, yet, when I die, let me be carried by angels into *Abraham*'s bosom. And however thou mayest be pleased to deal with my body, Lord, feed my soul, I beseech thee, with that bread which cometh down from heaven. Though poor in this world, O let me be rich in faith. Suffer me not to stagger at thy promises through unbelief. Let the poverty of my body be a means of humbling my proud heart. O let me not be ashamed of my low estate, since thou, O Lord, didst not disdain to let women minister to thee of their substance, and hadst not where to lay thy head. Help me to sanctify thee my Lord God in my heart, and bring me safe at last to thy heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ, my only Advocate and Redeemer. *Amen.*

A Prayer before Singing of Psalms.

O ALMIGHTY God who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast perfected praise, open our mouths, that our lips may shew forth thy praise. Let our souls be filled as with marrow and fatness, and out of the abundance of our hearts, let our mouths speak. Enable us to sing with the spirit, as well as with the understanding, and to make melody in our hearts unto thee, O Lord. O let us rejoice in thee evermore, and help us to shew forth our thankfulness not only with our lips, but in our lives; and from praising thee here, Lord grant we may, at the hour of death, be translated to join with

angels and archangels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, to praise thee eternally hereafter. Even so, Lord Jesus, *Amen* and *Amen*.

A Prayer for One before he goes to his Labour.

O ALL-GRACIOUS, and ever-blessed Lord God; who, when thou hadst placed the first man in the garden of *Eden*, didst command him to dress it, and after he had eaten the forbidden fruit, didst impose this as a part of the divine curse upon him, that he should eat his bread by the sweat of his brows: O most adorable Jesus, who thyself didst work at the trade of a carpenter, and hast by an Apostle, commanded all to abide in the vocation wherewith they are called by thee, O prosper thou my handy-work.

Behold, in obedience to thy command, I now go forth to labour for the meat which perisheth. O let me do it with a single eye to thy glory, and suffer me never to forget to secure that meat which endureth to everlasting life. Let me not be so cumbered about the many things of this life, as to neglect the one thing needful. O let me walk with thee all the day long; and though my body be on earth, Lord let my heart and affections be fixed on thee in heaven, and preserve me, I most humbly beseech thee, in my going out and coming in, from this time forth and for evermore. Do thou, who didst appear to the disciples when they were fishing and mending their nets, manifest thyself unto me, when employed in the business of my lawful calling. Do thou, who calledst *Matthew* from the receipt of custom, call me effectually by thy grace. Grant, O Lord, that I may not stand any of my time idle, but be continually improving my talent, that whether I live, I may live unto thee, or whether I die, I may die unto thee, O Lord; so that whether living or dying, I may be thine. O never let me be like the unjust steward, ashamed to dig. Suffer me not to be slothful in business, but grant I may be always fervent in spirit, serving thee, O Lord. Lift up my hands when they

hang down; strengthen, O strengthen my feeble knees, let not the sun burn me by day, nor the moon hurt me by night. Provide for me to-day, and keep me from being solicitously careful for the morrow: and after the labour of this troublesome world is over, translate me, O Lord, together with all thy faithful servants, to that happy place, where we shall enjoy an everlasting rest, with thee O Father, with thee O Son, and with thee O Holy Ghost; to whom, as three persons, but one God, be ascribed, as is most due, by angels, and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, by things on heaven, and things on earth, all honour, power, might, majesty and dominion, now and for evermore. *Amen* and *Amen*.

A Prayer for a Rich Man.

O SOVEREIGN and all-bountiful Lord God, who makest poor, and makest rich, and dost govern all things both in heaven and earth, accept my unfeigned sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, for giving me all things richly to enjoy. What am I, O Lord, what is in me, that I should have bread enough and to spare, whilst so many are ready to perish with hunger? Not my merit, O Lord, but thy mercy; not my foresight, but thy sovereign good-will and pleasure has made me thus to differ from, and hath exalted me above my brethren. O let not my prosperity destroy me; but as thou hast made me rich in this world's goods, for thy infinite mercy's sake, make me rich towards thee, rich in faith and good works. Suffer me not, O Lord, to say unto gold, thou art my hope, or unto the fine gold, thou art my confidence. Let me not trust in uncertain riches, but in thee, the ever-living God. Let me not lay up for myself treasures on earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but grant I may lay up treasures in heaven, where neither moth and rust do corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal.

I know, O Lord, that this is impossible with man, and that it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into thy kingdom. But, Abba, Father, all things are possible with thee! Enable me, therefore, by the all-sufficiency of thy grace, to sell all things in affection, to deny myself, take up my cross, and follow thee every day. Give me that faith which overcometh the world. Grant that I may not indulge myself in the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, or make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lust thereof. Lord, let me be given to hospitality. When thy disciples are sick, incline me, O Lord, to go to see them; when they are in prison, grant I may not be ashamed to visit them; when they are strangers, may I take them in; when naked, may I cloath them; when hungry, may I feed them; when thirsty, may I give them drink; may I be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, a father to the fatherless, and cause the widow's heart to leap for joy. May I be a follower of thee, O lowly Jesus, who though thou wast rich, yet for our sakes didst become poor, and camest not to be ministered unto, but to minister. O let me ever remember thy words, and count it more blessed to give than to receive. And, as I am like a city built upon a hill, grant that my light may so shine before men, that they seeing my good works, may glorify my Father which is in heaven. Let my affections, O Lord, be set on things above, and not on things of the earth. Let my conversation be in heaven, and grant I may use the world, as though I used it not. Make me a faithful steward of thy manifold gifts, O God, and grant I may not make friends of the accursed mammon of unrighteousness, that when my natural life fails, thy blessed angels may carry me into everlasting habitations, and I may receive that blessed sentence, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Or, if thou pleasest, O Lord, for my trial, to order that my riches should take

themselves wings, and fly away, grant I may learn how to want, as well as how to abound, and say, with thy servant *Job*, "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." Having nothing, may I learn to possess all things in thee; and in whatsoever state I am, make me therewith content. May I always behave as a stranger and pilgrim upon earth, and when my appointed time is come, may I not need, like the rich fool in the gospel, to have my soul required of me, but chearfully give up the ghost, and be translated to join with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and all the other spirits of just men made perfect, to praise thee for ever and ever. Grant this, O Father, for thy dear Son's sake Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

A Prayer for a Servant.

O THOU high and lofty one, who inhabitest eternity, yet art pleased to dwell with the humble heart: O blessed Jesus, who hast made of one blood, all nations under heaven, with whom there is no respect of persons, and who in the days of thy flesh didst go down to heal a centurion's sick servant; have mercy, I beseech thee, on me, even me, also a poor servant. Stretch forth the right hand of thy power, to heal all the diseases of my sin-sick soul, and enable me by thy Holy Spirit, faithfully to discharge the several duties of that vocation, whereto I am called by thee. Give me grace, I most humbly beseech thee, to obey my master, according to the flesh, in all things; not with eye-service, as a man-pleaser, but with singleness of heart, as unto Christ; knowing, that whatsoever any man doth, the same he shall receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

Make my obedience to my master on earth, like that which the holy angels pay to thee in heaven. When I am commanded to go, may I go; when I am required to come, may I come; whatsoever I am bid to do agreeable to

thy will, may I do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men. But if at any time, O Lord, to try what is in my heart, thou shouldst permit me to be tempted to do any wickedness, O give me grace, as thou didst *Joseph*, patiently to submit to a prison, and to death itself, rather than sin against thee, my God; knowing that it is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience towards God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully. Enable me, O Lord, to shew good fidelity in all things committed to my charge. Do thou, who blessedst *Abraham*'s servant, when he went to take a wife for his master's son *Isaac*, so bless me in all my master's business, that he may see, as *Potiphar* did, that the Lord maketh all that I do to prosper in my hands.

Keep, O Lord, also the door of my lips, that I offend at no time with my tongue; let a false tongue be far from me, and let me never lie unto my master, as *Gehazi* did. O let no such unfaithfulness cleave unto me; lest by being a partaker with him in his crime, I partake also in his punishment. Bridle also my tongue from ever answering again: may all sullenness and peevishness of temper be put away from me, with all passion: may I learn of thee, O holy Jesus, to be meek and lowly in heart; O make me patient of reproof, willing to be taught, and subject with all fear and godly reverence, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. Or if ever, through the weakness of the flesh, I should offend in this point, as *Hagar* did against *Sarah*, enable me, I beseech thee, immediately to repent and to return again to my obedience. Grant also, O Lord, I may behave holily and unblameably to my fellow servants: let no corrupt communication, nor foolish talking or jesting, which is not convenient, at any time come out of my mouth, but rather giving of thanks: may our conversation be always seasoned with the salt of thy holy word, and such as may tend to the edifying one another.

Endue us all with that charity, which hideth a multitude of faults; and if ever, O Lord, thy glory should call me to bring up an ill report to my master against any of my fellow-servants, which, I beseech thee, of thy mercies, I may never have occasion to do; grant it may be done with gentleness and compassion, not to insinuate myself into my master's favour, but to prevent them sinning against thee, and thereby ruining their own souls. Keep us, we beseech thee, from striving among ourselves, as *Abraham*'s and *Lot*'s herdsmen did, about any of the concerns of this life; but grant we may be always provoking each other to love and to good works. Preserve us, we beseech thee, from envying one another, either the favour of our master, or any blessing whatsoever. Let us not seek our own, but each our brother's welfare, as members of the same body, as disciples of the same Lord. When one of us suffers, let all suffer; when one rejoices, let all of us rejoice with him. Make us pitiful and tender-hearted to each other; and if at any time we should have a quarrel, enable us, O Lord, immediately to forgive one another, even as thou, God, for Christ's sake, hast forgiven us.

Finally, O Lord, endue us with a deep humility, that we may in brotherly love prefer one another, and in lowliness of mind each of us esteem his brother better than himself. O hear all our prayers for our master, and grant that he and his houshold may faithfully serve thee, our Lord. O make him as devout as *Cornelius*, and us, like the soldiers that waited upon him, devout also. That thus adorning thy holy gospel in all things, we may, at thy second coming to judge the world, be rewarded according as we have improved the different talents which we have received from thee, O glorious Redeemer, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen*, *Amen*.

A Prayer for a poor Negroe.

O RIGHTEOUS Father, who hast made of one blood all nations under heaven, and with whom there is no respect of persons, look down from heaven on me a miserable sinner. And as thou hadst once compassion on the eunuch of the Queen of *Candace*, a negroe like myself, O Lord, let thy mercy be shewn in like manner upon me. O send some one to teach me the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Behold I am foolish; Lord, make me wise unto salvation. Lord, I am poor, do thou enrich me by thy Spirit. Lord, I am miserable in myself, O make me happy in thee. Lord, I am naked, O cloath my poor soul with the righteousness of thy beloved son Jesus. Blessed be thy name, for bringing me over into a Christian country. O Lord, let me not come in vain. Make me willing in the day of thy power, and for thy mercy's sake, reveal thy dear Son in me. Shew me what it is to be born again of thy Spirit, and let Jesus be my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Let me know, O Father of lights, how I have died in *Adam*, and how I must be made alive in Christ. Make me contented with my condition, knowing, O Lord, that thou hast placed me in it. Let me never be tempted to rebel against my master or mistress; and enable me to be obedient not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. Lord, keep the door of my lips, that I may not offend with my tongue. Keep my hands from picking and stealing, and suffer me not to behave unseemly on the Lord's-day. Bless my master and mistress, and my labours for their sake. Bless the Governor, and all that bear rule in this province, and grant that we may live under them in all godliness and honesty. Have mercy on my poor countrymen: Lord, suffer them no longer to sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death. Arise, thou Son of Righteousness, arise with healing under thy wings. Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord, and let us know the truth as it is in Jesus. Grant I may be truly converted myself, and

then, if it be thy blessed will, enable me, O Lord, to strengthen my poor brethren. O take us poor negroes for thine inheritance, and bless all those who endeavour to teach us thy will. Prosper, O Lord, the work of their hands upon them, O prosper thou their handy-work. Grant they may turn thousands and ten thousands of us to righteousness, and shine as the stars in the firmament for ever and ever. May we be their joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus, and join with them for ever and ever in singing praises to thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to whom, as three persons, but one God, I desire to give all praise, now and for evermore. Even so Lord Jesus, *Amen*, and *Amen*.

A Prayer for a Person before he goes a Journey.

GOD of *Abraham*, God of *Isaac*, and God of *Jacob*, who leddest the people through a wilderness by a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night; and didst guide the wise men, on their journey to *Jerusalem*, by a star in the east; give thy angels charge concerning me thy unworthy servant, that I may not so much as hurt my foot against a stone. Keep me, O God, keep me on my journey, and suffer me not to fall among robbers. Jesus, thou good Samaritan, take care of, support, defend, and provide for me. Behold, I go out by the direction of thy providence; Lord, therefore, let thy presence go along with me, and thy Spirit speak to my soul, when I am journeying alone by the way-side. O let me know that I am not alone, because my heavenly Father is with me. Keep me from evil company, or, if it be thy will I should meet with any, give me courage and freedom, O Lord, to discourse of the things concerning the kingdom of God. And O that thou wouldst let me meet with some of thy own dear children! O that thou wouldst be with us, as with the disciples at *Emmaus*, and cause our hearts mutually to burn with love towards thee, and one another! Provide for me proper refreshment, and

wherever I lodge, be thou constrained, O God, for thy own name's sake, to lodge with me. Teach me, whether at home or abroad, to behave as a stranger and pilgrim upon earth. Preserve my houshold and friends in my absence, and grant that I may return to them again in peace. Enable me patiently to take up every cross that may be put in my way. Let me not be weary and faint in my mind. Make, O Lord, right paths for my feet, enable me to hold out to the end of the race set before me, and, after the journey of this life, translate me to that blessed place, where the wicked one will cease from troubling, and my weary soul enjoy an everlasting rest with thee, O Father, Son, and blessed Spirit; to whom, as three persons, but one God, be ascribed all possible power, might, majesty, and dominion, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Person at the Beginning of a Sickness.

O ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, with whom alone are the issues of life and death, who dost wound and dost heal, who killest and makest alive, who bringest down to the grave, and liftest up again, and hast commanded us to call upon thee in the time of trouble, and thou wilt deliver us, stretch forth, I beseech thee, the right hand of thy majesty on high, and save me from the power of this present sickness, which otherwise will destroy my life. Have compassion on me, as thou hadst on *Peter*'s wife's mother, when she lay sick of a fever. Rebuke my distemper, and grant it may leave me. Speak the word, O Lord, and thy servant shall be whole. It is but for thee to say, Go, and it shall go: for I believe, Lord, that thou art the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Jesus, thou son of *David*, have mercy upon me. By thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and passion, by thy precious death and burial, by thy glorious resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, good Lord deliver me from my present

approaching illness. Behold, to thee I fly for succour. In obedience to thee, do I give place to the physician. But I know that I may waste all my substance, and shall not grow better, but rather the worse, unless thou, O great Physician, who, in the days of thy flesh, didst give sight to the blind, and restore strength to the lame, and didst cure the woman of the bloody issue, dost also recover me from my sickness. Do thou, therefore, who didst bless a bunch of figs to the recovery of *Hezekiah*, sanctify the means that shall be made use of to my recovery. O let me not, like *Asa*, seek only to the physician, but depend on thee, O Lord, for a blessing. Or, if the decree be gone forth that I must die, grant, O Lord, I may set my house and heart in order, and though thou killest me, let me put my trust in thee. Into thy hands I commend my spirit: though worms destroy my body, yet grant, that in my flesh I may see thee my God.

If it be thy will, let this sickness not be unto death, but spare me yet a little longer, that I may recover my spiritual strength before I go hence, and am no more seen. If thou seest it best, let this affliction immediately pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but thy will be done. Only sweeten it, O Lord, with a sense of thy love, and strengthen me with thy mighty power in the inner man. Let thy grace be sufficient for me. Magnify thy strength in my weakness, and under the shadow of thy almighty wings, let my soul take refuge till this day of thy visitation be overpast. Shew me, O Lord, wherefore thou contended with me. For I know of very faithfulness thou hast caused me to be thus troubled. Make thou my bed in my sickness, and let thy rod as well as thy staff, comfort me. In patience, grant I may possess my soul. And though this affliction at present be not joyous, but grievous; yet grant, O Lord, I may be so exercised thereby, that it may bring forth in me the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Let tribulation, O Lord, work

patience, patience experience, experience hope, even that hope which maketh not ashamed, and whereby thy love, O God, may be shed abroad in my heart. Give me, O Lord, in this, and in every thing to give thanks, and enable me to suffer, as well as to do thy will, even like the angels in heaven. O! for thine infinite mercy's sake, let not Satan get any advantage over me, by tempting me to charge thee foolishly. Let not such a wretch as I am, ever complain for this punishment of my sin, knowing that I receive the due reward of my crimes. O suffer me not to cry out with wicked *Cain*, "My punishment is greater than I can bear;" but let me sanctify thee the Lord God in my heart, and rejoice in this tribulation, knowing that whom thou lovest thou chastenest, and scourgest every son whom thou receivest. Blessed be thy name O Lord, that thou hast not yet given me over to a reprobate mind. Blessed be thy name, that thou hast not cursed me, as I most justly deserve, as thou didst the barren fig-tree. Blessed be thy name, that thou still dost condescend to dig and dung round me. O purge, purge me for thy mercy's sake, and grant that I may henceforward bring forth fruit unto thee. O let me not forget this day of my visitation: and if it be thy good pleasure, that I shall not die, but live, grant that I may constantly declare thy works, O Lord. Whenever I am cleansed, let me immediately return and give thanks. With thy servant *Hezekiah*, may I go up into thy house, O Lord, and pay thee my vows, which I now make whilst I am in trouble. Suffer me to sin no more, lest a worse evil befal me: and as thou wast pleased to reveal thyself in the temple to the poor man, whom thou didst cure in the days of thy flesh, be pleased, for thy mercy's sake, to reveal thyself to me. Then shall I shew forth my thankfulness, not only with my lips, but with my life, by giving myself up to thy service, who didst die for

our sins, and rise again for our justification; to whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Woman lately married to a believing Husband.

EVERLASTING Father, who didst make *Eve* out of the rib of *Adam*, and didst give her to him to wife, accept my thanks for calling me to the marriage-state, and blessing me with a husband fearing thee. O, for thy mercy's sake, make me a help meet for him. Grant, as *Sarah* called *Abraham*, so I may call and honour him as my lord. Let me always remember, I am the weaker vessel, that man was first made, and not woman, and suffer me not at any time to usurp authority over him. O let me always take heed to reverence, and be in subjection to my husband; and let not my adorning be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, or of wearing of gold, or of putting on fine apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of thee, my God, of great price. O let me be grave, discreet, chaste, a keeper at home. Suffer me not to be a busy-body, or to wander about from house to house. Keep me from being a tatler, speaking the things which I ought not. And if thou dost bless me with children, Lord, teach me to guide them in the right way, and manage my house with such meekness and wisdom, that I may give no occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. Though in the marriage-state, enable me, O Lord, to serve thee without distraction, and let me never be so cumbered about the many things of this life, as to neglect the one thing needful. May I with *Mary*, continually sit at thy feet, and learn of thee, O Jesus, to be meek and lowly in heart. Keep me from being a snare to my husband. Make me willing to part with him whensoever thou shalt call him from me. Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend both our spirits, souls and bodies. O sanctify us

throughout, and let our seed be blessed. O let our marriage-bed be undefiled, and give us to live together as heirs of the grace of God, that our prayers be not hindered. Help us to love one another, like thee and thy church. Give us freedom to pray with and for each other, and grant I may be the glory of my husband, as the church is the glory of thee my Saviour. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, according to the multitude of thy mercies in Jesus my Redeemer; to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, I desire here and hereafter to ascribe all power, might, majesty, and dominion, for ever and ever. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

A Prayer for a Man, convinced that it is his Duty to marry, for Direction in the Choice of a Wife.

O ALMIGHTY, ever-living God, who, after thou hadst made all things out of nothing, and man after thy own divine image, didst say, "It is not good that man should be alone, I will make him an help meet for him;" look down, O Lord, on the work of thine own hands, and hearken to the voice of my humble request. O Lord, chuse a help meet for me. Thou Lord, art acquainted with my wants. Thou didst once chuse a *Rebecca* for *Isaac*. Thou art the same to-day as thou wast yesterday. Bless me, even me also, in like manner, O my Saviour. Suffer me not, O Lord, to be unequally yoked with an unbeliever. O let me not be in the number of the sons of God, who saw the daughters of men, that they were fair, and took them wives of all which they chose. Lord, do thou chuse for me, and direct me to a child of thine own, adorned with a meek and quiet spirit. O suffer me not to fall by the hand of a woman. For, Lord, thou knowest I desire to take a wife, not for lust, but uprightly; therefore, mercifully ordain, that I may have one after thy own heart. When I marry, let it be only in and for thee, O Lord. Let not lust or passion pervert or blind my eyes; but, Lord, give me to watch

unto prayer, and let thy providence point out the person thou hast appointed for me. Thou didst direct *Abraham*'s servant; Lord, for thy mercy's sake, direct me. Behold, I call thee, O blessed Jesus, to my marriage. Direct me also, when I consult my friends, thy disciples. O bless their advice unto me in this important change of my life, and let all know my marriage is of thee, my God. All which I humbly beg in thy name, and through thy merits, O blessed Lamb of God, thou heavenly bridegroom of thy church, to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, now and for evermore. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

A Prayer for a Woman, desiring Direction of God, after an Offer of Marriage is made to her.

FOUNTAIN of light and life, who hast promised to hear the petitions of them that ask in thy dear Son's name, look down on me thy poor handmaid, and answer my request, for thy infinite mercy's sake. Lord Jesus, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee, and desire only to live unto thee. Shew me, O Lord, shew me, for thy mercy's sake, what thou wouldest have me to do. I see, O Lord, the advantages of a single life, and that I can now care only for the things of the Lord, and serve thee without distraction. If thou seest this state best for my soul, O give me power over my own will, and never suffer me to know man. But since thou hast declared that "Marriage is honourable in all;" if thou seest that state best for me, Lord, shew me whom thou hast chosen for me. Behold, thy handmaid is now invited to the marriage-state, and thou alone knowest the heart of him who offers to be my husband. O suffer me not to deceive my own soul; watch, O Lord, watch over and influence my deceitful heart. O let me see the tokens of thy will, before I give a determinate answer. Suffer me not to say, I will go with him, until I plainly see this proposal is of thee, my God.

Influence my relations hearts, as thou didst influence the hearts of *Rebecca*'s friends; and if it be thy will I should be joined with this thy servant, O let me love him only in thee, and for thee, to the glory of thy great name, and the salvation of both our immortal souls, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Even so, Lord Jesus, *Amen*, and *Amen*.

A Prayer for Persons in a Storm at Sea.

DEAREST Lord, and all-powerful Redeemer, who wast praying on the mountain, whilst thy disciples were toiling and rowing all night, and the wind was contrary; who didst also appear by night to thy servant *Paul* in a ship-wreck, saying, "Fear not, *Paul*, for God has given thee all the souls that sail with thee;" mercifully look upon us, who are now exposed to the same danger. Say unto our souls, "It is I; be not afraid:" and to the winds, "Peace, be still;" and immediately there shall be a great calm.

Save, Lord, or we perish; for the waves rage horribly. Thou hast sent forth thy word, and the waters flow. O let not the deep shut her mouth upon us, and suffer not the water-floods to swallow us up!

We know, O Lord, for what cause this evil is come upon us. We have not feared thee, the God of heaven, who madest the sea and dry land, as we ought. Therefore we are exceedingly afraid, lest thou shouldst not deliver us in this needful time of trouble.

But O thou who didst once hear *Jonah*, when he cried unto thee out of the belly of the fish, though he was fleeing from thy presence, hear us also for thy mercy's sake. For thou hast cast us into the deep, into the midst of the seas, the floods are compassing us about, and thy billows and waves are passing over us. Save our lives from destruction, O Lord our God, and let us yet lift up our hands unto thee in thy holy temple.

But if the decree be gone forth, that our bodies must now perish and see corruption, thy blessed will be done. Only grant, O Lord, that our souls may be precious in thy sight, and that we may be preserved from the storm of thy everlasting anger; so that when the voice of the archangel shall sound, and the trump of God command the sea to give up its dead, we may rise to life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and for ever. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

A Thanksgiving for a safe Arrival after a Voyage.

ALMIGHTY and gracious Lord God, who art good, and doest good, who sendest thy rain on the just and on the unjust, and causest thy sun to shine on the evil and on the good; we thy unworthy servants humbly beseech thee, that thou wouldst open our lips, and enlarge our hearts, to shew forth thy praise, for letting us see thy wonders in the deep, and for leading us through the sea, as on dry land, and bringing us to the haven where we would be.

O do thou, who didst inspire *Moses* and the children of *Israel* to sing a song unto thee, when thou broughtest them up out of the Red-sea, open our lips, O Lord, that our mouths may shew forth thy praise: for thou art our strength and our song, and art become our salvation. Thy right hand is become glorious in power. Who is like unto thee, O God, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Praise the Lord, O our souls, and may all that is within us praise his holy name.

We have seen thy paths in the great waters, and thy providence and power hath alone preserved us, otherwise the deep had long since overwhelmed us, and the waters gone over our souls. It is thy arm, O Lord, alone hath brought us this salvation. O that we may therefore praise thee for thy

goodness, and declare the wonders that thou hast shewn to us, the unworthiest of the children of men.

Lord, let us never be unmindful of thy manifold mercies, but enable us to pay thee the vows we made thee when we were in trouble. O keep us, keep us, we beseech thee, unspotted from the world into which thou art sending us. Grant we may not turn thy grace into wantonness, but henceforward walk so holy, and unblameably in all manner of conversation and godliness, that after we have passed the waves of this troublesome world, we may arrive at the haven of eternal rest, which thou hast prepared for all that love our Lord Jesus in sincerity. Grant this, O Father, for thy dear Son's sake Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

A Prayer for a Sailor.

O THOU God of the sea and dry land, who in thy strength settest fast the mountains, and art girded about with power, who claspest the winds in thy fist, and holdest the waters in the hollow of thy hand, who deckest thyself with light, as with a garment, who spreadest out the heavens like a curtain, who tellest the number of the stars, and callest them all by their names, who hast set bounds to the sea which it cannot pass, and hast said, Hitherto shall ye come and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed: O thou, who hast made *Pleiades*, *Orion*, and *Arcturus*, who layest the beams of thy chambers in the waters, who makest the clouds thy chariot, and walkest on the wings of the wind: O thou almighty Jehovah, who hast called me by thy providence to go down to the sea in ships, and to occupy my business in the great waters; grant, that as I daily see, so I may daily admire thy wonders in the deep, and learn from storms and winds to obey thy word. They go, O Lord, when thou biddest them go; they come, when thou commandest them to come. But I have broken all thy commands: thou hast commanded me to

go often, but alas! I go not. Thou requirest me to come and draw near unto thee in prayer, but alas! I come not. Or if I do pray unto thee at such time as a storm comes upon me, yet my devotion ceases with the storm, it is but like a morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away.

Lord, I blush and am confounded, when I consider how often thou hast magnified thy power in my preservation, and yet that I could continue so ungrateful. Thou hast often heard me when I have cried unto thee, when I have been staggering to and fro, and been at my wit's end, when the waves went up to the heavens, and down to the hell beneath, and my soul hath fainted for very trouble: but I have forgotten to praise thee, O Lord, for thy goodness, and to thank thee for the wonders thou hast shewn to me, the unworthiest of the sons of men.

Thou wast with *Noah* in the ark, and his little family; O do thou vouchsafe to guide and protect me. Thou wast with *Jonah*, when he cried unto thee out of the belly of hell; hear me also, now I cry unto thee out of the great deep. I would not behave more wisely in the things of this life, than in the things which belong to my everlasting peace. Let me not be so careful to shun a shipwreck, and never fear making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. Let me not be so careful to eye my compass, and yet seldom eye thy most holy word, which alone can guide me through this world to the haven of everlasting rest. Let me not every day be solicitous to be at my wished-for port, and never desire to see and enjoy thee. Let me not daily improve every wind, and continually neglect those glorious opportunities, which I enjoy of fitting myself for thee. Let me not fear a storm, and yet never fear that fiery tempest, which will ere long come upon the wicked, from thy presence.

Keep me, O God, from impatience, when the winds and seas are contrary. Grant me a lively persuasion, that thy providence ruleth all things; that thou intendest every thing for my good, and enable me therefore patiently to tarry thy leisure, and to give thee thanks for all things that befal me, since it is thy will in Christ Jesus concerning me. Let me not complain of the weather, since that is tacitly complaining of thee, my God.

Keep, O Lord, I beseech thee, the door of my lips, that I may not offend thee with my tongue. O put away swearing far from me, and let me no longer, as I have done, cloath myself with cursing as with raiment, lest, as I delight in cursing, it should happen unto me, and as I loved not blessing, so it may be far from me.

O let me no longer deceive my own soul, by thinking it impossible thus to offend thee with my tongue. All things are possible with thee, my God! Purify, therefore, I beseech thee, my heart: create in me a new heart; renew a right spirit within me: for out of the abundant wickedness contained therein, my mouth hath so often uttered profane things.

Keep me, O Lord, I beseech thee, unspotted in my conversation, and let not the evil communications, to which I am daily exposed, corrupt my good manners. O let me never have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather give me courage to reprove them; and, as my life is always in thy hand, O let me not forget thy law.

Grant, O Lord, that the crosses I meet with, may not increase, but rather break my passions. Let me, in the hours of watching, watch unto prayer, and teach me to endure hardness like a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Keep me, O Lord, from loving unrighteous gain, and grant I may render unto *Cæsar* the things that are *Cæsar*'s, and pay tribute to whom tribute is due: knowing that money unjustly gotten, is but laid up to the owner's hurt,

and that hereafter it will pierce me through with many sorrows, and eat my flesh as doth fire. May my one business be to lay up treasures in heaven, and to secure an interest in thee, O blessed Jesus, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for evermore. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

The Pious Soul longing for Heaven.

LORD! how have I loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. O glorious seat; the residence and the workmanship of the great, the mighty God: let me continue, let me increase in this love of thee more and more.

Let this weary pilgrimage be spent in advancing daily toward thee, and may the breathing of my soul after thee, sanctify and comfort the labours of each day, and refresh my waking thoughts by night.

Let my heart be always where my treasure is already; and in this dry and desolate wilderness, may I feel no other thirst, than that of arriving at my heavenly *Canaan*, and partaking in the society and the joys of that happy people, who have the Lord for their God.

O may that God who made me, possess me in his holy temple! Not that I dare presume to hope for thy beauty and bliss upon the account of any deserts of my own; but yet, the humblest sense of my own unworthiness will not sink me into despair of it, when I reflect upon the blood of Him who died to purchase this mansion for me. Let but his merits be applied to me; let his intercessions assist my want of worth, and then I am safe; for those merits cannot be overbalanced by my sins, nor were, or can those prayers be ever offered up to God in vain.

For my own part, I confess with shame and sorrow, that I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost, drawn out my wandrings and my miseries to

a great length, and am cast out of the sight of my God, into the blindness and darkness of a spiritual banishment. In this forlorn estate I sadly bewail the wretchedness of my captivity, and sing mournful songs when I remember thee, O *Jerusalem*. As yet I am at an uncomfortable distance, and at best my feet stand only in the outer courts of *Sion*. The beauties of the sanctuary are behind the veil, and kept hid from my longing eyes; but I am full of hope, that the builder of this sanctuary, and the gracious shepherd of souls, will carry me in upon his shoulders, that I may there rejoice with that gladness unspeakable, which all those happy saints feel, who are already admitted into the presence of their God and Saviour; the Saviour who hath opened his royal palace to all believers, by abolishing the enmity in his flesh, and reconciling all things in heaven and earth by his own blood.

He is our peace, who hath made both one, and broken down the middle wall of partition, promising to give us the same degree of happiness in his own due time, which is already enjoyed in thee. For thus he hath declared, that they who are worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead, shall be equal unto the angels. O *Jerusalem*, the eternal habitation of the eternal God! may'st thou be the second darling of my soul, and only he be preferred before thee in my affection, who shed his blood to make me worthy of thee. Be thou the joy and comfort of my languishing mind, my great support in hardships and distresses; may the remembrance of thee be ever sweet, and the mention of thy name a holy means to drive away all sorrow from my soul.

An Act of Praise.

BLESS the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. O praise

the Lord, all ye works of his, in all places of his dominions; praise the Lord, O my soul.

Let us magnify that great God, whom angels praise, whom dominions adore, whom powers fall down and tremble before; whose excellent glory cherubim and seraphim proclaim with loud incessant voices: let us bear a part in this heavenly song, and together with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven, laud and magnify that glorious name; let us tune our voices with theirs, and though we cannot reach their pitch, yet will we exert the utmost of our skill and power, in this tribute to the same common Lord; and say with them, as poor mortals are able, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts; heaven and earth are full of thy glory; glory be to thee, O Lord most high.

For these are the happy spirits, who offer a sacrifice of pure praise before the throne of God continually, who are ever wrapt in the contemplations of his perfections; and see them, not like us through a glass darkly, but near at hand, and face to face.

What tongue can express, what thought conceive, the admirable beauty, the exact order, the numberless multitude of this heavenly host? The inexhaustible source of joy springing from the beatific vision; the fervent love which ministers delight without torment; the ever-growing desire, which rises with their satisfactions, and the grateful satisfactions, which crown that desire; a desire always eager, and never uneasy, always full, and never cloyed: the blessedness derived down to them, by their inseparable union to the fountain of all bliss; the light communicated to them from the original light; the happy change into an immutable nature, by seeing the immutable God as he is, and being transformed into the likeness of him they see?

But, how, alas! should we hope to comprehend the divinity and bliss of angels so far above us, when we feel ourselves unable to find out the nature and perfection of our very soul within us? What sort of being must this be, which inspires a lump of dead flesh with life and activity, and yet, when most desirous so to do, cannot confine its thoughts to holy exercises? What a mixture of power and impotence is here? How great, and yet how poor and little is this principle, which dives into the secrets of the most high, searches the deep things of God, and expands itself to celestial objects, at the same time that it is forced to employ its talent in the invention of useful arts, and to serve the necessities of a mortal life? What sort of creature is this, that knows so much of other things, and so little of itself; so ingenious in matters abroad, so perfectly in the dark to what is done at home? Specious but very disputable notions have indeed been advanced concerning the origin of our soul; but all we know of it, amounts at last to this; that it is an intellectual Spirit, created by the Almighty power of its divine maker, endued with such an immortality as he was pleased to qualify it for; enlivening and sustaining a body subject to change, corruption, and death, and liable to all the unequal affections of fear and joy, and every turbulent passion, that in their turns exalt and depress, enlarge or contract its power.

And what an amazing thing is this now! The more we attend to it, the more we shall find ourselves lost in wonder. When we read, or speak, or write of God, the great creator of the universe, we can distinguish ourselves clearly and distinctly, though at the same time his perfections be too vast, for our words to express, or our minds to comprehend; the subject, not of an adequate conception, but of an awful astonishment.

But when we descend lower, and treat of angels and created spirits, of souls united to bodies, and beings of the same level with, or a condition inferior to our own; we are not able to support our ideas with proofs so incontestable; and find it impracticable to satisfy ourselves or others in the enquiries concerning them.

Why then should we, to so very little purpose, hover uncertainly about these lower regions, and spend our time and pains in groping in the dark? No, let our minds rather enlarge their thoughts, and take a nobler range; let them leave all created objects behind, and run, and mount, and fly aloft: and, taking faith to the assistance of reason, fix their eyes, with the utmost intenseness our nature will bear, upon the Creator, the Universal Cause.

Yes, I will make a ladder, like that of *Jacob*'s, reaching from earth to heaven, and as by rounds, go up from my body to my soul, from my own soul to that eternal Spirit that made it; who sustains, preserves it always with me, about me, above me; thus skipping over all the intermediate stages of beings, and re-uniting my own soul to Him from whom it came, and in whose image it was created.

Whatever bodily eyes can discern, whatever leaves impressions upon my imaginative faculty, shall be resolutely set out of the way, as a hinderance to that more abstracted contemplation, which my mind is desirous to indulge.

A pure and simple act of the understanding, is that which must carry me up, and boldly soar at once to the Creator of angels, and souls, and of all things.

And happy is that soul, which, refusing to be detained by low and viler objects, directs its flight to the noblest and most exalted, and, like the eagle, builds its nest in the top of the rocks, and keeps its eye steady upon the Sun of righteousness; for no beauty is so charming, no pleasure so transporting,

as that with which our eyes and mind are feasted, when our greedy sight and eager affections are determined to our God and Saviour, as to their only proper center; when, by a wondrous mystical, but true and spiritual act of vision, we see him who is invisible; behold a light far different from this which chears our senses, and taste a pleasure infinitely sweeter than any this world and its joys can afford; for this is a short and insincere pleasure; this is a dim and feeble light, confined to a narrow space, always in motion from us, and in few hours put out by constant returns of darkness: these are enjoyments which the great Creator hath distributed to brutes, nay, to the vilest of insects, in common with mankind; and therefore let us thirst and aspire after such as are truly divine; for what even swine and worms share with us, cannot deserve the name of light and pleasure, but, in comparison of those more refined, are to be esteemed no better than pain and night.

Now to God the Father, &c.

END of the Fourth Volume.